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THE BAPTIST MESSAGE

An Address by the Pastor, Dr. T. T. Shields

This message was originally delivered during the years 1919-1920, in connection with the Forward Movement of the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec; and was published as part of the official literature of the Baptist Forward Movement at the Baptist Church House, 223 Church St., Toronto, Canada.

THE Book which, with a positiveness which only divine omniscience can justify, speaks of that which antedates all human history, and of that, therefore, which, in the nature of the case, no mortal could know, challenges our faith by the comprehensive sweep of its first great word, "In the beginning God." And that Book, concerning itself, as it does, with principles which are immutable, describes the order and progress of the first day of God's creation, by saying, "And the evening and the morning were the first day." And the last chapter of the same incomparable Book commands both our faith and our imagination by its description of the shadeless splendor of the Holy City, in the promise, "And there shall be no night there."

And between that first line of the history of the Genesis of things, and the line which predicts the consummation of the divine purpose in glory, you have an epitomized record, historical and prophetic, of the movements of God in all human history until time shall be no more; and everywhere and always, God is moving forward:

"Our lives through various scenes are drawn,
And vexed with trifling cares;
While His eternal thought moves on
His undisturbed affairs."

No one can walk with God and walk backwards; nor enquire as to His dwelling place without receiving His forward-moving invitation, "Come and see." And no one can really and sincerely summon all his powers to an endeavour to achieve a morally worthy purpose without having God on his side; nor without coming, consciously or unconsciously, into the current of that divine purpose which moves forward toward the light of an endless day.

It is important that Baptists should keep the principle

of the divine programme always before them. That we may never forget that the message and mission of God's redeemed people are essentially spiritual; for if we fail to keep the spiritual nature of our work clearly in view we are in danger of missing the aim of the church's mission altogether. Of late years, indeed, we have seen this effect an entire change of the accent and emphasis of the church's message, — in the recommendation of godliness chiefly for its profitableness in "the life that now is." This inevitably leads to the erection of worldly and temporal standards of value by which to appraise the church's ministry and progress, until the church arrives at the condition of the Laodiceans: "Thou sayest, I am rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked."

Moreover, if we forget the essentially spiritual character of our work we shall fail to depend upon the only Power by which it can be achieved. The first settlements in this country sprang up on the shores of the lakes, and beside the flowing rivers; because the pioneers were wise enough to drop their mill-wheels into the streams of God's power flowing by. These steel towers, bearing high voltage wires which we now see everywhere, proclaim our more recent discovery that God meant us to live, even on the plane of the physical, by superhuman powers. And in the realm of the spiritual the same principle obtains. The spiritual character of our work precludes all possibility of its being done "by hand"; it can be done only "by power", and that power the Spirit of the Lord. Hence our material gifts, whether of money or of service, must be only as the towers and wires along which the divine energy must flow for the accomplishment of our spiritual service.

The question arises, therefore, whether we, as Baptists, have any special aptitude for the spiritual interpretation of life. While other Christian bodies discuss the possibilities of various forms of organic union, have we still any logical reason for standing apart from such discussions? Have we still a distinctive message for the world? Are we as firmly convinced as ever that the distinctive emphasis of our presentation of the Gospel constitutes a truer interpretation of the evangel of grace than other presentations in which the emphasis is differently placed?

Before we can know clearly how to move forward, we need to enquire as Baptists where we are. I therefore propose to ask you to consider what is the *sine qua non* of the Baptist message. What is the irreducible minimum of revealed truth which a man must believe in order to be entitled to be called a Baptist? Or let me put the matter still more simply: What are the conditions of membership in a Baptist church? This can be answered satisfactorily only by enquiring, What conditions of church membership are set out in the New Testament? What is involved in the confession required of anyone applying for membership in the church? If we can get at these simple and fundamental principles we shall know what are the essentials of the Baptist message. And it is of these great principles I now speak.

I.

The first and central truth which Baptists have always firmly held is this: **THAT IN JESUS CHRIST GOD WAS MANIFEST IN THE FLESH.** Belief in the essential Deity of Jesus Christ is cardinal to our whole position as Baptists.

We believe that no true conception of God can, by natural processes, be evolved out of a man's own consciousness; that we cannot of ourselves imagine a true picture of God; that unaided human reason cannot discover God. And, therefore, we hold that a man's attitude toward God and his relation to his fellows cannot rightly be determined by his own conception of what God is, and of what He requires of us; but, on the contrary, that any true knowledge of God must be derived from what God reveals of Himself.

Therefore, fundamentally, *Baptists are not rationalists, but revelationists.* All that we know of God and all that we teach of Him is derived, not from what human reason has discovered, but from what divine revelation has disclosed. And we believe that all earlier and lesser revelations of God, even that which is revealed of God in nature, are summed up and comprehended in the full and final revelation of God in Christ: "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they."

I have sometimes thought that we need a Rescue Mission for fallen words; for words, like persons, do not always honour either their birthplace or their parentage, but go astray, to walk in the counsel of the ungodly, and stand in the way of sinners, and sit in the seat of the

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scornful; with the inevitable result, that, like persons, they lose their proper influence and power. It then becomes necessary, either to turn them aside to some Jericho, where, like David's men, they may recover from the debasement resulting from contact with the enemy; or, otherwise, such words need to be reclothed with ampler definitions.

The word "divinity" has lost much of its original strength of meaning. It is no longer sufficient for us to say we believe in the divinity of Christ; for there are those who say that, who also say they believe in the divinity of all men. We hold that God was in Christ as He never was in any other man; that He was begotten of the Holy Ghost and born of a virgin as no other man was ever born. We believe in the essential Deity of Christ, as the Eternal Son, Who was with the Father before the world was; as the second Person in the Holy Trinity Who, with the Father, and the Holy Spirit, is one God. And we worship Him as "the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature; 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."

Therefore, we set the Lord Jesus Christ in the centre as the Incarnate God in Whom "dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily."

As Baptists we readily accord to others that liberty of thought which we demand for ourselves. But though we deny the right of the magistrate or anyone else to fetter another's conscience, we do not, therefore, bind ourselves to have fellowship with principles against which our own consciences revolt. *While refusing to compel, we may with equal justice refuse to concur.* There are some things which are vital to true Christian faith; and one of them is this: a settled conviction of the essential Deity

of Jesus Christ. We can have no fellowship with anyone who denies the Godhead of Jesus. I believe I speak for the Baptists of this Convention when I say that there is absolutely no room among us for anything that savours of Unitarianism. Jesus Christ is to us "the only wise God our Saviour, to whom be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."

But what are the implications of this position? Our attitude toward Christ will determine our attitude toward many other things — indeed, it will determine our attitude toward everything, toward God above us, and man about us; toward "the life that now is," and "that which is to come."

"What think ye of Christ, is the test,
To try both your plan and your scheme;
You cannot be right in the rest,
Unless you think rightly of Him."

II.

Our attitude toward Christ will determine OUR ATTITUDE TOWARD THE SCRIPTURES.

It must be clear to the mind of every earnest and thoughtful man and woman among us that the time has come when we must clearly define to ourselves what our attitude toward the Bible is to be, if we are to continue our work as a denomination. No family, nor community, nor institution, nor nation, can live a peaceful, progressive, and useful life, without the direction of some recognized authority. And without some such authoritative direction no church nor denomination can exercise a useful ministry to the world about it. Authority must reside in some one. In whom? To whom can Baptists look for direction? We have no bishop; and we refuse to allow any person or collection of persons to exercise spiritual lordship over us. And yet some one must command and direct. Who shall it be?

There can be but one answer: "One is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren." But who is to be the Master's mouthpiece? By what means is His will to be communicated to us? Where shall we find an order bearing His unmistakable signature? Formerly, and historically, Baptists believed that the Head of the church had revealed His will in the Holy Scriptures. To our fathers the Bible was the word of God. Do we still so regard it?

If we do not, if we have no longer a reliable compass and chart, our ship must surely drift from her course; and, defaulting in her mission, disintegrate, and ultimately disappear. No captain would put to sea in a ship whose steering gear was believed to be out of order. And every Baptist movement, if it is to be worthy of the name, must find its direction in the authority of the Bible as the word of God. For *when Baptists yield their belief in the authority of the Scriptures they have surrendered the last logical reason for their continued existence.*

But how shall the right attitude toward the Bible be determined? Who shall tell us authoritatively whether the Bible is the word of God? Must we not in this matter resort to and rely upon the authority of Christ?

Personally, I have no theory of the inspiration of the Scriptures. But I am sure of ten thousand facts concerning which I am unable to formulate a theory. And it is of the fact of inspiration, not of any theory of it, we must be convinced. We may not know how "holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost", and yet be absolutely sure that they were so moved.

The Bible is a human book, written by human hands. It has never been claimed that its manuscripts were magically produced. But the Bible is divine as well as human. This is the claim it everywhere makes on its own behalf. In what proportions, therefore, are these divine and human elements blended? Is it so human as to partake of such imperfection as is common to all things of human origin? Or is it so permeated by the divine as to be saturated with divine perfection?

The Book tells us of a great Personality Who was born of a human mother, but was begotten of the Holy Ghost; and Who was, therefore, both human and divine, like the Book itself. But how were the divine and human elements blended in Him? Which of the two natures predominated? Did His human nature render Him subject to human limitations? Or, the rather, was not His humanity, while still making Him our true Kinsman, by union with His divinity, sublimed to the quality of divine perfection? For if He was limited in one realm of His being, must He not have been limited in all? If He was mentally limited to the measure of the human mind, how can inherent physical immortality, or moral perfection be predicated of Him?

We are thus driven to the enquiry: In what realms of life is Jesus Christ to be Lord? Unquestionably, He is to be Lord of our bodies. And who will dispute His supremacy as a moral and religious Teacher? But what about the realm of the intellect?

Let us hear from one who was widely and deeply learned. No one will question the Apostle Paul's qualification for judging of intellectual matters. And he tells us, "I verily thought with myself that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth."

But after he had seen Jesus he gloried in being the "bondslave" of Christ. Now to what extent did Paul submit himself to Christ? Did he continue to "think with himself"? And were his thoughts, "contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth"? O tell us! thou mighty leader of men, thou man of massive and far-seeing intellect, in the wide realm of thy intellectual activities, hast thou made Jesus Christ thy Lord?

And he answers:

"Though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh; (for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds) casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ."

And nothing less than that will do. Jesus Christ must be Lord in the realm of the intellect! Imaginations and reasonings and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, must, by the power of God, be cast down. A true Baptist, to whom Jesus Christ is the Incarnate God, in the nature of the case, has no "liberty" to entertain thoughts which are "contrary" to Christ. He is "the bond-slave" of Christ, intellectually as well as spiritually; and his "every thought" — his thought about the Bible, and about everything else, in this life, and in that which is to come, must be "brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ."

Now when Christ is so regarded we have an infallible Standard and Authority to Whom all our intellectual problems can be brought. We must consult Him, therefore, about the Bible; for He is the highest Authority in the universe.

Of the Old Testament in general, He says: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." And to this He adds in another place, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." Thus this infallible Christ declares He has come to fulfil the law and the prophets, even to the last jot and the last tittle; and having put the seal of His infallible authority on the law and the prophets, He later solemnly avers that His own words shall never pass away. Can language express a stronger claim to infallibility and final authority?

What use can I now make of this divine pronouncement? How is the authority of Christ with respect to the Scriptures to determine my own attitude toward the Bible? Let me give you two or three simple illustrative applications of the principle.

Personally, I am not concerned *per se* about the human authorship of the books attributed to Moses. When I find the writer of the epistle to the Hebrews saying of certain things in Exodus and Leviticus, "The Holy Ghost, this signifying", I could be content to ignore the human author and listen to the divine word. But when I find that the life and times of Moses are so inextricably interwoven with the Pentateuch that it is impossible to eliminate Moses without invalidating the first five books of the Bible, the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch becomes a question of vital importance. Therefore I must bring this vexed question to "the author and finisher of my faith" for settlement. And now let us hear Him!

To the Sadducean naturalists of His day, He said: "Do ye not therefore err, because ye know not the Scriptures, neither the power of God? . . . Have ye not read in the book of Moses, how in the bush God spake to him?"

And again: "Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father. There is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust. For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me; for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?" And yet again, in that most solemn parable which is a prophecy of retribution beyond the grave, in answer to the once-rich man's request, that Lazarus be sent to warn his five brethren, Christ represents Abraham as saying; (and as saying it in the clearer light and fuller knowledge of the life beyond), "They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them." And when Dives replies, "Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent," He puts into Abraham's lips these terribly solemn words: "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead."

When he has heard these words, surely for the man who acknowledges the Deity and consequent infallibility of Christ, the question of the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch is authoritatively and finally settled; and instead of spending time in idle speculation, he will read it to hear what "the Holy Ghost saith" therein.

And this principle of the infallibility of Christ may be applied to all Biblical questions. I am not disturbed by questions as to historicity of the book of Jonah. I should be quite content to learn its religious lessons as allegorically taught, even if the book had no historic foundation, providing there can be found nothing in any other part of scripture requiring me to regard the book as being historically true. An allegorical Jonah, and a parabolic

fish, and a legendary gourd, will do no violence to my faith, if I can secure the consent of my one infallible Authority to my holding such a view; for I am not free to form an opinion on the subject: my thought of the book of Jonah must be brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. Therefore, what saith my great Professor of Bible knowledge? Hear Him again:

"An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas; for as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it; because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here." And in the same breath He continues: "The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it; for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here."

By that pronouncement, for me, the question of the historicity of the book of Jonah is for ever settled. I believe the miraculous story to be historically true because the highest Authority in the Universe has so declared.

The same rule applies to the question of the inspiration and authority of the Scriptures as a whole, and in every part. For myself, this is my confession of faith with respect to the Bible: If this building were large enough to hold all the Biblical scholars of the world, and if they should all unite to tell me that the story of the deluge is unhistoric; that Moses did not write the Pentateuch; that the book of Jonah is not historically true, I would believe Christ's naked word before the contrary judgment of all the scholarship of the world, and stake the interests of my soul for time and for eternity upon the unsupported word of my absolutely infallible Lord; and, if need be, be a fool for Christ's sake. And I then should be much less a fool for His sake, than the contrary attitude would make me for the sake of agreeing with a "scholarship" falsely so-called. For though I thus speak for the purpose of emphasis, I am convinced that the body of thought which is worthiest the high and honourable title of "scholarship", and which represents the findings of disciplined intellectual powers in co-operation with spiritually enlightened and penetrating understandings, will always be found to be in agreement with the word of Him who is Incarnate Truth.

When we thus approach the Bible as being instinct with the personality and authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, what a world of intellectual and spiritual treasure it becomes to us! We have walked with Him among the flowers of Eden, and where first the shadow of the curse fell athwart the path of sinful man. We have seen Him walk the waves of the shoreless sea of judgment; and, in the patriarchs' tents, in the voice of angels, we have heard the Word which was in the beginning with God. In the tabernacle of the wilderness, with its crimson ritual, and in all the forty miraculous years, we have heard Him speaking in righteousness, mighty to save. We have followed Him with Joshua in His triumphal progress into Canaan's promised land; we have found Him sitting among Israel's judges; and in the fields of Boaz, near to Bethlehem, we have heard His whispered promise of the marriage of the Lamb. Where, indeed, have we not found Him? Is there a scripture path un-

trodden by His feet? Is there a valley which has not echoed with His voice? Is there a mountain which has not been transfigured by His presence? — "The voice of My beloved! behold, he cometh leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills. My beloved is like a roe or a young hart: behold, he standeth behind our wall, he looketh forth at the windows, shewing himself through the lattice. My beloved spake, and said unto me, Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away. For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land; the fig tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away." And we have followed Him — through historical wildernesses and biographical mountain solitudes, and through genealogical deserts, only to find that the wilderness and the solitary place are made glad for Him; and in His presence the desert rejoices and blossoms as the rose. In psalmist's melodies; in words of transcendent wisdom; in pregnant type, and glowing symbol; in wheels that are dreadful; in chariots of fire; in seraphic visions of enraptured spirits of prophets, priests and kings, we have seen and heard the form and voice of our Beloved; until, at last, He has come to us from out the grave, being declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead, and with perfect knowledge of both worlds, He has joined us on the Emmaus road; where with burning hearts we have heard Him, beginning at Moses and all the prophets, expound unto us in all the scriptures the things concerning Himself.

Therefore by the illumination of His presence in its pages; by the seal of His authority upon all its principles, and precepts, and promises; by His own invariable assumption of the Scriptures' infallibility, there is wrought into our deepest spiritual consciousness the unwavering conviction that the Bible is the word of God that liveth and abideth for ever!

"Should all the forms that men devise
Assault my faith with treacherous art,
I'd call them vanity and lies,
And bind the gospel to my heart."

III.

And now what follows from all this? If we have in the Bible the Book of the Lord, and in Christ the Lord of the Book, we have in Him also THE STANDARD OF INTERPRETATION.

Our Lord Himself promised of "the Spirit of Truth", "He shall guide you into all the truth; for he shall not speak of himself, but what things soever he shall hear, these shall he speak; and he shall declare unto you the things that are to come." And the manner of the Spirit's guiding into all truth He clearly predicted when He said, "He shall glorify me; for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you." The New Testament writers, who claimed to write "by the revelation of Jesus Christ", all made Him the Standard by Whom the values of life must be determined. They claimed to be the inspired exponents of the Gospel He had "revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit." And their standard was, in principle, always this: "As the truth is in Jesus." Their identification and appraisal of error was always effected by comparison with the only infallible Standard of truth; as when Paul says: "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradi-

tion of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." And ye are complete in him."

When I say that Christ is to be our Standard of interpretation, I mean that all the elements of human life can find their only true appraisal in His interpretation of life, as He speaks directly and through His inspired apostles.

For instance: There is a man in the city where I live who is a most exemplary character; a good husband and father, a loyal citizen, and in every respect a worthy man. He is, indeed, a returned soldier. He went "over the top", and was wounded. And in that hour he offered his life upon the altar of his country's service as truly as did the heroic men who will never return.

Now I want someone to tell me how I am to estimate that man religiously; for he is not a professor of religion. Does such an excellent character as he need any religion? And if so, what sort of religion? Does he need salvation? Does he need a Saviour? What should my attitude toward him be? You see, I am looking for a satisfactory, because final and authoritative, doctrine of man. For this I must go to the only One Who "needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man."

And I find that just such an admirable character as I have described, except that he lacked my soldier-friend's splendid courage, once "came to Jesus by night." And when he had said, "Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God," our infallible Authority answered, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." And when Nicodemus asked, "How can these things be?" this infallible Professor of spiritual knowledge answered: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, we speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness. — If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things? And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven."

That is equivalent to saying: "Nicodemus, human nature is so depraved that only a spiritual birth can make it spiritually capable of seeing; or morally fit to enter, the kingdom of God. And if you have any doubt as to the finality of this pronouncement, I tell you, now that I speak what I know, and testify what I have seen. No one else has ever ascended up to heaven. There is no other authority competent to guide you. I only, of all men, have complete knowledge of the other life, and of the conditions of entrance into the kingdom of God. I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by Me. Therefore, marvel not that I said unto thee, ye must be born again."

We have now, therefore, a trustworthy doctrine of man. He is so ruined by sin that he can be saved only through regeneration by the Holy Ghost. I must, therefore, go on preaching the doctrines of sin and the new birth; for my great Authority tells me they are still true and necessary. Moreover, I know now the religious message my ex-soldier neighbour needs; and I have learned too, that the first essential to "reconstruction" in any life is regeneration. And as a Christian workman I am no longer in doubt as to my course. I have a platform of certainty on which to stand, and a divinely authorized message to deliver; I can, therefore, address myself to my task as one who has a commission from on high.

What interpretation shall I put upon *the Cross of Christ*? There it stands, the promise and prophecy of it in the Old Testament, and the history of it in the New. What does it mean to a sinful world?

Shall I proclaim its moral influence? Shall I tell men it is the consummation of a sublime example? That Christ died to show us how to die, as He lived to show us how to live? Yes; there is all that in the Cross. No one can really gaze upon it without being moved to nobler living. But is that the full meaning of the Cross? If He who died thereon was but a man, the Cross can mean no more than that. You will remember that Bethmann-Hollweg, the ex-German Chancellor, offered himself to the Allied Governments as a substitute for the former Kaiser. The receipt of his offer was acknowledged; but the Allied Governments politely intimated that they had a little score to settle with him on his own account, and that he would have quite enough to do to answer for his own crimes. And thus the case stands with all men: "None of them can by any means redeem his brother; nor give to God a ransom for him." No man did ever have a surplus of merit wherewith to atone for another's offences; and even if he had, "a life for a life" would require a life of infinite value for the life of the world.

But what if Jesus Christ be God? What if He was "made after the power of an indissoluble life"? What if "He only hath immortality," if His life was eternal in its nature and essence? He said of Himself: "No man taketh my life from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father." And He said also, "The Son of man came, not to be ministered unto but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."

Now if in Jesus Christ, "God was manifest in the flesh", if He was born, "that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a Son, and they shall call his name, Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us", we must find a deeper and richer significance in His blood than is contained in any theory of its mere moral influence. When I know that "the precious blood of Christ" flowed from the heart of Incarnate Deity, I know that His blood was of greater moral worth than all the rivers of human blood which have flowed on all the battle-fields of earth through all human history, since Cain slew his brother Abel. "The life of the flesh is in the blood"; and when I know that the life that was in "the precious blood of Christ" was an "indissoluble life", even the very life-tide of Deity, then I can understand the incalculability of its atoning value; for in that crimson stream, I see the wealth of the universe in solution! And I can sing with renewed fervour, and out of an unwavering conviction,

"Thou dying Lamb, Thy precious blood
Shall never lose its power,
Till all the ransomed Church of God,
Be saved to sin no more."

For a spiritually bankrupt race there can be no gospel without a vicarious atonement for its theme; an imputed righteousness for its promise; a throne of grace for its faith; a divine Mediator for its Surety; and a kingdom of grace and glory for its end. And all this we have who believe "that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation."

Salvation by grace as the message of the Gospel follows as the natural corollary of all this; salvation as God's free gift, not something men can earn for themselves. How sadly that great word "grace" has been neglected of recent years! It needs to be rediscovered, as Hilkiah the high priest discovered the neglected book of the law in the house of the Lord; and to be restored to its place, as the ark of the covenant was brought back from the land of the Philistines. And they who see that all we know of our need of a Saviour and of a Saviour's work for us, has come to us, as it came to Saul on the Damascus road, by light from heaven, will feel the need of that immeasurable word, *grace* — a word as deep as hell, as high as heaven, as wide as human sin, and as lasting as eternity — infinite, indeed, as God Himself.

Once again. If Jesus Christ be Lord of all, *He must be recognized and acknowledged as the Head of the Church.*

And in that acknowledgment the principle of a regenerate church membership is involved. The church must be a company of witnesses to the grace of Christ: "He gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him which filleth all in all." Surely if a member of the church is to be a member of the body of Christ, it follows he must be spiritually quickened. How can Christ be said to be the Head of a church which receives into its membership persons who have not been "born again"? The need of the world is a witnessing church, a church whose members will witness to the grace of the Incarnate God by being themselves the incarnations of the truth of His Gospel. When the poorest and humblest person is put into the witness box to tell what he personally knows of the case before the court, if he is able, even with limping grammar and stammering lips, to tell what he himself has seen of the matter that is before the court for judgment, he is listened to with greater attention than would the most learned scholar who had no personal knowledge of the case. Hence the little church of really converted people will be a mightier power for good in any community than a great congregation of people who in their own experience have no witness for Christ.

We as Baptists, therefore, must learn to measure the progress of our churches by their increasing conformity to Christ, rather than by the number of their members, their social position, or the amount of their wealth.

Years ago there was a case at law in which everything turned on the resemblance of two car wheels, which were put in as exhibits. Webster and Choate were the opposing counsel. When all the evidence was in, Choate addressed the jury, and overwhelmed them with an elaborate address on "the fixation of points", — whatever that may be. I do not know; and the jury did not know either. They may have admired the advocate's learning; but it gave them no light on the question before them.

Webster followed Choate. He fixed his eyes on the car wheels, then on the jury; again on the car wheels and again on the jury; and then, as he pointed to the wheels, he thundered, "Gentlemen of the jury! There they are. Look at 'em!" And that was all he said. But the jury gave him the verdict. Happy the preacher, who, when he has told what Christ can do for a poor sinner, can point to the members of his own church, and say, "There they are! Look at them! Let their lives certify to the efficacy of the Gospel of grace in the lives of men."

The same great principle of the Lordship of Christ determines our teaching with respect to the ordinances

of the church. In the symbolism of baptism and the Lord's supper, divine wisdom has wrapped up all the doctrines of grace. In the symbolic death, and burial, and resurrection of the believer, you have life derived from Christ; and in the bread and wine, life sustained by Christ: He is the Alpha and Omega of both ordinances. And whoever observes them in their primitive New Testament simplicity and order, is not likely to lose sight of the great central truth of the Gospel. "Christ crucified," is "the wisdom" of God; and so are the simple ordinances in which that great truth is enshrined.

But rich as is the symbolism of the ordinances, our chief reason for our strict observance of them is that Christ is the Head of the Church; and we recognize no higher law for the believer nor for the Church than His will as revealed in His Word. No one may change what He has ordained.

Clearly, therefore, our whole message hinges upon the Lordship of Christ.

Much has been said in recent years about "union" and "co-operation"; and Baptists are not indifferent to these discussions. When, in March, 1918, the Allied armies were being pushed back upon the Channel ports, no one proposed that the British should become French, or the French British, or that either should become Americans. But the greatest military genius of all the Allied generals was appointed to the supreme command of the Allied forces; and when every individual soldier in all the armies of the Allies became subject to one supreme will, in that hour Germany's doom was sealed! And the forces of darkness will not be defeated by flags of truce; nor by the surrender of vital principles of revealed truth. The need of the hour is the recognition by every Christian of the Lord Jesus Christ as Generalissimo of all the armies of the Lord. And to that recognition our message clearly and uncompromisingly calls.

To Baptists there is a world-call to increased effort to bring in the day when the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ. To maintain the integrity of the British Empire, and to secure the liberties of the world, Canada was prodigal of her blood and treasure. But the claim of the kingdom of Christ is a still higher claim, made by a greater King, and to secure the interests of a nobler citizenship. The cause in which our Lord invested His life's blood is worthy the investment of our all.

I was in Brussels when King Albert, shortly after the signing of the Armistice, made his triumphal entry into his capital after his more than four years of exile. I shall never forget that scene. Hundreds of thousands were assembled to acclaim their returning king. It seemed to them that ages had passed since last they saw him. And during his absence they had been under the heel of the tyrant. Somewhere, without the ring of fire which encircled them, they knew their valiant king and his gallant army were fighting their way back. But it had seemed as though the king would never come again. But at last the happy day had dawned. I was privileged to stand on a balcony on the third story of an office-building at the corner of the street around which the king was to turn. I looked down upon the scores of thousands of loyal Belgians and others who lined the great thoroughfares as far as the eye could reach. Thousands of banners were waving; and the vast multitudes, delivered out of the hand of the oppressor, waited with loyal impatience to express their devotion to the

king. No one could look down upon those many thousands of expectant faces without feeling that they all "loved his appearing".

At last the cry was raised, "The king is coming!" And in a moment he came into view just beneath my point of vantage, riding a white horse, with his queen, similarly mounted, at his side. Immediately behind him came his children, also mounted. Then followed one of King George's sons, and with him the generals of the British armies and the generals of the French armies. Next in order was a contingent of American troops; then a French unit; then came the British; and at last the Belgian army, thousands strong. And when the king rode by with his hand at the salute, the people tried to acclaim him. But in the main they succeeded but poorly. They saw him through a mist of tears; tears streamed down many faces; there was a great lump in all throats; and, surcharged with inexpressible emotions of thankfulness, they "rejoiced with joy unspeakable and full of glory." One Belgian citizen remarked to me that the long agony of the tyrant's rule was swallowed up in the gladness of the king's return.

And as I viewed that never-to-be-forgotten scene, and saw the king ride triumphantly to his throne amid the countless thousands of his happy, welcoming subjects, I thought of that rapidly approaching day when the White Horse and his Rider shall come down the skies, when "every eye shall see him", for He, too, is a Conqueror: "He must reign till he hath put all enemies under His feet."

I have asked, what is the irreducible minimum of revealed truth which a man must believe, in order worthily to bear the name of Baptist? And the answer is: JESUS THE INCARNATE GOD! He is at once the Irreducible Minimum, and the Immeasurable Maximum of a Spirit-begotten faith. We cannot live with less than Jesus; and Heaven cannot give us more; for "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son"! In the certainty of His ultimate triumph, and in anticipation of His coming in glory, the world's great need calls us afresh, as a voice from heaven, to dedicate all our ransomed powers of spirit, soul, and body, to the world-wide proclamation of this message: Christ is the Head of the body, the Church; Who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things — He of the manger, of the Cross, of the empty grave, of the opened heavens, of the throne of grace and of glory — that in all things He may have the pre-eminence.

BOOKS AND BOOKLETS

By DR. T. T. SHIELDS

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The Gospel Witness

130 Gerrard Street East, Toronto 2 - Canada

THE GREAT CONTENTION

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

By Dr. T. T. Shields

THE FORWARD MOVEMENT

THE evening session of the Convention of 1919 at Ottawa was not for business, and while I have no reliable statistics on the subject, I am of the opinion that very few who attended the afternoon session were present in the evening. They were scattered in the various restaurants and hotel dining rooms discussing the events of the day.

It seemed to me that at all the remaining sessions of the Convention which I attended the delegates were somewhat subdued. Although a great victory had been achieved, and the enemy had been utterly routed, many of the delegates seemed to be possessed of a feeling akin to that which animated a certain prophet following a great victory by the armies of Israel over the Syrians: "The prophet came to the king of Israel, and said unto him, Go, strengthen thyself, and mark, and see what thou doest; for at the return of the year the king of Syria will come up against thee."

The only other matter of importance decided by the Convention was the adoption of the recommendation to proceed with the Forward Movement. Thus the Denomination came into step with all the other denominations—the plan being to raise a certain amount of money for the missionary interests of each denomination, and to conduct a canvass of the entire membership of all the churches in one particular week.

After returning to Toronto I did not even refer to the Ottawa victory in any public way, but quietly resumed my duties, going on with the work of Jarvis Street Church. Committees were organized for the prosecution of the Forward Movement Campaign. I was asked to co-operate with Dr. John MacNeill in effecting the organization of the Denomination. This we did, by means of a tour through the whole denominational constituency, covering the churches in conferences at various centres. By this means we were able to cover the whole Denomination in a month, except the extremities of Northern Ontario, and West to Fort William. These, Dr. MacNeill and I visited later, some time early in January, nineteen hundred and twenty.

The Baptist Message

The Forward Movement was thereafter carried to a successful issue. We set out with an objective of three hundred thousand dollars, and reached more than twice that sum. The months immediately following the Convention at Ottawa were very fully occupied in organizing for, and executing, the Forward Movement Programme. I joined with Dr. MacNeill on condition we set before the Denomination a programme in harmony with the Ottawa decision. It was agreed that the afternoon session of each conference with the churches be given to organization, and the evening session to two inspirational addresses, Dr. MacNeill concluding the session, as President, with an address on "The Baptist Mission", and I preceding him with an address on "The Baptist Mes-

sage"; and further, that the campaign be concluded with a meeting of all Toronto churches in Massey Hall, the same addresses to be delivered, and thereafter printed under the auspices of the Forward Movement, and stamped with the Forward Movement Committee's approval, as representative of the Baptist position. The address entitled "The Baptist Message" will be found on page one of this issue.

Baptists who read this story may form their own judgment as to whether there is aught of "fanaticism" or "bigotry" in this message. So far as I am aware, it is a fair representation of the Baptist position as represented by men like Spurgeon and others in England, and men like Gambrell and Carroll in the Southern, and Armitage, Henson and others in the Northern, United States; and such men as Fyfe, Davidson, Dadson, Goodspeed, and others, in Canada. The message of the Jarvis Street pulpit has been consistent with this message these now forty-three years; and so far as I know, throughout the ministry of all my predecessors. I advocated nothing new at Ottawa, and still proclaim the principles of this message.

Modernism Seeketh Mischief

Some appreciative brethren have enquired as to my reason for going so far back in the telling of this story. My answer is very simple: It is impossible to understand the story without knowing something of the history from which it springs. One cannot explain the fate of those "whose carcases fell in the wilderness" without the story of Kadesh-barnea. One cannot understand Hosea's pathetic cry: "Thy calf, O Samaria, hath cast thee off," without going back through Israel's unbroken record of idolatry to the day when Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, set up calves of gold in Dan and Bethel, and thus opened the gate for all his successors to walk in "the way of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin." In this controversy, also, questions were at issue which had everywhere been disturbing the Christian world during the same period. In many places differences have been composed, not on principle, nor in conformity with conviction, but on bases of compromise. Calves of gold have been erected to obviate the necessity of the tribes' going up to Jerusalem to the place of sacrifice, and to the ministry of the High Priest. It is, perhaps, too early to judge of the effects of the compromising pacificism of so-called Evangelicals. Modernism has come to the churches of Christ as did Ben-hadad to the king of Israel, saying: "Thy silver and thy gold is mine; thy wives also and thy children, even the goodliest, are mine." And invariably pacifist Evangelicals have answered as did the king of Israel: "My lord, O king, according to thy saying, I am thine, and all that I have." But each surrender has been followed by a further demand, even as it is written of Ben-hadad: "And the messengers came again, and said, Thus speaketh Ben-hadad, saying, Although I have sent unto thee, saying, Thou shalt deliver me thy silver, and thy gold, and thy wives,

and thy children; yet I will send my servants unto thee to-morrow about this time, and they shall search thine house, and the houses of thy servants; and it shall be, that whatsoever is pleasant in thine eyes, they shall put it in their hand, and take it away." It is not to be wondered at that the king of Israel "called all the elders of the land, and said, Mark, I pray you, and see how this man seeketh mischief: for he sent unto me for my wives, and for my children, and for my silver, and for my gold; and I denied him not." Nor is it in the least surprising that at length "all the elders and all the people said unto him, Harken not unto him, nor consent." The difficulty has been to persuade the pacifists that Modernism was seeking "mischief". But now that it has done its work for some years, what follows?

Only to-day I received a letter from England, containing this postscript:

"Last week I casually passed ——— Road Baptist Chapel. As I passed and stood to look at the Chapel, an imposing building, built only fifty years ago, a man approached me and asked if I were interested, and whether I would like to see the Chapel. I said, 'Yes.' He then conducted me all over it. I asked him: 'How are you getting on here?' He replied: 'We are on our last legs, sir. We get only ten or twelve for a Sunday morning congregation. We have no money to pay a minister, so an aged, retired, minister kindly comes and ministers to us free of cost. They can pay me only twenty-five shillings a week to clean and care for this nice large Chapel. I do not know what we shall do except to shut it up, and that soon.' He told me that he had been Chapel-keeper for nearly thirty years, and said: 'We used to be full of people. We paid our minister six hundred pounds a year.'

"The Chapel is situated in a fine residential district, thousands and tens of thousands of people within a radius of one-quarter to one-half mile. And yet, such a building must soon be shut up."

Our correspondent adds: "If it were not for the Baptist Union Sustentation Fund, it strikes me that scores of Baptist churches would be compelled to close down. In that case, what would become of the apostate Baptist Union? And as I see it, Modernism is the 'enemy' that 'hath done this.'

"Oh, my dear sir, how certain I am that your uncompromising attitude to this 'enemy' is the only right one!"

But we have not to go to England to find conditions like this. Rochester, New York, was once a great Baptist centre, and Rochester Theological Seminary was one of the greatest in the land. About a year ago I conducted a week's mission in an evangelical church in that city, and one morning addressed a meeting of perhaps fifty or sixty ministers, who assembled in conference. They were invited by the minister to ask me questions. I could speak only out of my experience, and not with any authority on many of the subjects. But among the questions asked was: "What do you think of Sunday closing?" I asked for an explanation of the question, assuming that it applied to the closing of theatres, or of bar-rooms on Sunday. To my astonishment, my questioner replied that he meant the closing of churches on Sunday, and particularly on Sunday evening. I told them that as I had never been under the necessity of considering such a problem, I had no answer, except to deplore the conditions which could even suggest such a question. Then I was informed that thirty-eight churches in Rochester of all denominations had combined in an effort to hold an evening service. The thirty-eight churches included many of the largest churches in Rochester. The result of their united efforts was a Sunday evening congregation not exceeding two hundred!

Churches Emptied by Unbelief

Similar conditions obtain in other places. Last summer I motored with some friends through Connecticut, and Massachusetts, Maine, and up into the Province of Quebec. Sunday we parked our trailer outside Augusta, Maine, the capital of the state of Maine. Sunday evening we went into the city to find a service. We discovered a Baptist church, a fine, large, stone building, but all was dark. Inquiring at the parsonage nearby, we learned that the Pastor was not away from home, but was out motoring, and his wife told us that she feared we should not be able to find a religious service anywhere in the city. We made further inquiries, which only confirmed her fears. We motored about to see if, perchance, some little mission were open anywhere. There may have been, but we could not find one. All the principal churches were dark; and so far as the wife of this Pastor could inform us, there was not a religious service of any kind in all the capital city of the state of Maine that Sunday evening. That is what Modernism does.

I recently received word from one of the young men of Jarvis Street, who was in Winnipeg, and who attended a Baptist Church there, not in the evening but in the morning, a church in which in days gone by I had preached to not less than twelve to fifteen hundred people. I was, indeed, told that it seated eighteen hundred, which I thought was possibly an exaggerated estimate. But this young man sent word to me, through his brother, that at a morning service in that Baptist Church of Winnipeg, the entire congregation, including himself and the preacher, numbered sixteen persons; six of whom were in the choir, and nine in the pews. That may have been fifteen too many. Why should people go to church where they are offered stones for bread? Why should people go through a form of prayer if when they ask a fish they are given a serpent, or, asking an egg, are offered a scorpion? The time is rapidly approaching when over the deserted shrines of modernized Christianity the pathetic cry will again be heard: "Thy calf, O Samaria, hath cast thee off." It is for this reason, and in order that I may lay a sound, historical, and philosophical basis for my argument, that I have rehearsed this story.

History and Prophecy

Furthermore, I would endeavour to lead my readers to take such a broad and long view of the religious questions of the day as will force them to an examination of their historical origins. I am increasingly convinced that no man can truly prophesy of the future, who is ignorant of the past. That is to say, history and prophecy go hand in hand; and it is true of more than the physical universe that, "The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun. Is there any thing whereof it may be said, See, this is new? it hath been already of old time, which was before us. There is no remembrance of former things; neither shall there be any remembrance of things that are to come with those that shall come after."

Furthermore, this story is written in the hope that it will be especially useful to ministers. While I count not myself to have apprehended, either ministerially, or in any other way, and would not presume to any competency to advise my brethren, the inexorable march of the seasons, and the public ringing out of the old years, and ringing in of the new, together compel me to acknowledge that I have passed the period of my novitiate. I

was a minister's son before I became a minister, and have spent my whole life among ministers. Although a happy participant in many of the joys of the ministry, I have not by any means escaped its sorrows, its real heart-breaks, its Gethsemanes and its Calvarys. And if I can say a word that will hearten some hard-pressed comrade in the war, that will lead some sorely-beset contender for the faith to take a fresh hold upon his sword, and with new confidence in the invulnerability of the Christian's armour "to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand", I shall feel that I have not written in vain.

Personally, I have no sympathy with any hierarchical form of government, be it Presbytery, or Council, or Synod, or Episcopate, or what not. I believe the New Testament churches were autonomous, independent, bodies, existing under a form of government suited to a spiritual body; being, therefore, organisms, rather than organizations. And I believe that the prophet of the Lord must be a free man, so conditioned that, when occasion requires, he can call heaven and earth to witness that he has not shunned to declare the whole counsel of God.

A Biblical Ministry

The exercise of such a ministry, however, is not always easy in so-called "free" churches. I have wondered whether these centralized forms of ecclesiastical government may not be the evolution of a human plan to correct obstreperous spirits in the local church. Whether that principle could be historically established I will not presume to say. But I have known from personal observation not a few who have ceased to be Baptist ministers, and have sought refuge in some religious body where the minister would not be absolutely at the mercy of the oligarchs, or plutocrats, in the local church. I have known other preachers who, literally, obeyed the scriptural injunction, "When they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another"; who have spent their ministerial lives packing and unpacking in a vain attempt to flee from the varying moods of the coppersmith-minded Alexanders, and the world-loving Demases. I have known others who have remained in a church just long enough to sweep and garnish the house; but instead of tarrying until the Holy Ghost should come and "fill all the place", they have moved on, with the result that their successor has found the place occupied by seven other evil spirits, the last state of the church being worse than the first.

This story is written to suggest to my ministerial brethren that a minister is a servant of God before he is a servant of the church, and that he owes his first allegiance to the one and only Head of the church; and that, though like his Master, he takes his place among his brethren as one that serveth, he should ever be able to say, "We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake."

This story is written in an endeavour to show my brethren that there is no scriptural, or practical, warrant for regarding the deacons of the church as its superior officers. In the average church the deacons arrogate to themselves the function of directors and managers, to whom the pastor, forsooth, must be in subjection and subservience. True, no pastor can be justified in attempting to lord it over God's heritage; but equally true is it that no deacons can be justified in attempting to lord it over their pastor. The ministry of pastor and deacons should be a mutually co-operative service. But if there be any precedence as between the

two, scripturally it belongs to the pastor, and not to the deacons. The pastor is called an "overseer". Believers are exhorted to "obey them that have the rule over you"; and ministers were described to still other Christians as those who are "over you in the Lord". But neither pastor nor deacons exercise authority over each other, nor over the church, by virtue of their office; for if there be any precedence in rank in the Christian church, it must be attributable solely to a superiority in spiritual quality. He who serves best will thus become chiefest of all.

The author's Forward Movement address, to which reference has already been made in this chapter is to be found, under the caption "The Baptist Message," on page one of this issue.

(To be Continued)

THE ARK, A TYPE OF CHRIST'S SALVATION

One of the earliest types of the Saviour was Noah's ark, by which a certain company, not only of men but also of the lowest animals, were preserved from perishing by water, and were floated out of the old world into the new. See, going up the hill on which the ark is built, not only the fleet gazelle, the timid sheep, the patient ox, the noble horse, the generous dog, and the fair creatures that you would wish to spare; but here comes the lion, his jaws all stained with blood; here is the fierce tiger and the wild hyena, the filthy swine and the stupid ass; creatures of all kinds come hither and find shelter. Who complains? I hear no voice lifting up its veto and crying, "There is no room for the swine here; there is no room for the fierce tiger here." The ark was ordained on purpose to save some of every kind; and just so, our Saviour Jesus receives all sorts of people into himself, and it is no marvel if this man receiveth sinners. Hither fly, ye loving and tender doves! Hither come, ye sweet birds of purest song! But ho, ye ravens, eagles, vultures, and birds of evil name, haste ye hither also, for the ark receives all who come!

—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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CHRIST'S ALMIGHTY "THEREFORE" AND ITS TEACHING

A Sermon by Rev. T. T. Shields

Preached in Delhi, Ont., Baptist Church
November 14th, 1897

This sermon, without the alteration of a word, is reprinted as it appeared in *The Canadian Baptist* of January 6th, 1898. Thus it was printed over fifty-five years ago. The preacher does not remember to have perused it within fifty years, and he read it for the first time, December 15th, 1952. It is not published because the preacher is at all proud of it; but he is thankful that by God's grace, throughout his entire ministry he has never, at any point wavered in respect to the great principle herein enunciated. We publish it thinking it may be of interest to those who read the sermons in *The Gospel Witness* week by week, to read a sermon by the same preacher, preached fifty-five years ago. We would have our readers remember that the preacher was *very young* at that time!

The sermon here published was written November 9th, and is No. 236 in the long list of over 1,500 carefully written sermons, which was the preacher's regular practice, until some time in the year 1921, when the theological war, into which he was precipitated, made such writing as an habitual practice, impossible.

ALL power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations."—Matt. xxviii. 18, 19.

These are the words of the Head of the Church, who, on another occasion, said, "I will build my church." I want to emphasize these two pronouns this morning.

"Our church," say we. It exists for our profit, for our pleasure, and by our desire. "My church," said Christ, meaning a spiritual organization existing only by His power, for the doing of His will and for His glory. "He built up the church," we sometimes hear it said of some perhaps only seemingly successful pastor. In such a case, we admit, it is not infrequently well to speak so, for there are some "built-up" churches whose walls are not of "living stones". But Jesus said, "I will build my church." Did He not mean this: "My church shall be of My design; like the tabernacle of old, all things shall be made according to the pattern". I am the Architect, and I will be the Builder. The plans, the material, the workmen—all shall be mine: it is to be My church, and I will build it, and the gates of hell shall not prevail to hinder Me."

That, I think, was what Jesus meant. And as "Solomon built the house and finished it," because God had before said he should do so, so Christ shall fulfil His own word and completely finish the construction of the "spiritual house" which is to abide forever.

The true church recognizes no authority other than that of Him who declared, "All authority is given unto Me in heaven and in earth." There are to be no assistant architects in the church to improve upon the plans of the original Designer. There must be no sub-contractors either. Christ will employ His workmen, and they must look for their reward to Him alone. The Christian has no right to sublet his work to the Devil. In this respect "every man shall bear his own burden", or account to the Master-Builder for its transference to other shoulders. "One is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren."

Our text this morning is a summary of the specifications for the building of the "spiritual house". Here is the foundation of all missionary enterprise. If we ex-

amine it we shall find a work given, a need recognized, and a support promised.

I. First, the text speaks of A WORK GIVEN: "Go ye and teach all nations."

Mention is made of the workers to be employed: "Go ye." To the unsaved there is only one command—"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ." To His disciples, and to His disciples only, did Christ commit the doing of His work. "Go ye," saith He. "Son, go work today in My vineyard."

The character of the work is here specified. It is to be spiritual; "make disciples." That is the Church's, as it is the individual Christian's only business, to "make disciples." Not to amuse, not to entertain, not to enrich with material wealth, but to "make Christians;" and having done so, to further instruct in the truths of the Gospel.

Again. We are not left in ignorance as to the extent of our work. We are not to be occupied ever and only with working out our own salvation; we are not to confine our efforts to the limits of an eight-roomed house, and be missionaries only to such as are "near and dear" to us; but "all nations" are to receive our teaching, be touched by our influence, and blessed by our lives.

II. THE NEED OF THE CHURCH is also spoken of in the text. It is suggested that "power" is necessary for the accomplishment of its work.

There is need of human power. By that I mean that since men and not angels are to preach the Gospel, there is need of hands and feet, and tongue, and eyes, and ears, and intellects—mental and physical force are required for the effectual preaching of the Word.

Moreover, spiritual power is equally indispensable. "Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord." If we are to do lasting work our mental and physical powers must be energized by the Holy Spirit. "Thou art my battle axe and weapons of war: for with these will I break in pieces the nations, and with these will I destroy kingdoms," saith the Lord. You see we are only to be instruments—the sharper the better, of course—in an Almighty Hand. But the hand of the Lord and no other hand must control the "battle axe", and the "weapons of war" must be wholly surrendered to Him, or the slain of the Lord will be few.

Then there is what I may call financial power needed. I have put this last, not because it is least or most important but because it is of this I want more particularly to speak today. I have only a few weeks acquaintance with you, but I suppose you are like all other churches in this respect, that you need money. I hope, however, that you will be unlike many others in your manner of getting it. We need money. We need it for our home work, and for work away from home. As I said just now, "all nations" must in some way be influenced by us. We must begin here. But all our money is not, as I have no doubt some missionary antipathists would tell us, "needed at home." Ontario, Manitoba, and Quebec call for our financial aid; India and South America require us to give them some golden or silver evidence of our much-professed Christ-like sympathy for them in their deep spiritual need. Money is needed and must be obtained for all these branches of work. The question is, How and from whom is it to be obtained? This leads us to consider the third point.

III. THE HELP OF THE CHURCH.

Listen, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore!" Joseph Cook says of Acts

II. 36, "I call that Peter's colossal 'therefore.'" But what shall we say of this "therefore" of Peter's Lord? See how He puts into our hands the power that built the worlds! He who made the world, can He not save it? He who lit the sun, can He not enlighten it? He who hath "in all things the pre-eminence," is not He sufficient for our help? Then again, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore and teach all nations." Oh, my brethren, what need we but to trust in Him? "All power" does not mean a little power. If the text means anything, it means that the power of Jesus is quite equal to the gigantic task of "making disciples of all nations." May we not call this *Christ's almighty "therefore"*? When Hadad asked to be allowed to return to his own land, Pharaoh asked, "But what hast thou lacked with me that thou seekest to go to thine own country?" And Hadad could only answer: "Nothing." And what has the Church lacked with Jesus that she should be "as one that turneth aside by the flocks of His companions"? There is no reason for the Church to be a beggar, if, in her wandering, she hath not forgotten "Where He feedeth, where He maketh His flock to rest at noon." Jesus said to His disciples, "When I sent you without purse, or scrip, or shoes, lacked ye anything?" And they, like Hadad, were obliged to answer, "Nothing."

Let us today remember our Lord's almighty "Therefore." If men and women are needed, do not try to supply the lack by committing spiritual work to ungodly hands. Appeal to Him to whom "all power is given," "Pray ye the Lord of the harvest that He would send forth laborers into His harvest."

If spiritual power is lacking, seek not, like Nadab and Abihu, to offer the sacrifice with "strange fire." Let us wait for the fire of Pentecost, even tarrying at our Jerusalem for the endowment with the power from on high. For the supply of our financial needs we are to give of our substance in the same measure that Christ gave, viz., all we have to give. We must take our barley loaves, not to the church, but to Jesus. And if they be but five and the multitude great, having given our all we have a right to expect even the working of a miracle. When five loaves are given to Jesus to feed five thousand souls, by the alteration of relative values and in other ways He is able to distribute them again through the disciples to the multitude, and send none of them empty away.

I have selected the text for this morning rather as being suggestive of a subject with which I wish to deal, than for the purpose of textual exposition. And now I think I may still "stick to the text," and yet use this opportunity to attempt the refutation of some of the arguments which are frequently employed to counteract the text's most evident teaching.

The Old Testament is sometimes quoted as authorizing the all too frequent general appeals which are made to the godly and ungodly alike for aid to prosecute the Lord's work. But in this matter, as in many others, *Scripture is often misapplied*. I have heard of the Israelites' conduct, on their leaving Egypt, being quoted as an example to be followed by the New Testament Church. They who adduce this argument, seem to forget that the Israelites "borrowed" of the Egyptians for their own private and personal necessities. I am afraid that the admission of this argument would result in very serious complications. It would put an end to all Christian industry. Why should I work if I may "bor-

row" of my generous or frightened neighbors whatever I need? I may borrow his horse or rig, his watch, coat, purse, all that belongs to him, and call it henceforth and forever my own? By such application of Scripture as this I should be allowed completely to "spoil" my neighbor, as the Israelites "spoiled the Egyptians," but as Jesus Christ, however, *did not "spoil" His neighbor*, and as the early Christians *were not* commanded or permitted to "spoil" their neighbors. For ourselves we should be much afraid to try the expedient to which this argument must inevitably lead us, lest certain policemen, magistrates, prison cells and various other inconvenient and uncomfortable things should proceed to "spoil" us.

But I think that even *the Old Testament condemns this principle of indiscriminate appeal*. Abram would receive of the King of Sodom only such provision as his young man had earned, "lest he should say, I have made Abram rich." The tabernacle was built of material voluntarily contributed by the people of God (Ex. xxxv. 21-22). Solomon did not receive cedar and fir from Hiram of Tyre without giving wheat and oil in return. Ezra was not only "ashamed" to ask help of the king because he had declared his confidence that the Lord would help him, but when help was offered unasked he replied: "Ye have nothing to do with us to build an house unto our God; but we ourselves together will build unto the Lord God of Israel," (Ezra iv. 3).

But *the Constitution of the Christian Church is not contained in the Old Testament*. We may speculate about Noah's carpenters—whose sons they were, and what became of them, and many pretty stories and partial analogies may be told to unthinking people as to the means by which *the Jewish nation* was provided with food and clothing, and other necessary things. But these have no weight as arguments in matters pertaining to the New Testament churches. The Apostles did not introduce the financial methods of the Jewish theocracy into the Christian Church. The tenth only was no longer required—but *all*.

The question which should concern us today is this: *What is the teaching of the New Testament with regard to the supply of the pecuniary needs of the Church?* Certain people tell us that the New Testament teaching is in perfect harmony with the idea that it is the Christian's duty to solicit help of all their ungodly neighbors to carry on the Lord's work. I don't see how any man, with twice the assistance the Roentgen Rays might give, can find in any New Testament Scriptures the slightest warrant for any such practice. However, let us see:

Did Jesus ever beg for Himself? He was so poor that to many He might frequently have said, with a very literal significance, "I was an hungered and ye gave me no meat." But notwithstanding His great and frequent needs, He did not borrow of His neighbors as Christians are sometimes advised to do today. As a worker of His Father's works, and as the example of the Church He came to establish, He was ever careful to maintain His entire independence, not only of the State, but of the world. State-support means State control, and world-support means world control, and Jesus knew it. We Baptists talk much about the separation of Church and State, and we do well. I would that the equally Scriptural doctrine of the separation of the Church and the world were as widely and as enthusiastically proclaimed!

If Jesus sought the hospitality of the tax-gatherer, it was because He knew that Zaccheus "sought to see Jesus;

who He was." Had the Saviour known that Judas, the treasurer of the then church, had in his "bag" money, which, by His own command, had been solicited of the "Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites," would He have felt free to say to them: "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" And will not the filling of the bag with the money of the Pharisees tie the preacher's tongue today? Then the question was asked of Peter, "Doth not your Master pay tribute?" His Master did not have a social, or garden party, or any other such pauper's assistant to help Him pay the taxes, but by the exercise of His own "power"—as He said to Peter, "Lest we should offend them"—He provided for Himself and His disciples. And He will do the same today.

—Did Jesus ever authorize His disciples to beg, either for themselves or for their work? He who was "a Teacher come from God" was not a professor of beggary, and they who studied in His school were quite unlearned in that most unenviable accomplishment. When He sent forth the twelve to preach, He especially charged them to make no provision for their journey, "for," said He, "the workman is worthy of his meat." But of whom were they to obtain their meat? Mark: "Into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, enquire who in it is worthy and there abide till ye go thence." Thus they were to seek only the hospitality of such as were "worthy", i.e., doubtless faithful to the Lord.

What was the practice of the Christian Church after Pentecost? Did the disciples depart in practice from the principles their Master had inculcated? The first collection taken after Pentecost was of "all that believed" (Acts ii. 44). The next was also given by the professed followers of Jesus (Acts iv. 33-35). Again: "The disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judea" (Acts xi. 29). The "contribution for the poor saints at Jerusalem," made by certain people of Macedonia and Achaia was the beneficence of some who had "been made partakers of their (the Jerusalem saints') spiritual things" (Rom. xv. 26-27). The Christians of Corinth and Galatia were alike ordered to make the collection for the saints in this way: "Before the first day of the week let every one of you (no command here to 'ask ungodly neighbors for aid to propagate the Lord's work!') lay by him in store as God hath prospered him" (I Cor. xvi. 1-2). If Paul labored with his hands that he might not be "chargeable" or "burdensome" to the churches, is it likely that he would allow himself to become chargeable to the unbelieving world? Would he permit an unbeliever to "make his glorying void" if it were better for him to die than that "any man" should do so?

Again: *The Scriptural figure representing the Church contains much teaching.* The Christian Church is the Bride of Christ. "Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it." The Bride is not the Church as it is today, but as it shall be in the day when "the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready." That is to say the Church is to be composed of "the dead in Christ," and of those who shall be "alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord." They are the members of Christ's body who are "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father."

I believe it is generally supposed to be the husband's duty to support his wife! That, at least, is the Scriptural view of the case, and upon this I base my argument. Is the Bride of the Lord of glory to be a pauper in the

earth? And will her well-Beloved leave her to the tender mercies of the world whose very "friendship" is "enmity against God"? I trow not. In answer to her prayer of faith, Jesus will well and sufficiently provide for the Bride of His choice, that is, for the edification of those members who have been already "predestinated, called, justified;" and for the effectual calling of those whom the Father "hath chosen in Him before the foundation of the world." Let not the heavenly Bride dishonor her Lord by begging of His enemies. Like Ezra, she may well be "ashamed" to ask help of any but her members and her Lord, seeing she hath declared her perfect confidence in Him.

One point more. I met recently with an argument which is by no means new and which is very frequently used. It was couched in the following words: "*The silver and the gold belong to God, and will do the Lord's work equally well, whether contributed by saint or sinner, or taken, as on one occasion, from a fish's mouth.*" In the first place, there is certainly some money which has no place in the Lord's treasury. Even the conscience-seared priests of Judas Iscariot's day believed this. And today there is many a dollar which may rightly be called "the price of blood," and much more which might with equal appropriateness, be styled "the price of sin," and which God, therefore, will not have in His treasury. Again, it is certainly not true that money "will do the Lord's work equally well whether contributed by saint or sinner." If that were true, why did Christ say of the widow's gift, when comparing it with the greater gifts of the rich men, "Of a truth I say unto you, that this poor woman hath cast in more than they all"? He who made the five barley loaves feed five thousand people, can make the faithful Christian's dollar, prayerfully given, supply the lack of all the rumseller's gold.

I have no doubt that the money taken from the fish's mouth, at Christ's command, will do all the work which He intended it should do. But since there is no Divine command to attempt to extract money for the Lord's work from the mouth of "that old serpent, which is the Devil and Satan," we are of the opinion that this latter course would be rather an-unwise, not to say dangerous, experiment.

Every one must believe that the silver and the gold are the Lord's; but if it be His why not ask Him for it, instead of seeking the devil's help? Why should the devil be asked to preach the glorious Gospel of the blessed God? Did Jesus ever commission him to do so? There was an interrogative proverb in the olden time: "Is Saul also among the prophets?" Today we might appropriately enquire, Is the devil also among the prophets? Has he been Divinely called to the ministry of the saints?

Rabshakeh, enemy of Israel though he was, uttered a truth when he said: "Lo, thou trustest in the staff of this broken reed, on Egypt; whereon if man lean, it will go into his hand, and pierce it, so is Pharaoh, King of Egypt to all that trust in him." They who borrow the weapons of the Lord's enemies will surely be "pierced," and will suffer infinitely greater harm than the enemies against whom they are employed. Let us do our utmost, my brethren, for the teaching of "all nations," depending upon the Lord's blessing for our success; and let us lean upon His promises who is so lovingly and mercifully almighty, for the supply of our greater need. For it is written: "Woe to the rebellious children, saith the Lord, that take counsel, but not of me; and that cover with a covering, but not of my spirit, that they

may add sin to sin: that walk to go down into Egypt, and have not asked at my mouth; to strengthen themselves in the strength of Pharaoh, and to trust in the shadow of Egypt! Therefore shall the strength of Pharaoh be your shame, and the trust in the shadow of Egypt your confusion." May the Lord deliver us from this shameful confusion of face for His name's sake.

OUT OF THE FOWLER'S SNARE

By ANDREW BORLAND, M.A.

From *The Christian Irishman*, January, 1953

HER body lies in the quaint and beautifully-situated burying-ground attached to the Friends' Meeting Room near Moy-Allon, in Northern Ireland. Few witnessed the interment — just a handful of friends whose lives had been sweetened by the saintliness of a devoted follower of Christ. There was no sorrow as the plain black coffin, bearing these simple words, "Rose Connor, died August 9, 1934, aged 80," was lowered into the rose-wreathed grave. No tears were shed, for each one felt that a good race had been run, a splendid fight had been fought, and the saint was "resting from her labours", "at home with the Lord." That quiet, reverent service was a fitting close to a life of unceasing toil for Christ, and ungrudging vigilance for souls. Adventure and romance, thrills and threats, clustered thick around the life that had just ceased to be. Rose Connor was hated by Rome, because she had left "the Mother Church," to witness to the sufficiency of the work of the Cross, and to the solitary mediatorship of Jesus Christ.

Born into a good family, in County Tyrone, staunchly Romanist and bitterly bigoted, Rose grew to womanhood without any knowledge of God apart from what she heard from the lips of the priests of her Church. Protestants she hated as heretics. Protestant literature she detested like poison. To her the Bible was all but unknown. Bitterness grew as bigotry deepened. Then a miracle happened, for miracles continue in the realm where God's grace works.

One day a colporteur, of the Irish Colportage Association, called at the farm. Rose answered his knock, looked at the wares displayed, and, discovering that his books were the banned literature of the people she had been taught to hate, commanded his instant withdrawal. He was a wise man, knowing that discretion carries one farther than discussion does. He hoisted his bag on to the window-sill, sorted out his rejected goods, closed his bag, and courteously withdrew. The charm of his manner captivated the maiden. She had become partially disarmed as she watched the retreating figure.

As she turned to re-enter the home her eye caught a strange object lying in a corner of the window-sill. Her curiosity overcame her: but a hurried perusal of the book she found disclosed to her the fact that the visitor had (purposely) left behind him a copy of one of his detestable Protestant Bibles. Her first feeling was one of revulsion. Contempt surged in her bigoted breast. She dropped the hated book. Someone suggested the use of a pair of tongs to carry the volume to the fire — that has always been Rome's way, the stake for the martyr and the bon-fire for the book. But God had His own work to do. His Spirit was active.

Rose picked up the book again; she opened it, and precious words flashed to her eyes, and instantly reached her heart. The Scripture living and active, conveyed to her darkened spirit the message she had long sought in

confessions and penances. The Book became a "treasured prisoner", and for the time escaped the premeditated fate. It burned its way into her affections. Repeated enquiry could not wrest from her the secret of its whereabouts. At intervals she devoured its truths. In the cowshed she pored over its pages. A peace surpassing strange had entered her soul. Like a bird from a cage, she knew that release had come. Her bigotry melted as the book continued to cast its spell over her spirit. She knew what Rome had never taught her to dream of knowing, that Christ's work was complete, and forgiveness of sins was possible.

The verse that arrested her eye, and forced her attention was, "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree" (1 Peter 2:24). For weeks Rose rested there, and read till the strange words had become a permanent part of her mental content. The Roman Catholic woman had found the Saviour; and the Saviour would not let her go.

Rose Connor's convictions grew. The suspicions of others were roused, and repeated search for her book was rewarded. Her own mother found it tucked away within the folds of her dress. It suffered the fate that its owner had at first meditated, but although the greedy flames could devour the printed word, no amount of argument, threat or persecution could destroy the truth written on her heart. But how she missed her little volume! A light seemed to have gone out of her life. Where could she find consolation? With an insatiable hunger she sought for another Book. Protestant neighbours, at first fearful lest her request for a Bible was but a Romish ruse to destroy another, listened to her tale, believed she was sincere, and furnished her with a complete copy of the Bible.

How she treasured that volume! It was food to her day after day. Surreptitiously did she read it. Her movements were again shadowed. Her retreat-places were discovered, and her Bible found. Again the flames did their work — destroying the best of Books. The woman's cup of sorrow was full to overflowing. What could her Protestant friends think? They would conclude that she had practised fraud on them, her story was too plausible to win credence. But ingenuity triumphed. With some money of her own she begged of them to replace the lost volume and purchase a fresh one for herself. That was done, and Rose had her Bible again. Alas! soon it suffered a like fate to its predecessors. Yet Rome's malignity could not destroy the peace that possessed the woman's heart. Nevertheless she determined to procure a fourth Bible. Some Christian people heard of her earnest search, and advised her to buy a Douay Testament. This a colporteur secured for her—and it had on it the imprimatur of Pope Pius VII. Her attendances at confession became less frequent. Her absences were noted, and Rose Connor was listed as a lost sheep, strayed into the fold of Protestantism. Neither persuasion nor pressure could move her. Her convictions deepened, and firm she remained.

About this time she went to work on a situation with a Christian family, where a weekly prayer and praise meeting was held. The lad in this family, although reared in favourable surroundings, was like the wicked sons of Eli—he knew not the Lord. Just after her arrival Rose was so charmed with the singing that she said to the boy when he came in, "There's lovely singing upstairs, it's a wonder you are not at it." He replied, "Oh, that's for Christians!" This seemed a huge joke to her. Was

not this a Christian land? The remark set her thinking as well as inquiring. On hearing this her mistress and master read to her the Scriptures from Douay and Authorized versions, pointing to such precious truths as 1 Peter 2:24, "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree."

It happened at this time that there was an evangelistic mission conducted by two Scotch preachers some ten miles away, to which she was directed. Here again was put before her 1 Peter 2:24, "Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, by whose stripes ye were healed." The reality of the redemptive work of Christ flashed like a ray of light into her heart, and she said, "What need have I to pay for masses for my soul, and to do penance for my sins, when Christ bore them on the cross?"

At length she was summoned to appear before a tribunal of "fathers". Like Luther she went convinced that God was with her; unlike the German monk, she had no copy of the Scriptures to produce.

Undaunted the young convert faced the "confessors." Her testimony was sterling. Without apology she declared that she knew her sins were forgiven. "If you know that," one replied, "then you know more than we do." Boldly she repeated the words of her text. "Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree." Cunning argument, Romish sophistry, wicked threat could not temper the zeal of the awakened girl. Dismissed with admonition, she returned to her home, not vanquished and glad beyond words. From that moment her life for years was to be lived in an atmosphere tense with uncertainties and foreboding through threatenings. Yet the peace of her heart remained.

She was excommunicated. Several times after this she was carried off and detained for a time. She was taken from her place of employment and had to undergo much persecution. Her persecutors thought it would be a good idea to put her back in situation under the priest again, where she stayed for some time. While there several Christian ladies wrote to her and sought to establish her in her new faith. The priest as her guardian read these letters, grew interested, and longed for more, and said, "I would now know a Christian's letter any place." While God was caring for Rose He was also caring for the soul of the priest, and Rose asked her friends to send a marked Bible for him. One of the ladies gave her own well-marked one, although loth to part with it, this he gratefully accepted. Her own Bible was stolen, and she told him of the loss. He replaced it with a Protestant one, saying, "If they ask you where you got it, say it was from me, and if they take it, I will get you another." Thus Satan was foiled from an unexpected source. News came to her that her mother was in poor health, and she thought it right to go home and nurse her. She was richly rewarded, for by her consistent life and bright testimony she was the means of leading her mother to Christ. One night, some time later, as they were preparing to retire, they heard a knock at the door. "Who is there?" they asked from inside. A familiar voice replied with characteristic Irish wit, "You never know what is in the wee pot till you lift the lid." The door was opened and in came the priest, saying, "Rose, I'm saved." He never officiated again, but was taken to the home of his relatives, where shortly after he passed away in his sleep. Mysterious!

The remaining years of Rose Connor's life were crowd-

ed with incident. Their narrative reads like an extract from the pages of mediaeval martyrdom. Rome's emissaries did their utmost to stifle the new life and to suppress the testimony: but for nearly fifty years with undimmed splendour the light shone amidst the darkness. The hand of God was upon His servant for good.

On more than one subsequent occasion her enemies waylaid her, but God always brought deliverance. For her Master she worked assiduously, spending during many years of activity, six as a Deaconess in slum-work in Manchester, and over twenty years in Dublin in Smyley's Home for boys. Christian friends, in Ireland especially, took a personal interest in her. Among these were Mr. and Mrs. Richardson, of Moy-Allon, in a little house on whose estate she passed many happy days towards the close of her career.

Conclusion

This biography is a sterling testimony to the power of the Scriptures. God's words are living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, able to convey a power unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. Man needs conversion, and that experience is not natural but spiritual, for we "are born again not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God that liveth and abideth for ever." No sinner need perish in his sins, for Christ has died for the ungodly; and everyone who believes the simple testimony of the Scriptures concerning the Son of God will "pass out of death into life." No external agency is required; for "by grace are we saved through faith; and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God" (Eph. 2). So independent are the Scriptures of human interpretation, that the divine declaration is "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God."

Rose Connor's text makes several assertions:—

First: "Our Sins". Scripture makes unrelenting accusation against all men, irrespective of class, colour or creed. Civilized man, religious man, irreligious man and heathen man alike are all condemned for "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." There is neither exemption nor excuse. Writer and reader alike must join in saying with the finger of shame on the lips—"our sins."

Second: Our Saviour "His own self bare our sins". Sin demands judgment from God; and God Himself devised a means whereby the sinner might righteously escape that judgment. He punished sin in the person of His Son. To this end incarnation was necessary. "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." Nothing requires to be done by the sinner. His doing is too late. The death of Christ is sufficient to satisfy both God and the sinner. Prayers, payments, penances, protestations avail nothing.

Third: Our Salvation. This depends entirely upon what Christ has done for us. "God can be the just and justifier of every one who believeth in Jesus" (Romans 3). No other plea can merit God's favour. All He asks of us is faith in a living Saviour, "Who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification" (Romans 4:25). "There is one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Timothy 2:5). The sinner's only plea is that he believes in Jesus, crucified, risen, exalted, saving, That kind of salvation need not be deferred until after death, but may be enjoyed now and enjoyed fully hereafter. "Do you believe?" is the question we ask.

Bible School Lesson Outline

Vol. 17 First Quarter Lesson 11 March 15, 1953

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

JESUS REBUKES APOSTASY

Lesson Text: John 8:31-47.

Golden Text: "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."—John 8:32.

I. The Jews Described as Slaves of Sin: verses 31-36.

When our Lord concluded His great message in the temple on the last day of the feast (John 7), He may have spent the night in Bethany, the home of Lazarus, Mary and Martha, as His custom was (Matt. 21:17; Mark 11:11, 19), returning to the temple in Jerusalem early in the morning (John 8:2). He then sat down to speak to the people.

On this occasion He had been teaching the precious truths concerning Himself as the Light of the world (v. 12), the Judge (v. 16), the faithful Witness (v. 18), the Way to God (v. 21) and the Son of man (v. 28). Although some of His hearers had rejected His message, many had believed on Him (v. 30). If one would understand the significance of our Lord's further teaching to the assembled multitude; it will be necessary to remember that sometimes He addressed His remarks to all His hearers, sometimes specifically to the believing Jews, and sometimes directly to the hostile Jews, scribes and Pharisees, rebuking them for their apostasy.

All disciples are believers, but evidently all believers are not disciples. To believe on the Lord Jesus Christ is but the first step in the pathway of discipleship, for some of the marks of true discipleship are faith (John 6:66-69), perseverance in the ways marked out by the Word of God (v. 31), teachableness (Matt. 23:19, 20), humility (Matt. 10:24, 25), obedience (Mark 8:34), self-denial (Luke 14:26, 27, 33), fruitfulness (John 15:8) and love (John 13:35).

The Jews at all times boasted of their liberty and their ancient lineage. They regarded the bondage to Egypt, Babylon, Syria and Rome as being temporary conditions, and the people as a whole refused to acknowledge subjection to any individual or to any nation. Although they had this strong feeling of independence, yet they knew nothing of the spiritual bondage in which they were held. They were under the domination of sin, for whosoever commits sin acknowledges that he is in slavery to its demands, desires and impulses (Rom. 6:16). Our Saviour promised that a knowledge of His truth would set them free. To have an experimental knowledge of the truth of God as set forth in His Word will give liberty from an accusing conscience (Heb. 9:14), from fear (Psa. 34:4; 2 Tim. 1:7; Heb. 2:15), from carping care and undue anxiety (Isa. 26:3), from the domination of the flesh (Rom. 6:12-14, 19-22; 7:24, 25) and liberty of spirit (2 Cor. 3:17).

Christ is the Author of liberty, since He is the Son of God. A son differs from a slave in his birth, privileges and position (Gal. 4:1-7, 30, 31; Heb. 3:5, 6). A slave would have no power to free another slave, but the son and heir would have that authority. Christ came to deliver men from the thralldom of sin (2 Cor. 1:10; Gal. 5:1), and those whom He thus frees are free, indeed, for He will make us more than conquerors over every one and every circumstance that would wrongfully subdue us (1 Chron. 4:10; Psa. 27:12; Matt. 6:13; Rom. 8:2, 35-39).

II. The Jews Described as Sons of Satan: verses 37-47.

The Jews to whom our Lord was speaking were unable to distinguish between natural generation and spiritual generation. The Scriptures clearly teach that there are two lines of descent, each with its own founder and its own posterity. God is the Father of all men in the sense of being their Creator, but He is the Father in a true sense only of those who believe (Gal. 3:26; 1 Tim. 4:10). All men who have reached the age of accountability and have not by faith definitely identified themselves with Christ are designated as being still the children of Satan, (v. 44; 1 John 3:10).

The Holy Spirit through the Apostle Paul speaks of these two lines of descent, the one through Adam, the federal head of the old and natural creation; and the other through Christ,

the federal head of the new and spiritual creation (1 Cor. 15:44-49). By natural birth all men are "in Adam", but on condition of their personal faith in the atoning work of Christ, God performs a work within their hearts which is spoken of as the new birth (John 3:6, 7; 2 Cor. 5:17), and they then enter the new line, and are said to be "in Christ" (1 Cor. 15:21, 22). Those in the natural line live by the power and energy of Satan (Eph. 2:2, 3), but those in the spiritual line live by the power of the Holy Spirit of God, Who dwells within them (Gal. 2:20). Death is the destiny of the one race, but life eternal is the destiny of the other race (Rom. 5:12-17; 6:23). Our God by redeeming grace can deliver us from the rule and kingdom of Satan, and transport us into the kingdom of His dear Son (Col. 1:13; 1 John 3:8).

A similar comparison is made between the natural posterity of Abraham and his spiritual posterity (Matt. 3:9; Rom. 9:7, 8). The Jews boasted that they were Abraham's seed, and so they were, as far as the flesh was concerned (v. 37), but they were evidently not Abraham's seed according to the spirit, otherwise they would have manifested the spirit of Abraham, and would have performed deeds such as he did, faith being the outstanding work of Abraham (Gal. 3:6, 7, 29). On the other hand, they would not believe Him, love Him or hear His words.

It will assist us in the understanding of our Lord's message, if we remember that in Scripture such expressions as "children of wrath" and "children of disobedience" and "sons of light" and "sons of darkness" are used to denote that people are characterized by wrath, disobedience, light or darkness (Eph. 2:2, 3; 1 Thess. 5:5). When our Lord designated unbelievers as children of Satan (vv. 41, 44), He implied that they exhibited the characteristics of Satan, in this instance a hatred of the truth, and a desire to lead men to destruction (2 Thess. 2:8-12). Satan brought sin and death into the world by persuading Adam and Eve to believe a lie (Gen. 3:4; Rom. 5:12). On the other hand, those who were children of God would manifest His own love of the truth (vv. 45-47). They would desire to be holy, even as the Lord was holy (John 18:38; Heb. 7:26).

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

March 9—Disobedience and Self-Will Entail Bondage
Judges 2.
March 10—Failure in Separation; Blindness and Slavery
Judg. 16:13-31.
March 11—Deliverance for the Captives Luke 4:16-30.
March 12—Deliverance Illustrated Mark 5:1-20.
March 13—Stand Fast in Liberty Gal. 5:1-16.
March 14—A Prisoner Frees a Slave Philemon,
March 15—A Willing Slave Forever Exod. 20:1-11.

SUGGESTED HYMNS

"Twas Jesus my Saviour. 'Tis the grandest theme. I am redeemed. Free from the law. Would you be free? The blessed Redeemer has found me.

REMEMBER THE SEMINARY IN YOUR WILL

We suggest that our friends should remember Toronto Baptist Seminary in their wills. The proper form for this is: "I give, devise and bequeath the sum of to Toronto Baptist Seminary, 337 Jarvis Street, Toronto 2, Canada, associated with Jarvis St. Baptist Church." We are laying foundations for the future, and we are determined to make it as impossible as it is within human power to do, that not one dollar given to Toronto Baptist Seminary shall be used for anything but the propagation of the gospel. No amount would be too large, and certainly no amount would be too small. We earnestly solicit the gifts of those who believe in ministerial and missionary education.