

The Gospel Witness and Protestant Advocate

Authorized as Second-Class Mail, Post Office Department, Ottawa

Vol. 32, No. 36

130 Gerrard St. E., TORONTO, DECEMBER 24, 1953

Whole Number 1648

Titles of Christ

By FRANCIS RIDLEY HAVERGAL

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His Name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."—Isaiah 9:6.

Wonderful

Wonderful! Wonderful!
Ring out the Name, O Christmas chimes!
Wonderful! Wonderful!
Echo the word to farthest climes!
May the splendour of this great Name
Shine and glow with a mighty flame,
Filling thy life with its glorious rays,
Filling thy spirit with Christmas praise.

Counsellor

Mist and cloud and darkness
Veil the wintry hour,
But the sun dispels them
With his rising power.

Mist and cloud and darkness
Often dim thy day,
But a Christmas glory
Shines upon thy way.

May the Lord of Christmas,
Counsellor and Friend,
Light thy desert pathway
Even to the end.

The Mighty God

The Christmas bells proclaim
His glorious name,
'The Mighty God!'
God manifest indeed.
And yet the Woman's Seed,
To whom we sing
All glory, praise, and laud!
Divinest Lord and King.

The Everlasting Father

O Name of gentlest grace,
O Name of strength and might,
Meeting the heart-need of our orphaned race
With tenderest delight!
Our Everlasting Father! This is He
Who came in deep humility
A little child to be!

The Prince of Peace

O Name of beauty and of calm!
O Name of rest and balm,
Of exquisite delight,
And yet of sovereignty and might!
Let it make music in thy heart to-day,
And bid thee go rejoicing on thy way;
For Jesus is thy Peace, Thy Prince of Peace,
Whose reign within thy heart shall evermore
increase.

A WORD ABOUT THE EDITOR

Dr. Shields is still extremely ill. The experts assure us that he is improving, but some days the improvement seems to be almost imperceptible. However, as yet he is too ill to attend to any of his affairs. But he has asked us to express his very great appreciation of the affectionate intercessions offered by a vast multitude of people throughout the world. He has been informed of at least one church, not a Baptist church, which held a special prayer meeting to pray for his recovery. For this he is very thankful. He desires also that we should express to his many friends his gratitude for the lovely cards of greeting with their cheering messages, which have been sent to him. They are so numerous that it is impossible to acknowledge them individually. He asks all his friends please to accept this inadequate and rather indirect word of thanks. He also sends to all his friends the warmest Season's Greetings.

Dr. Shields is still daring to hope that he may be able to be present at the New Year's Morning Meeting; and if he should find that service not too exhausting, he is cherishing the hope that he may be able to preach on the evening of January 3rd. All this, of course, is contingent upon his continued progress. He sends his warmest love to all the Church and GOSPEL WITNESS Family, and to the Bible School, and the Seminary.

MR. H. R. MOAT

Last Friday evening, December 18, Henry Richard Moat, a brother greatly beloved and esteemed by the entire Jarvis Street Church family, passed to be with His Lord. Mr. Moat was converted in the Salvation Army in England while he was still in his teens and he gave the best years of his life to the service of God in that organization as one of its most useful officers. In Canada he devoted himself with unflagging zeal to the work among prisoners. He used to say laughingly that he had spent two years less one day in Burwash Prison, the usual sentence meted out to offenders. But his term there was spent, as was his entire life, for the uplift and blessing of those in need. Many former prisoners, now free men, bless his faithful testimony in word and in life to the power of the Gospel. Mrs. Moat, who predeceased him ten years ago, was a faithful and able helpmeet through a long married life, which was joyfully consecrated to the service of the Master whom both loved with their whole heart.

Ever since Brother Moat came to Jarvis Street Church a quarter of a century ago, he was busy in the Master's work. As the congregation came in the front door, he was there to welcome them in his cordial yet dignified manner, and at the close of the service he was on duty in charge of the enquiry room. It was good to see his face light up when there was a response to the appeal and he would "have work to do", as he put it. No member among us was more beloved by young and old alike, and he filled a large place in the life of the church and in the affections of the entire membership. And now this faithful, humble soldier of Christ has received the promotion that he awaited at the hand of the Great Commander who never errs. He is with Christ, which is far better, and the memory of his unflinching Christian charity and of his unceasing devotion to his Redeemer will serve as a lasting inspiration to all of us who mourn his loss.

W.S.W.

The Gospel Witness and Protestant Advocate

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

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

Editor

T. T. SHIELDS

Associate Editors

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

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

S.S. Lesson and Exchanges

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

Address Correspondence:

THE GOSPEL WITNESS

130 Gerrard Street East, Toronto 2

Canada

Telephone RAndolph 7415/

Registered Cable Address: Jarwitsem, Canada

THE WILL AS A PERCEPTIVE FACULTY

We are all slow to recognize the principle that our conduct is seldom dictated by our judgment. With most of us the knowledge of good exceeds the doing of it. Our Lord Himself laid down the principle — and no one understands the constitution of the human mind as He understood it—when He said: "If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the teaching." The same principle is involved in the proverb—

"Convince a man against his will,
He's of the same opinion still."

The recognition of this principle would save us from many difficulties. It would, for instance, save us from the folly of substituting education for evangelism. It is quite possible for men to inform the judgment. It is much more difficult to direct the will. Only the Spirit of God can make our carnal wills willing to do God's will. It would assist us often, also, in the interpretation of Scripture. Many portions of Scripture are not understood, not because men cannot understand, but because they will not. We remember a lady who said to a certain gentleman, "I want you to expound to me the doctrine of baptism as you understand it." To this the gentleman replied, "If I prove to you from the Scripture that you ought to be immersed on a profession of your faith, will you be immersed?" "Certainly not." "Then," said the gentleman, wisely, we believe, "that being the case, it will be only a waste of time for us to discuss the question."

Thus the various problems, as we like to call them, of conduct, which concern our relations to others and our duty to God; our understanding of the Scriptures; our experience of divine guidance,—all these things, in the last analysis, depend upon a will that is entirely surrendered to God. When we are willing to do His will, it is never difficult for us to understand what His will is.

The Jarvis Street Pulpit

"Where Is He That Is Born King?"

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Christmas Morning
Tuesday, December 25th, 1934

(Stenographically Reported)

"Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him."—Matt. 2:1, 2.

Prayer Before the Sermon

Help us, O Lord our God, as we approach Thy throne this morning by the ministry of Thy gracious Spirit; to come to Thee as we ought. We thank Thee for the occasion which brings us together. We bless Thee that Thou hast come in the Person of Thine only begotten Son, that there has come to this earth One of Whom it may truthfully be said: He came down from above. We rejoice that so many of us know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding that we may know Him that is true. We thank Thee that He Who was born in Bethlehem now reigns on high; that He Whom the wise men worshipped, may still be worshipped in spirit and in truth by the grace of Thy Holy Spirit.

As we meditate upon this great truth this morning, may the Spirit of God minister the truth to our own hearts; that Jesus may be vastly more to us than a Figure in history, or a Character in a book, or merely an Ideal to be cherished by men. Thou hast come to us in Thy living, saving, power, O Lord. Thou hast walked with us, and we have walked with Thee. Thou hast permitted us to hold converse with the King, and Thy hand has been stretched out in our behalf, saving us, keeping us, preserving us, providing for us through all the years. We thank Thee that the Lord is come, and that earth may receive her King. May every heart in this assembly this morning prepare Him room, while heaven and earth shall sing.

We thank Thee, O Lord, for all the grace which has come to us as individuals. We thank Thee for Thy multiplied lovingkindnesses with which Thou hast blessed the children of men; and throughout the world as countless millions turn aside from the ordinary affairs of life to give thought to this great truth that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, we pray that people may be blessed; that multitudes may be saved. And here in this service this morning, make us specially aware of the nearness of God. We can do nothing without Thee. It may be that some have come depressed in spirit; it may be that there are some even on this Christmas morning whose hearts are heavy, who are, indeed, wrapped about with a spirit of heaviness, to whom the day brings but little brightness. We would listen this morning to the angels' music; may the good tidings of great joy sung to all people reach us, every one. Help us to view life in the light of Thine advent, and to rejoice in Him Who is the Lord indeed.

It may be there are some here this morning who need special grace, who need to be undergirded by the very might of God Himself. We thank Thee that Jesus Christ is more than sufficient. We bless Thee for His sovereign power, for His abounding grace, not alone for His birth in Bethlehem, but for His birth from the grave, His resurrection from the dead in which He spoiled principalities and powers, making a show of them openly, and triumphing over them in it.

Graciously bless us, O Lord, that as we sing these hymns of praise this morning our hearts may really adore Thee.

Bless the land, we pray Thee, in which we live, and all who rule over us. Strengthen the arms of those who would do right, and contend against those who would do wrong. Bless the Empire to which we belong the world, around in many climes. Vast numbers of people to-day recognize Jesus as Lord. Let Thy blessing rest upon them all. Bless him who reigns over us. We thank Thee, O Lord; for the influence of the Crown. We thank Thee for His Majesty King George and for the royal family. We bless Thee that we have reason to believe that in the palace Jesus is recognized as the King of kings. And as Thou hast been pleased to use the Empire in days past for the furtherance of righteousness in the world, so continue graciously to abide with us, and give us, if it please Thee, peace in our time, O Lord.

Now cause us to know that Thou hast fulfilled to us Thy gracious promise that where two or three are gathered in Thy name there Thou art in the midst. May we all know it this morning, for Thy name's sake, Amen.

"WHERE is he that is born king?" The wise men mentioned in the text, were wise in a deeper and truer sense than the Magian sense in which the word is here employed. Truth that is truth indeed has universal relationships. Truth is never fragmentary, segmentary; truth is related to truth everywhere. Truth is never self-contradictory; and it is because the gospel is true that it is always at home among all peoples, and in all ages. The religion of Christ is a universal religion because it is the religion of the universal King. The gospel, it is true, is a dynamic. It is the power of God unto salvation; but it is a power which operates through a system of principles which are eternal, and which constitute the very fabric of human life.

There are words in every language which become obsolete. Look at your dictionaries, and you will find some marked "archaic", which means that they are rather ancient, seldom used now; and others are marked "obsolete", which means they no longer belong, properly, to human speech.

But the Word that was made flesh will never become obsolete in any language. It belongs to the whole human race and to all ages of human history. The speech of the gospel will never wear out. I delight to observe that the gospel of the Lord Jesus in any aspect is never arbitrary; it is always founded in some deep necessity: It belongs to the essence of things; it is founded in the nature of things. Even the simplest statements of Scripture are profoundly, philosophically, true.

I.

Here is a question asked by the wise men, and wise as they were, they asked it without themselves recognizing, I dare say, its full significance. Their great question is: "Where is he that is born King?" Where is this Personality that has come into this world of human affairs, endowed by nature with qualities, with potentialities, which will make him a Ruler among the people. Let us look at THAT SIMPLE AND YET PROFOUND PRINCIPLE FIRST OF ALL AS WE ASK AGAIN THIS QUESTION: Where is He that is born King?

Was there ever a king worthy to wear a crown who did not derive that worthiness primarily from His birth? They who are really kings are born kings; they are what they are, not because of any "accident of birth": there is no accident of birth. Whatever men are, they are, could we but understand it, by virtue of the qualities which are inherent. You remember our Lord said: "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: and yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." Great as was Solomon, glorious as were the qualities of his mind, and splendid as were all the pomp and circumstance of his position, yet it was, in a sense, external to the man. But the beauty of the lily was a thing that was inherent. It outshone the king because it was born so to display its beauty. I am not now speaking of the externals of life. I recognize that a clown may be born in a palace, and a king may be born in a cottage or in a stable, as in the case before us. My insistence is that the inherent qualities of kingliness, wherever they are found, will be discovered to be an endowment of birth, and are never acquired, nor possessed by any effort of the human will.

This principle finds abundant illustration in human life. If you look at the record of the leaders of human thought, and effort, and achievement, you will find that they were all born kings; and all they became and accomplished was really due to some native quality, to some potentiality of blood. However disciplined or developed those qualities may have been, they were natively resident in the man, or he never could have developed them. Turn the pages of history and look at the conspicuous figures there, look at the characters in this history. Such a man as Moses, for example, was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and mighty in word and in deed! "Oh," says somebody, "but was he not a product of education? Send the schoolmaster abroad and you will have plenty of people like Moses." Oh, no; the Bible goes to the heart of the matter, for when describing a certain dark day, it says, "At which time Moses was born." Yes; there came into the world by divine act, certain potentialities which, in the course of time, were to be enlarged and developed, and which were to determine the course of civilization. There are characters in profane history which we do not admire, but which we cannot ignore. Look at the most conspicuous military genius of all time—Napoleon Bonaparte. Born in obscurity, he attained to an imperishable, though unenviable, fame. I suppose the world has never seen the military equal of Bonaparte. But one cannot study his history without recognizing that in some strange way he was a man of destiny, that those powers which were in him, and which he developed—we grant you they were all disciplined and directed toward a particular course; but they were there because they were born in him.

Look at another character, Abraham Lincoln, of very humble birth also. Yet he came to be called by men "the President", and later "The Great Emancipator". But all the powers that made Abraham Lincoln what he was, that enabled him to do what he did, were born with him. Who shall deny that he was one of nature's own kings, born to the kingdom for such a time as that in which he lived?

Look at the realm of literature. Study the case of Bunyan. How can you account for this "tinker out of Bedford" as Kipling calls him? "The immortal dreamer" as all the world delights to name him? Whence that incomparable imagination? What school on earth can reproduce John Bunyan? None. He was born.

One might speak also of the poets. Look at Burns—I do not admire him as a man. I always feel like apologizing for mentioning him; and yet, he was marvellous as a poet. He could no more help singing than a canary. He was born doing it—with music in his soul. And that is true of all music, whether it be of speech, or sound, or colour—the great determining factors in the lives of men are always, in the ultimate analysis, the issues of birth. People wonder to-day at the world's chaotic condition. We lament the mediocre character of the best of men. People pull long faces and say that in the realm of statesmanship we have few great men. True: but our great men were slain in the war! Has it occurred to you that the men who ought to have been leaders and commanders of people in nearly all realms of human endeavour—many of them at least—were destroyed by the Great War? We speak of so many millions of lives. Yes; but the whole world was irreparably impoverished by the elimination from human affairs of those tremendous potentialities that but for the war might have blossomed into great characters in church and state and everywhere, that would have brought blessing to the world. No; kings must be born: you cannot make them. You may discover a king as Samuel discovered Saul when he hid among the stuff, or as he later discovered David while he was still keeping his father's sheep. But Saul was a king before Samuel found him, and the majesty and power of the ruddy lad called David, was acknowledged by the brute creation—lion and bear bowed down before him before even his father and his brethren recognized him. He was a king, so born. You cannot make a kingdom, and fashion a king to rule it unless nature, and, back of that, God has laid His ordaining and pre-determining hand upon the man, and brought him into the world to be a king.

II.

These are simple, self-evident, truths, and WE SHOULD EXPECT TO FIND THE GOSPEL OF SALVATION IN HARMONY WITH THAT FUNDAMENTAL AND INDISPUTABLE PRINCIPLE OF TRUTH. And so it is: "Where is he that is born king?" Let it never be forgotten that *Jesus Christ was born to be king*. Ah, I fear that our gospel has been stripped of much of its power, our glorious Samson has been shorn of His locks by modern thinking, and we are disposed to speak of the disclosure of God in Christ as though it were not a revelation, but a human discovery of divine benignity, benevolence: "God is good"; "God is love"; "God is compassionate". How much we speak of the manger and of the stable, and of the little Child!—and we cannot speak of these too often, nor emphasize the principles which they involve too strongly. But remem-

ber the Child that was laid in Bethlehem's manger was a King, a King by divine right. He was born to be King, and that element is in the gospels and it was also in the ancient prophetic scriptures concerning Him: "My heart is inditing a good matter: I speak of the things which I have made touching the king: my tongue is the pen of a ready writer. Thou art fairer than the children of men: grace is poured into thy lips: therefore God hath blessed thee for ever . . . Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows."

We speak of the gladness of Christmas, of its exuberant joy. We wish each other "A Merry Christmas", or "A Happy Christmas". Of what value is it all? It could not be even possible were it not true that the One Whose birth we celebrate was born to be King. I say, there is that great truth in the gospel, and we must never forget that power, that unlimited power—we call it *omnipotence*! We fill our mouths with great words which we do not understand, and talk about divine *almightiness*. But whatever word you employ, you must remember that the power, the majesty of Deity, is in the gospel, that the gospel is a revelation, a self-disclosure, an unveiling, not merely of a little Child, but of One Who from all eternity to all eternity, was and is a King, sovereign over all.

You say, "Did He not come to be a Saviour?" Yes; my friends, but He could never have been a Saviour if He had not been a King. I love to mark the steps of His triumphal march, how everywhere, by the exercise of His own inherent power, He compelled every realm in which He operated to recognize His inherent kingliness: "Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it", said Mary His mother—herself wondering and worshipping this Son of hers, Who as yet she did not understand. And they did as they were told, and all the processes of nature were abbreviated, accelerated, and as someone has said, "The conscious water saw its Lord and blushed." He was the King Who could make, by His own power, even as He made all things by the word of His omnipotence, the best of all wine, and ministered the superlative, the supreme gladness to the feast. Jesus is everywhere King.

"What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him?" Ah, you Evolutionists! Are there any here who think of God as a remote Figure, who think of the Creator as though by His own act, if you will, an act of self-exclusion, He had removed Himself from the created order? Not at all! He that is born King by the very fact of His birth proves to an intelligent mind—I use the strongest language I know—*absolutely demonstrates the truth that the evolutionary hypothesis is never anything better than the philosophy of fools*. He is born King—and in the world that He made shows Himself sovereign of all powers which radiate from His own Personality—demonstrates the falsity of any mechanistic view of the universe. A personal, transcendent, Will is regnant in the universe. He is born King, the world is not without a King! In His name I affirm it! So was it all through life, and even in death. Indeed it was in the beginning, it is now, and ever shall be, world without end, Amen.

I have seen His Majesty, King George, ride in state. Very splendid! And because of his position, of all that he is, I frankly can say I am conservative enough to glory in it. And when I heard people all over the world this morning sing "God save our gracious King",

my heart sang it too. And when I heard His Majesty wish all his people a Happy Christmas, and quoted the word of God, I said, "God save the King, God bless him; long may he reign!" But King George was never attended by such circumstances of royalty, by such accompaniments of kingship, as was the Babe of Bethlehem; and when at last He came to the cross, when He yielded His hands and feet to the nails, and suffered them to lift Him up at the place called Calvary, and all nature acknowledged His supremacy, the sun exchanged at noon His wonted bridal vestments for the mourning robes of night, the constellations formed in funeral procession, and the whole earth trembled with emotion as the God-man yielded up His life,—and there above the cross written by human hand, but sovereignly directed by a power that was from above, there—had men but eyes to see it—it was written: "This is the King". And Pilate said, "What I have written, I have written" because another Hand had written it. He was always a King.

At the place called Calvary, as the King, in person, He went forth to do battle against our enemy. They said to David: "Thou art worth ten thousand of us." Angels might have said that to the Man on Calvary, all the inhabitants of earth might well have said: "Thou art worthy of all of us"—for He was! Notwithstanding, single-handed in His own proper Person He subdued all our foes:

"He hell in hell laid low,
Made sin, He sin o'erthrew;
Bowed to the grave destroyed it so,
And death, by dying, slew."

He was born to be King. Hallelujah!

But you say, Was He not born to be Saviour? Did He not come to die? I answer: He died as a King Who was monarch of the universe. He died as a King Who was greater than all human potentates, who could have no power against Him, save what was given them; and even the king of terrors was subject to His sceptre. Oh, for power to sing the praises of the King! He died as a King? Yes, How better could He show His power than by thus providing amnesty for His foes. You must not think of Jesus as an unwilling Lamb led to the slaughter, but as a mighty warrior-King celebrating His sovereign power by an act of sovereign grace, dying the just for the unjust to bring them to God. Oh, rebellious men! presume not upon the tender mercies of God, nor think that in this economy God has laid His sceptre by.

III.

And what is grace? Infinite tenderness? Yes. The compassions of God? Yes; but more than that: grace is another name for God, as we have so often said in this place. Someone may say a certain thing is an act of grace. Well, grace as applied to mere men is one thing, but the grace of God is something vastly different. I would proclaim the grace of God, preach it to everyone if I could. But it must be remembered that it is said of grace, that grace reigns. Grace is representative of power, of might, of majesty. But what is grace? Grace is the fullest manifestation of the glory of God seen by men or angels. Grace is all the attributes of Deity combined and in redeeming exercise. Grace is the despair of hell, the wonder of earth, and the glory of heaven. I will sing of grace, but it shall be grace! Grace cradled in a manger, dying on the cross, bursting the bands of death, rending the heavens, and sitting on a throne!

That is grace! Grace does not beg as a pauper; grace does not kneel as a suppliant: GRACE REIGNS! Oh, hear it, ye rebels, who dare longer to strive! Hear it, ye despairing souls in bondage held! Hear it, ye devils in the caverns of darkness, and hear it ye angels, and oh, help me to proclaim it! Grace reigns "through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord"! I proclaim the birth of One born to be King, of a King triumphant in redeeming love.

And there is nothing you need so much as a King—A Saviour, you say? But no one could be your Saviour who could not be your King. What is wrong with your life? Every field is sown with tares, every city besieged, every power held in bondage more or less complete. No one could be your Saviour who was not able to break the power of cancelled sin, and set the prisoner free.

General Gordon was a good man, a godly man. He put aside his sword; he carried but a little cane for a long time. And so he went to Khartoum. I remember reading, as a little boy, of the martyrdom of Gordon in Khartoum. Gordon died, and Khartoum was shut up, and the British residents were captives for weary years. Then they sent a man to Egypt called Herbert Kitchener. He was an engineer, a soldier. His name ceased to appear in the papers: he was forgotten. And he began to build a railway, and to move inch by inch, mile by mile, until he laid a railway across the desert, and to the gates of Khartoum, which should bring to bear upon that citadel of evil, all the might of the British Empire. By this means he broke, smashed, destroyed the power of the Mahdians and set the prisoner free. A picture of delivering grace! Steady, persistent, irresistible, invincible, at last He destroyed principalities and powers, triumphing over them, and making a show of them openly. Because He was born a King.

Oh, yes, sing of grace! But let it be triumphant, undaunted, invincible, grace. "Grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord."

Christmas means more than toys tied on Christmas trees. Christmas means more than a lot of pleasant greetings, lovely as they are. We wish our friends a Merry Christmas. I have no doubt when His Majesty the King said this morning—he spoke as a father of a family—that he wished all his people a happy Christmas. I have no doubt that even the king said in his heart: "I wish I had power to make that wish an effectual wish, to end everybody's hunger and unemployment, to dry everybody's tears, and to make everyone throughout the empire really happy." But the wish of this great King Whom I proclaim is more than a wish: it is a command. It has power in it, for our gracious Lord is born to be King, and He is King. He has not laid His sceptre by.

IV.

BUT WHAT IS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF IT ALL? WHAT IS THE APPLICATION? Would you like to be a king? I do not mean to live in an earthly palace. Would you like to be a man of some great distinction, and enjoy that fame which Pope describes as "a fancied life in others' breath"? If everyone spoke well of you you would welcome such kindly speech, would you not? Oh, how we like to have our praises sung in a very small circle sometimes! So vain are we! But, my dear friends, that does not matter so very much, whether we are men of achievement—it is well to do good, of course—but I mean it is relatively unimportant whether we become prominent in this life.

But there is a realm in which we must be kings, or we cannot be happy. There can be no happy Christmas in the last analysis of things for anyone who is not a king. No happy Christmas for a slave, a serf, the man who has no sceptre, no power to do the thing that ought to be done! You would send your presents, if you could, to men behind iron bars. Feed them well, give them turkey, and everything else that they could eat. But I will venture to say that any one of them would say, "You may have all these presents if only you will open the doors and let me be free, that I may feel that once again I am a man."

In the beginning when God had made this glorious earth, He made His own creature, bearing His image and likeness, and He put a sceptre in his hands, and a crown upon his brow, and He said: "Have dominion"; "Thou madest him to have dominion". Originally we were all intended to be kings; But, alas! we have lost our crowns; like the Kaiser at Doorn, we have been kings in exile, with no liberty to go home, and all our kingliness must be viewed in retrospect.

But there may be a happy Christmas for us; for there is joy and gladness in that higher moral and spiritual realm which surpasses everything that belongs to the visible and temporal.

Can we become kings again? If so, how shall we become kings? By what means can the crown again be fashioned, and the sceptre restored to our impotent hands? How can that be done? The same principle holds. We must ask again: "Where is he that is born king", for those qualities that will give us power, prominence, and, ultimately, preeminence in the moral and spiritual realm, are qualities which belong to birth, and can never by any human process be acquired. "Marvel not that I said unto thee"—said He Who was born King—"ye must be born again."

Oh, that is the message of Christmas, that we may be born again, and born kings, that all our kingly powers may be communicated to us from Him Who is born King—not of the Jews only, but of the Gentiles, for "there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all"—we are all born to be kings.

And such as are born to be kings will have a kingdom. Some years ago I was entertained for a short period in one of the old castles in Ireland, by an Irish nobleman. As we went up the old oaken staircase that had stood for more than a thousand years, and saw the old castle as it had stood in the days of King John, when in that place he received the Irish barons, this good man said, "I want you to see my children." He had three lovely little children, and one of them was wakened up by his nurse, and brought out to see us. He was only a little fellow, and he came rubbing his eyes like any other child, for he had not had his sleep out. As he came down the stairs holding his mother's hand he began to cry, and she said, "You must not cry, for if you do I will tell the king about you." She then turned to me and said, "We are to entertain ex-King Manuel to-morrow," ex-king Manuel of Portugal. The ex-king! Ah, the world is full of ex-kings. We are all ex-kings, without any kingdom. But being born again we may hear one say: "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." You shall not only have a crown and a sceptre, but a kingdom as well, for by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead we are be-

gotten unto a living hope "by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance, incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you." That is the destiny of all of us, to come to the kingdom, to live in a palace, to wear a crown, to sit upon a throne. In the last book of the Bible one who had been partaker of that abounding grace, giving all honour and glory to Him Who was born to be king, exclaimed: "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever, Amen."

May God give us, by His grace, a happy Christmas here, and a still happier Christmas in the unending hereafter!

THE KINDLY VEIL

If I could draw the curtain back,
If I could see beyond to-day,
What things are waiting in the way—
The measured providential track
Which my reluctant feet must tread;
If I could feel each rugged stone,
And weight the burdens I must bear,
The sigh, the sorrow, and the tear,
Which are reserved for me alone,
My spirit would be slain with dread.

Or could I drive the mists away,
And see afar through storm and night,
Behind the shadow see the light,
And, ill-content with God's to-day,
If I could steal to-morrow's joy;—
If all the seeds which Love hath cast,
Which grow to beauty in the bloom,
Could suddenly unfold in bloom,
And night without a dawn be past,
The light and beauty would destroy.

I'd rather meet the day unknown,
Assured my life, divinely planned,
Unfolded by a wounded Hand,
Will be with glory overshadowed
When perfected the clouds above.
I see to-day the shade and shine,
Tempered by twilight and the dawn,
Life's web with skilful fingers drawn,
Where truth and mercy intertwine,
And know the Weaver's name is Love.

COMPLETE IN CHRIST

Christ crucified is the central point in which all the lines of evangelical truth meet and are united. There is not a doctrine in the Scriptures but what bears an important relation to it. Would we understand the glory of the divine character and government? It is seen in perfection "in the face of Jesus Christ". Would we learn the evil of sin, and our perishing condition as sinners? Each is manifested in His sufferings. All the blessings of grace and glory are given us in Him, and for His sake. Practical religion finds its most powerful motives in His dying love. That doctrine of which Christ is not the sum and substance is not the gospel, and that morality which has no relation to Him, and which is not enforced on evangelical principles, is not Christian, but heathen.

—ANDREW FULLER

HOW TO USE A MIRROR

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church,
Sunday Morning, September 1st, 1929

(Stenographically Reported)

"But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.

"For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass:

"For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.

"But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed."

—James 1:22-25.

THE letter of James, as you will have observed in your morning study, is an intensely practical epistle. It is not a book to be stored away on your library shelf, but a guide book, to be carried with you on the road. It is not to be regarded as a book that should be daintily bound in morocco for carrying to church on Sunday, and then forgotten until the Sunday following. It is rather like a telephone directory, or a street directory, or a cost directory such as you use in your office; or, in fact, any kind of book for the office, or the shop, or the home, the purpose of which is to instruct you as to how to get the day's work properly done. The epistle of James is in perfect agreement with every other part of the Bible; with this passage, for instance: "This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works." The Apostle James emphasizes the importance of works as the evidence, the fruit, of faith.

I desire to turn this scripture to some practical account this morning. Our text gives us a *description of the Word of God*. It describes it as "the perfect law of liberty"; and then having described its character it *prescribes its use* as a mirror. Then it tells us something of the *benefits to be derived thereby*: the man who thus makes the use of the Word of the Lord will not be a hearer only but will be a doer of the Word; he will reduce its principles to practice, and in the doing of it he will find the supreme blessing of life.

I.

Here, then, we have THE WORD OF GOD DESCRIBED as "the perfect law of liberty". We hear of many kinds of liberty nowadays. Liberty is the great desideratum. The Great War was fought from the allied side, we say—and I hope it is true, I believe it is—for the maintenance of the world's liberties. We are hearing just now in Toronto, much talk about "liberty" and about "free speech". But this is not new. The anti-prohibitionist objects to prohibition because, forsooth, it interferes with his "personal liberty". He must be free to stagger down the street and jostle everybody—throw his cigarette into a gasoline tank if he wants to, while under "Government Control". We have heard much also about academic liberty—"academic freedom" is the precise phrase. The professor is engaged to serve a certain college or university. The college professes to exist for certain clearly defined purposes, but Mr. Professor demands for himself what he calls "academic freedom". He demands that he be left "free" to use his position as he likes; he will be bound by no objective standards; and

he will be responsible to no one but his own sweet self. He must be "free", although his freedom, like that of the drunken incendiary, destroy the institution he is engaged to serve.

Well, it is very desirable that we should have liberty. Political freedom is a necessity. Then if we do not approve the principles of the government of the day we can work to secure a change. That is a great privilege, is it not? We must have liberty to effect such changes in our environment, as changing circumstances may require.

We all desire liberty. But the word "liberty" needs accurate definition; and our text defines it. It implies that *true liberty is a condition of life which is subject to law*. Liberty is not license; it is not lawlessness; it is not freedom to go, and do, and say, whatever your particular will may dictate. Liberty finds its highest perfection in obedience to the most perfect law; and the word of God is described as "the law of liberty".

Children find it difficult to learn that lesson. Their idea of freedom is, that they be permitted to be a law unto themselves. And many people are merely grown up children. I heard a little boy say, shaking off his father's restraint, "Let me go on my own"—and older people prefer to "go on their own". But, my friends, there is no liberty in that direction. Liberty is conditioned upon obedience to law in all realms.

I have never outgrown my childish interest and admiration for a locomotive engine. When I was a little boy, a train was to me the most wonderful thing, and even an aeroplane or a Zeppelin can scarcely compete with it to this day. I love to see a monster engine being groomed for a journey. I travel a little, and at every opportunity, where there is a long enough stop, I get out of the train and walk up to see the engine by which it is pulled, just to look at it, and marvel at its latent powers. What wonders it can accomplish! And to see it running, to see those mighty wheels flying around, pulling thousands of tons across the continent at the rate of a mile a minute, what an inspiring sight! How free that piece of machinery seems to be! With what perfect precision it works! It seems to work with complete freedom; yet its liberty consists in its obedience to law. There is no more helpless thing in the world than a locomotive engine off the track. It cannot move its own ponderous body: nor can men move it without some mighty mechanical aid.

The same is true of the car you drive. I have heard people say, "Street car tracks are a nuisance in a big city, I wish they would tear them up. Busses can go wherever they like." Can they? I do not want to be on one when it goes wherever it likes! If it is to serve any useful purpose, and if it is to be free to go from its point of departure to its predetermined terminus, then from one point to the other it must be absolutely subject to law; and only as it is so can it be free.

I saw a man engaged the other day on a very particular piece of work, and I marvelled at his manual dexterity, at the way he used his fingers. I said to him, "After all, there has been no improvement upon that first machine, the human hand, has there?" I was in Belfast, Ireland, some years ago as the guest of a great linen manufacturer, and as I was going away he gave me some valuable Irish linen handkerchiefs. He told me that no machine had touched them from the flax in the field till they became a finished dainty fabric, which was a work not of science only but of consummate

art. It was the product of the human hand, and was beautifully done.

Hands may not be much to look at, some of them at least, but they are wonderfully useful. And how freely we can use it! Did you ever see Paderewski play? I did not say, Did you ever *hear* him? I said, Did you ever *see* him? It is one thing to *hear* him: it is another thing to *see* him. I both saw and heard him play in London last October, by the courtesy of a friend. He is about seventy, but his fingers flew over the keys so rapidly one could not see them. The dexterity of the man was marvellous as he struck that keyboard, and thrilled the great audience with the harmonies he produced. You may have your player-pianos if you like, but give me Paderewski; give me someone who can play with his hands. I like to see a man whose hands are free. Yes, but they are free only in the sense that they are subject to law. You cannot bend your fingers backward, if you are properly made.

Our freedom in every department of life, whether physical, mental, or moral, consists in obedience to law. It does not mean self-will and self-indulgence. There is no true liberty in any department of life that is not an expression of law.

And that law of liberty must be an inward law. It is not wholly objective; but it is partly so. Why is the locomotive engine so helpless when off the track? Because its weight, its own internal mechanism, its constitution, is designed to operate in harmony with an objective law. The inner law of its own being, if I may so say, must co-operate with a law without—the steel rails upon which it moves, and only as these two are brought together, and the engine works in obedience to both, is it free. The same is true of every machine, of every organization, and of every organism. There is an inward law of life that must be obeyed or we are not free.

Our favourite illustration of perfect freedom, is the bird that flies. We say of somebody that he is just "as free as the bird that flies". I was coming out of my house the other day, and I saw a robin—but it was not flying; it was hopping across the road as fast as it could go, but it could not fly. Why? There was nothing without the bird itself to prevent its flying; the air was free. But one wing was hanging down. I do not know how it was injured, but the poor creature had broken one of its wings; it was hanging impotent by its side. Because it could not fly with one wing, it was not free to fly at all, because, while there was an external freedom, while there was opportunity enough, yet at some point the law of its physical being had been violated. Because of that its freedom had been curtailed, and instead of being free to fly in the upper spaces, it was able only to hop across the road. I was afraid that a swiftly passing motor car would overtake it before it got to the sidewalk the poor bird was like a little child at the mercy of the passing machines.

Oh, no, my friends, we shall not find liberty in obeying our own wills.

What is the "law of liberty"? There are many laws. You would like to make your own law, each would like to make a law for himself; and the last law that unregenerate people are willing to observe is the law of this Book. Its prohibitions and inhibitions are sometimes spoken of as "blue laws". I saw in one of our papers last week an editorial, headed by a quotation from somebody, I do not know who the genius was, but the quotation

was this, "I spent a week in Toronto one Sunday"! The thing that made Toronto so dull and dreary, and the passing of its hours so slow, was that a good many things were permitted in other cities were not practised here; and it was an editorial plea for "liberty". It depends on what you mean by liberty, what law is going to govern you. Let me ask, To whose law must that robin be subject if it is still to fly as God meant it to fly in the air? What law must be obeyed? It must obey the law of its own physical being. Who gave it that law? Whence came that law? "Do not err, my beloved brethren", says this very chapter, "every good gift and every perfect gift is from above." That bird's physical constitution is from above, and, for it, the perfect law of liberty is the law of its own being, which God gave it. If it is violated at any point, its freedom is diminished, its liberty curtailed.

In spite of all that the human mind may say about the Bible, it is the "perfect law of liberty". It tells us how to live, and it tells us that if we would have perfect freedom, and enjoy liberty to the full, the precepts and principles of God's Word must become incorporated into our own life, given effect in our own characters and conduct; and in the measure in which we ourselves become the very incarnations and exemplifications of the high and holy principles of this Book, in that measure we shall be free men and women. The truest freedom, the richest and the largest liberty, will be ours as we are brought into subjection to the principles of the Word of God.

That applies to the whole man. The bird of my observation, so far as I was able to see, was all right on one side, but it was all wrong on the other side; and because it was lopsided it could not fly at all. We are more than flesh and blood. The kingdom of God is not meat and drink. The whole problem of life has not been solved when a man has found an answer to the question, "What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Where-withal shall we be clothed?" The life is more than meat, and the body than raiment. We are something more than animals. "Man shall not live by bread alone." We have minds, and we must find a law not merely for our physical nature: there must be a law, which will govern our thinking as well. Our thinking must be under control, every thought brought into "captivity, to the obedience of Christ." There must be law in the intellectual realm if there is to be liberty.

The same is true of our moral and spiritual nature: "I pray God," said the Apostle, "your whole spirit and soul, and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." The Word of God is a perfect law for the physical nature, for the intellectual life, and for the moral and spiritual realm; in all these departments of our being the principles and precepts of the Word must govern, and in obedience to their behests shall we enter into the largest liberty.

That is a definition of the Word of God. I come back to what I said in the beginning, it is a guide-book. There may be some visitors here this morning who come from a far country—but you are not necessarily prodigals on that account! Perhaps you have come from the United States. You came over strange roads, and you did not consider that it was any abnegation of your rights, or that it necessarily involved some ignominious surrender of your intellectual powers, when you opened your guide-book and said, "Now, what road leads to Toronto?" Why do you want to know about the roads? "Because" you say, "I wished to know what road lay in that direction,

and which road was properly paved. I wanted to know the shortest distance between two points, and the safest too." You looked up your guide-book because you did not know. You know something, but there were some things you did not know, and so you consulted a book to find out, because it described a territory into which you were to make an excursion. You wanted to know how to go, so you obeyed the book, and you came on paved roads. How did you get along? "Splendidly, thank you." No accidents? "No." Did you get on any rough roads? "No." Any ditches? "No, we came right through without any trouble at all." Why did the traveller experience no trouble? Because he had sense enough to do as he was told: he consulted his guide-book. And that is exactly what the Bible is: it is a "perfect law of liberty"; therefore, if you would have the largest freedom, do as the Bible teaches, do as the Word of God directs.

So much for the description of the Word. The Bible ought not to be bound in blue covers, nor must everyone who tries to translate its precepts into action necessarily wear a long face. On the contrary, obedience to the principles of the Bible will give the greatest freedom, and the largest possible measure of enjoyment of life.

II.

HOW ARE WE TO USE THE BIBLE? We are to use it as a mirror. Is there anyone who does not know how to use a looking-glass? You boys and girls understand this scripture thoroughly, do you not?

There are some people who use the Bible to look at other people, they really do! A pastor told me some years ago that he had a very stingy man in his congregation. That was quite unusual, of course, but he had! He said the man was rich, but he gave little. He said, "I made up my mind that I would prepare a sermon especially for his benefit. I spent a long time getting ready for that Sunday morning, I prepared myself as thoroughly as I knew how, and I said, 'If he can stand this, he can stand anything, but I shall surely show him up this morning, and make him feel his defects.' So the great morning came, and I preached with all my might—just as I had prepared to preach. And that brother sat down there with folded arms, and beamed on me as though he had never heard a sermon that he enjoyed so much! He did not put any more money in the collection plate that morning; but at the close of the sermon he came up to me, took me by both hands, gave me a hearty shake, and said, "Pastor, that was the finest sermon I ever heard you preach. I am so glad Mr. So-and-So was here!"

That is how and why some people use the Bible; they are able to describe everyone but themselves. But that is not what you use a mirror for. *You look into a looking-glass to see yourself.* I know the Germans used one upside down, and obliquely set, periscopically, so that they could keep out of the way and yet look out of the top. But ordinary people look into the glass to see what they look like! That is what the Bible is for. Do not spiritualize it unnecessarily; do not rob it of its plain and practical teaching. What do you do in the morning when you get up? You look into that glass to see yourself as you are, in order that you make yourself sufficiently respectable for other people to see you. You comb your hair, put on your collar and tie; and after you have stood before the glass for a little while you are prepared to go out into the larger world, and say, "Good morning". But you would not like to do that without

first of all looking into the glass to behold your natural face.

That is how we ought to use the Bible. We should ask ourselves, "What must it tell me to-day? What correction in life and conduct is necessary to-day?" It will profit us to so use the Bible morning and evening, and as often as possible. You ought to have a good wash before you go to bed! You ought to have everything settled for the day. If you use the Bible like that it may show you some things that are not very pleasant—that is, when it shows you yourself. But you should not shun the mirror on that account.

There are some people who frequently have their portraits taken. I get a magazine jointly edited by two gentlemen, and I think there never has been a single issue that has contained less than two portraits of each of them! I am half inclined to write a little editorial note in THE GOSPEL WITNESS, saying I had received the personal album of Mr. So-and-So and Mr. So-and-So. They seem to think that everyone wants to see them! They are like a politician I once heard. I will not tell you who he was, but he was Prime Minister of the Dominion of Canada many years ago. I happened to be in a certain town where he was speaking, and there was such a crowd of people who wanted to see him that he had to go out into a park. First of all he spoke in a place of limited capacity, and this is what he said, "I am very sorry, my friends, that the thousands of people who have assembled to-day cannot hear what I have to say. I shall say a few words to you, and after that we shall go out to the park, for if the people cannot hear me, I am resolved that they shall see me." And see him they did! But they did not vote for him at the general election.

Now, my friends, more people will be inspired by looking at us if first of all we get a good square look at ourselves; and there is only one way I know by which any man can possess that power of which Burns speaks, to see ourselves as others see us, or, which is more to the point, to see ourselves as God sees us. If we look into this perfect law of liberty, and do it faithfully from a right motive, we are likely to see a picture that is by no means beautiful. When you get up in the morning, and look into your looking-glass, if you do not see anything particularly attractive, let me counsel you not to throw stones at the mirror! It is not the mirror's fault: it can only reflect what stands before it. There are people who turn to the Bible and say, "If that is what the Bible says, I will not believe the Bible." They throw stones at the mirror! The Bible only tells them what they are like, it gives them only a reflection of their natural faces.

It is most profitable to come to the Word of God to receive its rebukes, as well as its encouragements. I often hear people say, "I have got my promise for the day this morning." They pulled it out of a box—as though the Lord were a conjurer! Occasionally He will overrule such treatment of the Word and give them a message, but that is not how the Lord Jesus used the Scripture. He knew it so well that when He wanted others to hear what it said, "He found the place where it was written." We ought to know our Bible well enough to find the place where it is written; not to do a conjurer's trick and open the Bible and say, "That is what the Lord has promised me to-day." The proper way to use the Bible is to go to it as to a mirror, to know where to find it. You say, "I got my promise this morning"? But did

you receive your rebuke, that cutting, searching word from the Lord that says to us, "Wash you, make you clean"? Do you go to the Bible for that?

For what do people go to Church? I expect they at least hope that the minister will administer some sort of a sedative. If he does, they go home saying, "Was not that lovely? I feel ever so much better than I did before." Well, some times you may be justified in such feelings; but very often we need a stimulant, we need some corrective word that will say to us with respect to some things, "Thou shalt not", or "Thou shalt". And that is how the Bible will speak to you if you listen. We are to "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

But, observe, we are not only to look at the Bible: we are to *look into the Bible*. There are many people who look into the Bible as some tourists go sight-seeing. They go to the British Museum, up the front steps, into the halls, look around, and say, "Good bye". They only look at it: they do not look into it. That is not the way to read the Bible. We are not only to look into it, but to get as close to it as we possibly can. You must get the reflected image as close as possible to yourself. Looking at the Bible from a distance is like looking at a mirror from a distance. You will see no marks of age, you will miss the faithful reflection of "the old man". Get a little closer. It will not hurt you sometimes when you look into the mirror to put your glasses on so that you may see the wrinkles there—and other things, which may indicate the ascendancy of "the old man" in your life.

And we are to look into the Bible so that it will search out our motives, the springs of action. Sometimes it will make us feel so contemptible that we shall want to run away and see no one for a week until we have had time to make some crooked things straight. That is what the Bible is for. The mirror pays us no undeserved compliment: it is simply a reflection of truth, of fact. And if there is anything worthy in the reflection it will pay you the compliment; but if there is not, it will tell you the plain facts of the case.

Do you now say, "All right, I will do that; I will look into this perfect law of liberty. While you have been speaking I have thought of a certain thing which is a common practice in my life; previously I had not thought there was any harm in it; but I will look more closely. I will find out whether that thing is, by the will of God, permissible. I will look into this perfect law of liberty to find out what I ought to do"—"Whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed."

I learned long ago that it was possible to learn something from everybody. I think we ought to make everyone our teacher, I have seen young ladies with their vanity cases, from whom I have learned something! They know how to "look into" a mirror, how to look into it very closely,—and they know how to "continue therein", for they are always at it! They really are, at home, on the street car, everywhere. I was travelling the other day, and a gentleman said to me, "Have you marked the evolution of the use of the mirror, the powder puff, and the rest of it?" I said, "I am rather careful of the use of that word evolution. There is a true evolution, but just what do you mean?" "Oh," he said, "the mirror was once used occasionally—and usually where there was no one to observe; but now it comes out into the open

quite unashamed. Look yonder!" And sure enough there was a young lady looking into her mirror. How many times she did it that day, I do not know. "I was travelling on the same train, and it seemed to me she" continued therein" all day! That may be an excusable bit of vanity. I am not disposed to condemn it—because some people need it! I have seen some people whom I would have recommended to use it oftener! There is no valid objection to our making the very best of ourselves.

But it is a useful practice to carry around with us another kind of mirror, and to look into it. You cannot look into it too often, or too long. I used to know a man who had two mirrors in the place where he worked. He was a workman, working at a bench, and he had a little mirror tacked up above his bench, then against the wall he had a Bible just under the mirror; and as he could see his natural face in the one glass, he could see his whole character in the other. As he went about his work he would get a verse from the Bible, and just like the young lady with her vanity case, he took it out and said, "Now, wherein do I need correction to-day?" And as he put these principles into practice he found liberty.

That is very simple. All the boys and girls can understand it, and everyone else. But what is the use of looking into a mirror and beholding our natural faces, if "we straightway go away and forget what manner of men we were"? I heard the other day of some young men going into the bush. They wanted to be like wild Indians, to get as far away from civilization as possible, and they did not even take a watch with them; they decided to let the sun tell them what time of day it was. I am going to ask them when I see them if they took a mirror. If they did not they would be fine specimens when they came back! Of course, if they were honest they would tell each other when it was time to shave. But if one were to be by himself, with no one to tell him what he looked like, he would be likely to forget his own appearance. He would grow out of his own knowledge, so that he would forget what sort of person he was.

I know people who have no idea what they look like. Sam Jones was asked to give a lecture on a certain occasion, and the chairman introduced him in a most eulogistic way. When he rose to give his lecture he said he felt most happy with such a chairman, that he loved to be among frank and honest people; that he was afraid of people who were two-faced; but he was sure he need not be afraid of his chairman—for if he had any other face he would not be wearing that one! That was a little pleasantry on the part of Mr. Sam Jones which would be highly offensive from most people.

But, my friends, it is perfectly evident that there are a great many people who are called Christians who are not using the looking-glass, for it is certain they have forgotten what manner of men they are. They are like those who are lacking the growing graces, and who "have forgotten that they were purged from their old sins."

We are to look into the mirror, then, for what? I was going down the street one day and someone, whom I did not know was very kind to me. He stopped me and said, "Excuse me, sir, but I am quite sure you do not know that you have a black smudge on your face." "Well," I said, "will you not wait for a minute until I take it off to be sure it is gone?" You see, I did not carry a mirror, and I had to wait for someone to tell me!

How many of the Lord's children are walking about with stained garments and characteristics that are not glorifying to the Lord Jesus! Year after year passes by

and the black smudge is not removed; they do not improve a bit. They have the same ugly temper they had years ago, and it is evident to everyone that they have forgotten what manner of men they are. There is only one explanation: they are not using the mirror. If we would use the Bible, and look into it, it would correct us; we should be more and more like Christ: "We all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." Yes, He changes us into His own likeness, if we will but yield ourselves to Him. That is the process of sanctification; sanctification is merely God's education, of His children, of new-born souls. Justification synchronizes with conversion; sanctification begins with justification and will never end until we are presented without fault before the throne of God. The main instrument in that process is the Bible, the Word of God, before which we live, and into which we look, and by whose admonitions and reproofs we are encouraged, until we grow up into Christ in all things.

III.

If you look into it, you who are not Christians, you will say, "Oh, what a sinner I am!" Every man who looks into the Bible will soon discover that he is a sinner. There will be no doubt about it. No matter how respectable, how prosperous, how successful, how greatly honoured by your fellows, look into this perfect law of liberty, and you will see that you are a sinner. You will be like my little robin-friend. "Oh," you say, "I really thought I was a man, exercising my freedom, yet here I am like a bird, just hopping along the ground; while it was intended that I should stretch my wings, mount up with wings as eagles, get away from earth and live in the heavenly places, here I am earthbound all this time."

I talked to a man on the train the day before yesterday as I was coming from Chicago. He said he was from Windsor, and that he had found it necessary to go to Los Angeles. It had got into the papers, and he received an offer of a trip by airplane. He said he left the next morning, via St. Louis, Tulsa, El Paso, Phoenix, reached Los Angeles, and thence to Oakland, California, in only twenty-two hours of flying time, if I recall correctly. When his business was done he flew back again. My new acquaintance said that was the way to travel. The train was moving fast, and I said, "I suppose this seems slow?" To which he replied, that when he got into Tulsa there was a car waiting, and the pilot of the airplane drove it with only one hand on the wheel. He said he usually used both hands driving his own car, even at a moderate speed. But the air pilot drove with one hand at seventy-three miles an hour. So my friend said when one is used to travelling in an aeroplane at one hundred and twenty-five, or one hundred and fifty, miles an hour, the fastest train seems to move like an old ox-cart!

And there are some people who think they know much, although they do not know Christ. They say, "I am having such a good time!" Oh, but if you could know Him, and get into the upper spaces, and spread your wings and fly as God wants you to fly, you would say, "I thought I was having a good time, but now I know I was travelling in an old ox-cart all the time." If you would know the meaning of life, its fulness, its richness, you must know Christ; and the man who continueth therein, looks in the perfect law of liberty and becomes a doer of the work, imbibing the principles and precepts

of the Word, and working them out in everyday life, thus by obedience bringing the whole man into harmony with God's Word by the power of the indwelling Spirit, that man is "blessed in his deeds".

Those of us who are Christians have our dull moments. Even this air man who rode in the aeroplane said, "We had some rocky roads." I said, "What do you mean by rocky roads?" I have been up in the air myself, I mean literally. He said, "Flying over the mountains we often came into a soft spot in the air, and down we went—just as a motor-car drops into a soft place in the road." Yes, we have that, and yet it is a glorious thing to be a Christian, is it not? We have to say of the things of the world as we look at the life that is lived apart from Christ,

"My heart refuseth joys like these,
Since I have known the Lord."

When you have looked into the mirror to see yourself, have you not seen behind you a basin? The mirror showed that you needed to wash, and then showed you where you could wash and become clean. Look into the Bible and you will see the need of cleansing, but you will also see the divine Laver, the Fountain filled with blood:

"There is a fountain filled with blood,
Drawn from Immanuel's veins,
And sinners plunged beneath that flood
Lose all their guilty stains."

The Bible never shows you a defect without showing you how to correct it; it never condemns sin without promising forgiveness on condition of repentance and faith; it never points out a weakness without pointing to a source of strength; it never thunders its condemnations without whispering its words of pardon, inspiration, and comfort. It is a blessed thing to look into this perfect law of liberty. May the Lord help us so to do, and seeing, to do the thing that we know ought to be done!

There are men and women here this morning who do not need a word of instruction in respect to these matters. You have known for twenty years how you could be saved, but you have not come to Christ. Others of you have known for years, as Christians, how you could enter into a larger and fuller life by making Jesus Christ your Lord—and you have not done it. All you need this morning is to become a doer of the word you have heard. Some of you have never been baptized. You say, "I agree with you, sir; I agree with the Book; it is all true." Well, then, if it is all in the Book, do as you are told. Somebody else says, "I know I ought not to be a disciple secretly. I know the Bible tells me that it is my duty to confess Christ." Then do your duty! someone else says, "I know I ought to be a witness for Christ." Then take your stand, be a doer of the work as well as a hearer; and in the doing you will receive a blessing.

Let us pray:

O Lord we thank Thee for the simplicity of Thy Word. We thank Thee that we have not to have great learning in order to understand it. We remember that it is said of our Lord Jesus, The common people heard him gladly. We believe that Thy Book is written for common people—and we are all common, sin-stained, travel-worn, sometimes weary, too; and we come to this resting-place this morning that we may begin afresh, that we may wash our faces and our hands, that we may improve our raiment, that we may see the need of putting on our beautiful garment, and wearing it every day, even the best robe. Make us willing to advantage ourselves of all that is in Christ awaiting our appropriation.

Bless everyone here this morning. Help those who desire to confess Christ, to confess Him. Help those who want

now to witness to their belief in Christ, to do so. If any of Thy children have not yet obeyed Thee in baptism, enable them to yield to Thee. Help us all to do the thing the Word tells us we ought to do. May the Holy Ghost take these simple words spoken in Thy name and apply them to the hearts of men and women for whom Christ died! So may this service be glorifying to Thee. We ask all these things in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE GIFT OF SWEET SPICES

By Dr. O. L. Clark

THE magi who came from the east to worship the infant Saviour opened their treasures and presented unto Him gifts, among them frankincense and myrrh. These spices were prominent, also, among the offerings requested in the time of Moses. The shepherd of Israel, after spending forty days and forty nights in communion with God, came down from the mount and gathered the children of Israel together to declare unto them the commandment of the Lord. In view of the erection of the tabernacle, whosoever was of a willing heart was to bring as an offering to the Lord such materials as gold, silver, brass, precious stones, shittim wood, oil and "spices for anointing oil and for the sweet incense" (Exod. 35:8). The spices for the anointing oil were specified; pure myrrh, cinnamon, sweet calamus and cassia (Exod. 30:23-25), whereas the frankincense contained stacte, onycha and galbanum (Exod. 30:34, 35).

The person who presented spices unto the Lord brought a gift of rare value. From earliest times the condiments, which add zest, flavour and savour to food, have been considered precious commodities. The Ishmaelites to whom Joseph was sold had come from Gilead with their camels, "bearing spicery and balm and myrrh, going to carry it down to Egypt" (Gen. 37:25). When Jacob would prepare a gift for the lord of Egypt he chose balm, honey and spices. Hezekiah foolishly showed to the ambassadors from Babylon "all the house of his precious things" (Hebrew "spicery"). We, too, have the privilege of presenting to our Saviour a costly gift, even ourselves, with all that we are and have.

The gift of spices was not merely one of great value, but also one of deep significance, as suggested in Scripture. In the first place, the sweet spices were associated with the *worship* of the Lord; they are numbered among the materials in constant use in the services of the tabernacle. These ingredients perfumed the pure oil which was used to anoint the tabernacle with its furnishings and utensils, and also to anoint the priests, as a sign that all and everything throughout the whole building was thus consecrated unto the Lord (Exod. 40:9-16). Let us bring an offering of sweet spices to the Lord in holy devotion.

"With gold of obedience and incense of lowliness
Kneel and adore Him; the Lord is His name."

Spices formed an integral part of the sweet incense, which speaks to us of *prayer* (Psa. 141:2; Rev. 5:8). This incense was burned upon the holy altar in the tent of the congregation (Exod. 40:26, 27). How fragrant that gift which even the youngest saint may offer in the Saviour's name! The prophet Samuel offered acceptable prayer unto the Lord from his earliest years (1 Sam. 2:1-10; 12:23). David, the man after God's own heart, prayed in the morning, at noon and at night (Psa. 55:17). The prophet Daniel refused to renounce the privilege and duty of prayer, even when his life was threatened, but

"his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime" (Dan. 6:10). Our Saviour spent whole nights in prayer. All the great men of Scripture were men of prayer. Let us offer to the Lord the fragrant spices of prayer.

It is significant that the morning and evening sacrifices in the tabernacle were sprinkled with incense. This association of spices with the thought of *sacrifice* is well illustrated in the devotion of Mary of Bethany. As she broke the alabaster box of ointment of spikenard, which was very costly, and poured the oil upon the feet of her beloved Lord, the sweet perfume pervaded the whole house, and according to the Master's promise has been diffused throughout the whole world, wherever the Gospel has been preached (Matt. 26:13). It should be our joy to obey the Master's command to lose our lives for His sake, that we may find them. The gift of spices for sacrifice will always be acceptable unto our God.

Mary's gift was prompted by love and thus illustrates the association of spices with the fragrance of *love*. In the Song of Songs the perfumes of myrrh and spikenard are represented as the substances which make delightful the bower where the Bridegroom will have fellowship with His beloved (Song of Sol. 1:12-17). The garden of love contains "spikenard and saffron; calamus and cinnamon, with all trees of frankincense; myrrh and aloes, with all the chief spices" (Song of Sol. 4:14). The cruel north wind, as well as the soft southern breezes, must blow upon the garden of love to bring out the full fragrance of the spices (Song of Sol. 4:16), since true love is best manifest in the day of sorrow and adversity. The mutual nature of the affection between Bridegroom and bride is also suggested in this figure. The beloved one finds that as she is to him as the pleasing spices, so also is he like "a bed of spices, as sweet flowers": "I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine: he feedeth among the lilies" (Song of Sol. 4:10; 5:13; 6:2, 3). Let us bring to our Saviour the offering of our love.

The Lord Jesus, in interpreting the devotion of Mary of Bethany, described her offering as an anointing for His burial (Matt. 26:12). The spices speak to us, then, of *death*. We are told that on that dark day before the resurrection of Christ the women rested, according to the commandment, after preparing spices, intended for the body of their beloved Lord. "When the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, had bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him" (Mark 16:1). Christ was born to die (Heb. 2:14), and even as an infant he received from the magi the gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh; the gold given to Him as King of kings, the frankincense as a token of His Priesthood, and the myrrh as foreshadowing His death on our behalf. We should bring to Him the offering of spices as a token that we would have fel-

lowship with Him in His death. We are to reckon ourselves as crucified with Him and as risen with Him. The shadow of His cross should be found athwart all our activities; we should live as those who have been purchased by His precious blood.

"As with gladness men of old
Did the guiding star behold;
As with joy they hailed its light,
Leading onward, beaming bright;
So, most gracious Lord, may we
Evermore be led to Thee.

"As they offered gifts most rare
At Thy cradle rude and bare;
So may we with holy joy,
Pure, and free from sin's alloy,
All our costliest treasures bring,
Christ, to Thee, our heavenly King.

THE SHAME AND THE GLORY OF CHRISTMAS

"He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.

"He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name."
—John 1:10-12.

The Substance of a Sermon Preached by Rev. W. S. Whitcombe in Jarvis Street Church, Sunday Morning, December 20, 1953

NEARLY two thousand years after the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ in Bethlehem, the real meaning of Christmas is still vague and indistinct in the minds of many, many people. The other day I read in a well-known magazine the story of a unit of American soldiers in Japan who provided a special Christmas treat for some Japanese children. They entertained them in the fine old style: turkey dinner with all the trimmings, and Santa Claus in red suit and white whiskers to distribute gifts for everyone. Of course the Japanese kiddies were greatly impressed by the American Christmas, though they were rather confused as to the reason for it all. One of the soldiers explained that it was really a birthday celebration. Perhaps the explanation was not sufficiently clear or perhaps the Oriental children were not prepared by their training to accept the wonder of the Christmas story. In any case, the question remained, "Whose birthday was it?" One bright little fellow voiced the general sentiment when he asked, "Is it the birthday of the old white-whiskered gentleman in the baggy red trousers?"

To overcome ignorance of this sort in Canada and the United States a campaign has been instituted to "Put Christ back into Christmas." It has been suggested, among other things, that to teach the real meaning of Christmas, straw-filled crèches, with effigies of an infant and mother, should be erected in public places. I gravely doubt the efficacy of such means of proclaiming the great truths of Scripture for the reason that in the very places where there is a maximum number of images, there is often a minimum of genuine Christianity. But apart from that consideration, to understand the real meaning of Christmas, we must hold clearly in mind that it is not merely the celebration of a child's birthday. Many children have been born in the long history of this old world, some of them were ordinary, some of them

GOSPEL WITNESS PUBLICATIONS

"The Priest, the Woman, and the Confessional", by Father Chiniquy\$1.00

"The Greatest Fight in the World", by C. H. Spurgeon, 64 pages 25

"Bakewell's Roman Catholic Doctrines Examined", 316 pages 1.00

The Gospel Witness

130 Gerrard Street East, Toronto 2 - Canada

extraordinary persons; some of them turned out to be good men and some of them bad men. The Gospels do not tell simply the birth of a child; they recount the coming of God to earth, the eternal Word, becoming flesh. The dim light of the star heralds something of the wonder; the opened heavens and the angel choir announces it more explicitly: "Unto you is born a Saviour which is Christ the Lord." The ancient prophecy which the scribes found to the astonishment and troubling of Herod foretold the true greatness of the little town of Bethlehem: "Out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel, whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting."

Taken alone, divorced from its setting, the story of the birth of a child in a stable is another shameful monument of "man's inhumanity to man (that) makes countless thousands mourn." If to-morrow morning's newspaper reported such an event in this city, there would be a public outcry and a demand for an investigation. You-mothers would not want your babies to come into the world in such surroundings, would you? And I know that we fathers, too, would have something peremptory to say about it! The child in the manger must be seen in the white light that beats upon it from the multitude of the angelic host who announced His coming to earth, just as the Cross can only be understood in the glory of His resurrection and the bright promise of His coming again. We have often been told of the humility of our Saviour's birth, we need also to be reminded of the glory that He had with the Father before the world was. Our text suggests both those states, the heavenly and the earthly. It speaks of His pre-existent state when it says, "He came," that is, the Word came, the Word that was in the beginning, "and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." This is the one who was made flesh and dwelt among us. Our text also points to His humiliation when it says, "and his own received him not."

Let us look first, as well as we can with our poor dimmed eyesight, at the GLORIOUS STATE OF OUR LORD. The startling contrast between the splendour of the heavenly host and the meanness of the lowly cattle-shed where He was born serve as symbols of the infinite stoop of His condescension. Matthew's Gospel records for us the angelic song and the announcement of the heavenly messenger to the startled shepherds, but we are left to wonder at the paeans of praise that sounded from the ten thousand times ten thousand of the armies that surround the throne of God in heaven as they saw the unique Son of the Father take upon himself the form of a servant and be made in the likeness of men.

"Will you permit an illustration? Last summer we left Belfast by ship for Glasgow. Embarking just before midnight we stood upon the deck waiting for the lines to be cast off. Among the passengers there were several missionaries and a party of Christian people on the quay were singing hymns and shouting words of encouragement, Scripture verses and hymns, that seemed to us like the breath of heaven, for one hears but rarely such notes upon shipboard. It was a happy time and blessed time for those who sang the prayerful, joyful farewells and also for those who were leaving home and loved ones for the work of God in some distant field of labour. I noticed that the whole company of passengers listened with interest to all that was said and done, as though they would fain share in the joy of something that was not of their world. The next morning, in the dull grey

dawn under lowering skies, our ship slid into the Clyde and docked at Glasgow. I listened in vain for a welcoming chorus to correspond to the farewell of the previous night, but there was none. Two young women with a badge of a Christian organization in their hats were there to greet them, but there was no joyous crowd singing hymns of praise and prayer, just a busy bustling throng of people, struggling with their bags and baggage that had no time or thought to bestow upon the lonely young missionaries now lost in the crowd.

With that inadequate illustration in mind, may we dare to say that the voice of the angelic chorus that smote the ears of the startled shepherds was, in our poor human speech, but the antiphonal echo of the great swelling chorus of praise that resounded through the heaven of heavens in farewell to Him whose name is Immanuel, God with us! Is it not written, "When he bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, he saith, and let all the angels of God worship him"? Was it not prophesied of this Child centuries before His birth that His name should be called "Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace"? Angels desired to look into these things, but were restrained by the gracious Father who so designed that they should be revealed to the sons of men that they might proclaim the glorious news of a Divine Saviour to their fellows who knew the corruption of sin. How happy must those angels have counted themselves who were commissioned from among the uncounted hosts of heaven to wish God's "Merry Christmas" to the sons of men.

In the chapter from which our text is taken, our Lord is described as the Word that was in the beginning. That takes us back to the account of Creation as recorded in the first book of the Bible: "In the beginning God . . ." There we read that "The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters," and there it is recorded that each creative act was performed as God spoke, that is, His power and His wisdom were expressed in His almighty Word. "He spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast." Just as a man's word tells us what he thinks, what he does, and most of all what he is, so the Word of God is the revelation of God himself. And that Word, says John in his majestic prologue, *was* in the beginning, "and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." In the eternity of the past, before the Creation of the world of nature and of man, our God was not the eternally Lonely One, for "the Word was with God." He was in the bosom of the Father, sharing His glory before the world was. He is also called the Son to distinguish an abstract impersonal aspect of the Godhead from the rich fulness of Him "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."

The Son of God did not come to this earth as a stranger, for it was He who created it: "He was in the world, and the world was made by him." His coming at Bethlehem was like the visit of a builder to the house that his own hands have designed and fashioned, and that he loves as a man can love an object that he himself has called into existence. And yet he did not come to his handiwork as an absentee landlord after a lapse in the slow march of the millennia, for "He was in the world." We talk about the laws of nature as though this universe were a self-sustaining machine that maintained itself according to some inherent principles and power. But

that is not so. The Creator did not fabricate a great machine and fling it out into space to forget it as a man forgets a clock that he has wound up and set in place. Paul taught the philosophers at Athens that "In him we live, and move, and have our being". What we call the laws of nature are the habits of God's working, The stars in their courses hold their wonted places because Our Lord speaks to them and directs their path. He whom we call our Saviour, whose birthday in Bethlehem we now celebrate, is He who upholds all things by the word of his power.

Our Lord did not come to Bethlehem in the land of Judaea as a stranger. It was His ancestral home, the town of His father David. But in still another sense it was His, as was the land over which the cruel Herod ruled as a tyrannical usurper. Centuries before in the backside of the wilderness the great I Am appeared to Moses in the burning bush. The pillar of cloud by day and of fire at night led the children of Israel into the Land of Promise. They drank water from the rock and ate the manna that came down from heaven. When this child of the manger became a Man, He asserted His right to say "Before Abraham was I am." Not "I was," but "I am." John speaks of the glory of the Lord as Isaiah the prophet saw Him, high and lifted up, and the Fourth Evangelist identifies that sight with the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ: "These things said Esais, when he saw his glory, and spake of him." The Lord Jesus Christ taught that He was the bread come down from heaven, and the Apostle Paul spoke of Him as the Rock from which the people of God drank in the wilderness. It was in this sense that we are to understand the phrase "And he came unto his own." Pilate spoke more truly than he knew when he showed the Jews the thorn-crowned Christ, and said "Behold your king."

He was their King in a way that Pilate had not dreamed of, in a way that the people refused to accept Him, like the wicked husbandmen in the parable who plotted against the Son, saying, "This is the heir, Come, let us kill him."

This brings us to the second part of our text: "HIS OWN RECEIVED HIM NOT." How many sad illustrations of it we can find. The first that comes to our mind is the one we have already referred to: "And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn." Those of you who have travelled know how serious a matter it is when you are far from home in a strange city and every hotel and lodging-place bears the sign, "No vacancy". Even if you have money in your pocket, it can be an exceedingly embarrassing situation, but we must suppose that this weary man and the sick young woman, burdened with anxiety, had little of this world's goods to command what could be purchased with money. In modern times, at least, "No room" is a well-worn phrase with a relative meaning. Go to the smartest hotel in town with a big car, fine luggage, a good suit and the door-man will touch his hat to you and promptly obtain the kind of service that would be extended to the Queen's majesty, were she to appear. But go to the same hotel on foot, with a shabby suit and poor, worn old suitcase, or none at all, and see what disdainful looks greet you as the clerk icily repeats the stereotyped refusal: "No room!"

That was the world's reception to our Lord Jesus. Wicked Herod sought to slay Him, and because there

was no room for Him in the Land of Promise, He fled to Egypt. When he began to teach in the village where He was brought up, His fellow-townsmen would have thrust Him over the edge of the precipice. There was no room for him in his boyhood town. His own brethren thought He was mad, and even His own mother failed to understand Him. His disciples forsook Him and fled when the hour of darkness came, and even Peter denied Him with oaths and cursing. The people chose Barabbas, a robber, rather than Jesus, and when Pilate presented Him as their King, they cried, "Away, away with Him crucify him, we have no king but Caesar." There was no room for him in the inn, no room in Judaea, no room in Nazareth, no room in Jerusalem, no room in this world: "Away with Him, crucify Him!"

One of the early English kings rejected with scorn the demand of an arrogant invader with words of bold defiance: "You ask for the land of England: we will give you six feet of good English soil!" That is a commendable way of dealing with haughty usurpers. But how ought true and loyal subjects receive the rightful King when He comes to claim His own, when He comes as the Friend and Helper of all, not merely to be served, but to serve others, and to serve them in the highest and best way at the greatest cost to himself, when He comes not only to receive, but above all to give salvation and life to all? Oh, how great is the wickedness of men that they had no place for Christ but a cross, no room for Him but the rock-hewn tomb that was borrowed from another and sealed with a Roman seal to keep Him there forever!

Nevertheless, there is hope in our text, for it says, "AS MANY AS RECEIVED HIM, to them gave he power to become the sons of God." I think I can hear some of you boys and girls saying, "If the Lord Jesus were to come down our street, He would not see a 'No room' sign on my house. I would make room for him in my house." Would you? I wonder what would happen if the Lord Jesus were to walk down the streets of Toronto at this Christmas season? I think I know. It has already happened, for He still offers Himself here in Toronto as He did long ago in the land of Judaea, and still, here in this so-called Toronto-the-good, men and women and boys and girls, have no room for Him. You would not join with those who stood shouting, "Away with him, away with him, crucify him." Would you? That is what I want to ask you this morning, you boys and girls, and you grown-up men and women, mothers and fathers: Have you any room for Jesus? Let us sing as our closing hymn this prayer:

Thou didst leave Thy throne and Thy kingly crown,
When Thou camest to earth for me;
But in Bethlehem's home there was found no room
For Thy holy nativity.
O come to my heart, Lord Jesus!
There is room in my heart for Thee.

WITHOUT CHRIST

Without Christ, the matters of this world are but a puzzled maze. Poor blinded man sees nothing as it really is. He knows not the true end of being. He takes the tinsel to be gold. He counts the gold as dross. He treasures up the chaff as wheat. He casts the precious grain as playthings to the wind. . . . He profits no one and he ruins self.—HENRY LAW.

Bible School Lesson Outline

Vol. 18 First Quarter Lesson 1 January 3, 1954

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

DAVID DEFEATS GOLIATH

Lesson Text: 1 Samuel 17:32-51.

Golden Text: "If God be for us, who can be against us?"—Romans 8:31.

I. David Accepting the Challenge: verses 32-40.

David had returned from the royal court (1 Sam. 16:21-23) to his father's sheepfold unspoiled. He could "walk with kings, nor lose the common touch" (Prov. 22:29). The Lord would have us do our duty, whatever or wherever it might be (Eccl. 9:10; 1 Cor. 10:31; Col. 3:17). David behaved himself wisely in all his ways, and the Lord was with him (1 Sam. 18:14).

Goliath had belittled the cause of Israel, making it appear ridiculous for them to set themselves against the Philistines (v. 8). He tried to belittle their nation, also, claiming to be a member of a superior race and counting the Israelites as a race of slaves. He then defied the armies of Israel. Surely he had forgotten the victories which God had given to those armies over his own people (1 Sam. 7:11-13; 13:4; 14:47).

The giant's challenge was enough to cause dismay to the faint-hearted among the Israelites. They could not hope to produce a champion to match the giant Goliath. Christians make a great mistake when they attempt to fight against their spiritual foes on equal terms. They should keep to their own grounds, and to their own weapons (Eccl. 9:18; Jer. 21:4, 5; 2 Cor. 10:4; Eph. 6:10-17).

Every morning and every evening for forty days Goliath hurled his defiant threats against Israel. In Scripture the number "forty" suggests testing (Exod. 24:18; Deut. 8:2; Luke 4:2). His action had value as propaganda; it wore down the morale of the Israelites.

The Lord heard the proud boasts of the Philistine warrior, and He hearkened to the cries of His people (Exod. 3:7, 8; 2 Kings 19:14-20; Psa. 28:1, 6). He was already preparing a champion for their cause. David was sent on an errand to the camp, a seemingly trivial mission (verses 17, 18), but it led to mighty results, since it was a part of the Lord's plan to humble His enemies and deliver His people.

"A prophet is not without honour, save in his country, and in his own house" (Matt. 13:57). David's brethren did not believe in him (Gen. 37:8; John 7:5); they accused him of pride, mischief and espionage. It remained for others to take his offer seriously and to report the matter to King Saul.

Although so young, David had been taught of the Spirit, and he recognized the significance of Goliath's challenge. Goliath was casting insults, not merely at the armies of Israel, but at the armies of the living God (Exod. 16:8; Josh. 3:10; 1 Sam. 8:7; Isa. 63:9). It is the same today. Those who oppose the good, despise God; and those who oppose Christian principles, are opposing God Himself (Acts 5:38, 39).

To the natural eye the champions of Philistia and of Israel seemed to be extremely ill-matched. Goliath was a mighty warrior, about 9 feet, 9 inches tall, while David was but a youth. And yet, David humbly recited his previous exploits and bravely bore testimony to the power of the Lord in his life. His confidence in the Lord was the source of his courage (Psa. 56:4; Isa. 26:3, 4).

David refused to fight with any weapons but his own. In His wisdom the Lord has made no two of His children alike; He endows each with individual gifts and talents (Rom. 12:6-8; 1 Cor. 12:4-11; Eph. 4:7-11). Every Christian is at his best when serving the Lord in his own way, using the instruments tried by his experience, those befitting his own character and training. The general tendency is to try to imitate others.

II. David Defeating the Champion: verses 41-51.

Goliath disdained and despised the young Hebrew champion.

Evil-doers may despise the righteous, but the time is coming when the tables will be turned, and the wicked will themselves be put to shame, and also utterly destroyed (Psa. 9:3-6; 11:6; 34:21; 91:3).

David was small, young and seemingly poorly armed, but he was not alone, for he stood before the giant as the representative of the Lord God of hosts (Psa. 124:8). The battle was the Lord's, and His honour was at stake (Exod. 14:14; 1 Sam. 25:28; Hos. 1:7). David was clothed with the power of God, and weapons of steel were of no avail against him (Isa. 54:17). We, too, may be assured of the ultimate victory of the Lord over His enemies.

David conquered the giant through faith in God (2 Sam. 22:33; Heb. 11:34). Yet, he also used means—his staff and five small, smooth pebbles. Faith and means go together.

David had not performed his service with a view to gaining a reward of riches, fame or position (verse 25), but he was jealous for the honour of the Lord (verse 26). The youthful warrior, bearing the trophy of his victory in his hand, was presented to the king. One day all Christians will stand before the Saviour to receive rewards for the deeds done in the flesh (Psa. 126:5, 6; Rom. 14:10). Let us so serve Christ that we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming (1 John 2:28).

Saul's failure to identify David may suggest a lapse of some years since David had acted as minstrel at the court (1 Sam. 16:23) or faulty memory due to Saul's mental condition when he first saw David. It may be, however, that Saul had forgotten merely the name of David's father, as the wording of his question would suggest (verse 58).

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

Dec. 28—Goliath's Challenge	1 Sam. 17:1-14.
Dec. 29—David's Answer	1 Sam. 17:15-31.
Dec. 30—Israel's Triumph	1 Sam. 17:52-58.
Dec. 31—God's Answer to Man's Insolence	2 Kings 19:20-37.
Jan. 1—God for us	Psa. 56
Jan. 2—Who can be against us?	Rom. 8:28-39
Jan. 3—David's Song of Victory	2 Sam. 22:17-41

SUGGESTED HYMNS

Standing by a purpose true, 'Stand up! stand up for Jesus! It may not be on the mountain's height. Firmly stand for God. Conquering now and still to conquer. Awake our souls; away our fears.

THE NECESSITY OF THE NEW BIRTH.

Music has no pleasure in it to them who cannot hear; nor the most beautiful colours, to those who cannot see. It would be no benefit to a fish to take him from the bottom of the ocean, filled with cold and darkness, and place him under the beams of the sun; for he is in no way meet to receive any refreshment from it. Heaven itself would not be more advantageous to persons not renewed by the spirit of grace in this life.

—JOHN OWEN

BOOKS AND BOOKLETS

By DR. T. T. SHIELDS

"The Plot That Failed"	2.00
"Other Little Ships"	\$2.00
Special Illustrated Number of Sept. 28	.25
"Russellism or Rutherfordism", 71 pages	.25
"The Papacy in the Light of Scripture", 26 pages	.25
"The Oxford Group Analyzed"	.05
"Does Killed in Action Mean Gone to Heaven?"	.05
"The Christian Attitude Toward Amusements"	.05
"The God of All Comfort"	.05

The Gospel Witness

130 Gerrard Street East, Toronto 2 - Canada