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MOTTO FOR 1955

A Message by the Pastor, Dr. T. T. Shields
Electrically Recorded

Given at the New Year's Morning Service, Jarvis Street Baptist Church, January 1st, 1955

"And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God." 2 Cor. 8:5.

I SPEAK to you, dear friends, this morning from my sick bed. I shall try to make myself heard.

Some weeks ago Mr. Tarr published in THE GOSPEL WITNESS an article by Mr. Spurgeon recounting his experiences as a sick man, telling all that he had suffered, and what a trial it was. Since he did that I may perhaps presume to refer to myself. All that Mr. Spurgeon suffered I have suffered, and very much more. His sufferings were gouty pains, which lasted for some time, but not for a very great while. Mine have lasted for fourteen months, and that is a long time to be suffering in bed. However, I have learned many lessons, and it has not been all suffering. I have had some very delightful experiences with the Lord, and I am going to try to tell you this morning some of the lessons I have learned.

First of all I must tell you how grievously I have missed you all, and how much I have longed for your fellowship. I do not boast when I say that as long ago as I can remember I cannot recall having missed one opportunity of attending the house of the Lord when it was possible to be there. I have loved the habitation of God's house, and the place where His honour dwelleth.

The text I have given you has a world of meaning in it. No one is of any real value to the church until he has first given himself to the Lord. *And so I want to speak a little of that first of all, and try to explain what I conceive to be involved in giving one's self to the Lord.*

It is not just becoming a church member, and making a profession of religion, it is not walking up the aisle in response to an invitation; it is really a surrender of one's own self to the Lord. And what does that involve, to give our own selves unto the Lord? How can we do it, and in what sense are we thus surrendered to Him? Well first of all, it is to give up ourselves to the Lord in the sense that all of our personal interests are subordinated to the will of God. It is to put Christ first in everything. It means to put Him first in our business, to put Him

before our business in fact, and always to consider what the Lord's will is in respect to any course of action contemplated, whatever your business is. It means that you put Christ first, you give priority always to His claims, and put yourself in the second place. It means that you must surrender your profits, and consider first what will be glorifying to Him, and not what will be profitable to you. It means to put the customers' interests largely before your own. It means, in short, to put Jesus Christ first in everything, every day, and all the time, from morning till night.

Now that means to live unto God wholly, so that is what we must do. It means that we must put Him before our family. Many parents allow their children to cripple their Christian lives. They indulge them. They do many things because the children ask them, which the Lord would not have done. Now this we must be careful of. You remember how our Lord said that unless a man should love Him more than his father and mother and wife and children, and his own life also, he could not be His disciple. That is just what it means, and nothing less than that. I know that is a very much higher standard than that set by the average professing Christian, but the standard is not too high, and it is the only standard which the New Testament recognizes. It means to learn to say "No" to the children. It means to learn to deny them that which would be injurious to them; it means to forbid their going to the movies when they want to go, because it would do them harm. It means, in short, to set the children an example of putting Christ first in everything.

It means putting Christ before the church. A great many people think more of the church and of their Denomination than they do of the Lord Jesus, and when interests conflict they yield their interests to the church instead of to the Lord. Now those who put the Lord first will be separated people; they will have to be. They

will sometimes find that they have to part company with their own church, and with their Denomination, and with their minister, and with many others. But cost what it may they must put Christ first, or they are not doing what these Macedonians did. Many otherwise earnest Christians are slaves to their Denomination. They think more of their Denomination and of their church than they do of Christ, and when the church goes wrong they go wrong with it. This must not be if we are to observe the principle of the text. I am glad that our people in Jarvis Street follow so closely the ways of the Lord. I am glad that they do as Jarvis Street does as we try to follow Him. But if and whenever Jarvis Street goes astray it becomes your duty not to follow them, but to give yourselves unto the Lord, and unto the Lord only.

The one supreme example of one's giving himself to the Lord is that of Abraham. When God said to him, "Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and . . . offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of," Abraham obeyed the Lord, and went so far as to stretch forth his hand to slay his son. And God told him to lay not his hand upon the lad, "for now," he said; "I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me." The New Testament states it thus: "By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only son, of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure." You will say that is a very high standard. Quite true; it is the Divine standard, the Biblical standard, and the only standard by which we may be guided. We never give ourselves unto the Lord until we have given up our dearest treasure to death, and received it back from God as the living guarantee that He will fulfill His promise. When thus He has met our requirements it becomes our duty to give ourselves unto the Lord.

No man is of any value to God, or to the church until he has wholly given himself to God. That is the *sine qua non* that is indispensable to any acceptable service by God. We first give ourselves unto the Lord, "and unto us (that is, the church) by the will of God."

What does it mean to give ourselves to the Church? It means to do it by the will of God, whatever may be the will of God in that respect. That we must do. And when thus we give ourselves to God and to the church then we may be of some value to Him. We must study how we ought to serve God in the church, how we should preach the gospel, how we should go about the work of the Lord in general. So the apostles did. They did what they did because they believed it was the will of God. And so they went from place to place preaching the gospel of the grace of God. Thus they went everywhere preaching the Word.

I have a thousand things I should like to say to you this morning, but I think this is sufficiently comprehensive, and if we follow these directions we shall not go far wrong. And so I set before you this New Year's morning motto, that every one of us should begin by giving ourselves to God, and after that by giving ourselves to the church by the will of God. I think I must let the rest go for this morning, and you can follow it out for yourselves. May we thus spend ourselves this year in this way, to the praise of the glory of His Name.

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

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NOTE ABOUT PASTOR'S NEW YEAR'S MOTTO

Our readers are aware of the fact that the Editor of this paper has been laid aside upon the sick-bed for the past fourteen months. As the regular New Year's meeting approached, he determined that he would send a message to the church. The message is contained in the pages of this issue of THE GOSPEL WITNESS. Our impression of it is best summarized in the words which Mr. Cole used, on hearing it—"After being laid aside for such a long time, most men would talk of themselves; he talks of Christ!"

The congregation filled Greenway Chapel on New Year's Day to join in the service of prayer, praise and testimony. Dr. Shields' message had been recorded on tape and the whole company rejoiced to hear once more the voice of the under-shepherd. —L.K.T.

SUNDAY IN JARVIS STREET

On the first Sunday of the new year, the services were marked by good attendance and a fine spirit. In the morning Professor Cole spoke on the subject, "The New Year and the New Road". One responded to the invitation. In the evening the associate pastor, Mr. Slade, spoke on "Fire and Flood". During the evening service four were baptized. The monthly communion service was held after the evening service; at this time five were received into the membership of the church. —L.K.T.

CHRIST, THE RULER OF THE CHURCH

Christ loves to dwell in a house which is built according to His own plans, and not according to the whims and fancies of men. The Church ought not to set up as her authority the decrees of men, either living or dead; her ruler is Christ. Associations formed otherwise than according to Scripture must fail in the long run. I wish Christians would believe this. Chillingworth said: "The Bible, and the Bible alone, is the religion of Protestants."

SPURGEON

A Terrible "Crime"!

IN *THE GOSPEL WITNESS* of December 16, we wrote of Rome's recent interference in the educational system of Canada's tenth province, Newfoundland. The system in that province is one centered around denominational schools. In accord with this system, the United Church of Canada recommended a Mr. Lloyd Howse for the position of a School Supervisor. He was not granted this position because the Roman Church objected! Yes, because the Church of Rome did not endorse a Protestant supervisor for Protestant schools, the government yielded to the servants of the Pope.

At the time we felt that the Church had no business interfering and we could see no reason why it should. Now the story comes out and we are told why Rome objected to Mr. Howse. The St. John's *Telegram* ably tells the story as follows:—

"Offered the job as U.C. School Supervisor, which he accepted, Lloyd Howse was later told he was not acceptable. In a letter to *The Telegram*, Nov. 2, Mr. Howse told his story in the extracts below:

"Last year an advertisement appeared in the press for U.C. Supervising Inspectors. School supervision appealed to me and so I applied. My application was favorably received and I was requested to go to St. John's for an interview—which I did during the Easter vacation. This interview was successful. Every member of the U.C. Council of Education was in favour of my appointment. The decision was unanimous. 'The job is yours,' said Dr. Curtis, 'but it has to be approved by the Cabinet before it becomes official.' It need scarcely be said that the cornerstone of sectarian education is the autonomy of each denomination within its own educational sphere. In other words, Cabinet approval is a mere formality. Hence I was virtually appointed.

"Immediately after Easter I tendered my resignation to the Corner Brook Public School Board to become effective at the end of the school year. The Board asked me to reconsider, but to no avail. My decision to become a School Supervisor was irrevocable. Time passed quickly, and soon I was back home in Glovertown where I intended to spend a short holiday before proceeding to St. John's to instruct in Summer School. (All Supervisors are obligated to serve in Summer School.) However, the vacation was short lived, for on June 26 Dr. Curtis called me on the telephone requesting that I come to St. John's for consultation. Naturally I consented to go and next morning I appeared in the Superintendent's office. After we exchanged greetings Dr. Curtis came to the point. He said that the R.C. Church was deeply perturbed by my letter which (a) criticized statements made by Bishops O'Reilly and (b) favoured amalgamation of schools. But this was not all. Far from it. I listened with growing apprehension as he stated categorically that the R.C. Church was fanatically opposed to my

becoming a School Supervisor and had brought powerful pressure to bear upon the Cabinet to stop the appointment. 'The Cabinet,' continued Dr. Curtis, 'was divided over the issue and had shelved it.' (Paradoxically, however the Cabinet's indecision was really decisive, for shelving a matter is tantamount to rejecting it.) Nevertheless for a brief moment the thought flashed across my mind that the door was not finally shut and so I said: 'Do you think it is reasonable to assume that the Cabinet will eventually decide in my favour?' No. It was not a reasonable assumption. I suppose it was rather naive of me to have indulged in such wishful thinking, for the crux of the matter from the political point of view: 'How many votes can Howse command at an election?' Alas for the obliquities and callousness of politicians!

"It was less than a fortnight since I had severed my connections with Corner Brook where I had spent such happy and rewarding years. And now suddenly and without warning I was struck down. The incredible tale which Dr. Curtis told was a bitter pang to me. No man likes to be clawed down. And it was done surreptitiously. That was the unkindest cut of all. Here were the protagonists of sectarian education, who affirm that the system is essential in order to include Christian ethics, engaging in tactics that are the very antithesis of the Sermon on the Mount. What an extraordinary commentary on the workings of the human mind! I must confess that I felt deep resentment while at the same time I was disillusioned."

Notice that the Roman Catholic Church objected not because of Mr. Howse's lack of qualifications or experience nor because of his character but because he dared to criticize some statements of two Roman Bishops! Surely a terrible "crime"!

In another letter Mr. Howse says, "I had no idea that it was an offence to criticize a clergyman, and so I refuted statements by two bishops. The result? I was struck down. No amount of twaddle; no amount of claptrap can conceal the pregnant fact that the R.C. Church deprived me of a position which is rightfully mine. It is no mere rhetorical question to ask, 'Whose turn will be next?'"

Have we come upon a day when it is thought wrong to disagree with anyone else? Is conformity to error the great virtue and silence the mark of brave men? Some may be disposed to say that this is a minor incident. Not so! Mr. Howse rightly asks, "Whose turn will be next?" If Rome is given full sway, you may rest assured that next in line will be any who oppose her tyranny and false teaching.

Surely this incident in Newfoundland will help to persuade Protestants and all liberty-loving citizens that Rome is the enemy of a free educational system and of civil liberty.

—L.K.T.

BOOK REVIEW

SINGING IN THE VALLEY: A Word of Cheer from the Twenty-Third Psalm, by Robert Barr. Published and distributed by Evangelical Publishers, 366 Bay Street, Toronto 1, Canada. Cloth bound, 95 pages. Price \$1.00.

The Twenty-Third Psalm, called by Mr. Barr "The Westminster Abbey of the Psalter", since "in a wonderful way all that is best in the Psalms finds expression in this Psalm," has been of untold blessing to multitudes. Probably no portion of the Sacred Word has brought more courage, comfort, cheer and inspiration to troubled hearts than has the Shepherd Psalm. The servant of God who can make real to the heart the blessed truths taught therein has performed a ministry of lasting benefit. The present volume is a devotional meditation which abounds in poetical expression and homely illustration, as the heart-searching message of the Psalm is applied to the lives of men and women of our day.

The late Rev. Robert Barr, M.A., was eminently fitted to undertake this mission of consolation and encouragement. He was educated in Scotland and there spent the early years of his ministry before going to Capetown, South Africa, where he was greatly used of the Lord among Europeans, white and coloured folk. His last years of service were spent in Toronto at Knox Presbyterian Church. He passed away in 1953. His devotion to the Lord, his zeal in His service, and his tender compassion for the souls of wounded men and women breathe through the lines of every page of this precious little volume.

The truths of the Psalm are aptly summarized and expounded in the various chapters, but never does the analysis become stilted, and never does the expression or the form of the thought take from the force of the truth itself, but rather these add to the glory and beauty of the promises. Even the headings of the chapters strongly invite further reading and study of the Psalm; for example, Three Great Contentments, Precious Foretastes of Heaven, With Christ in Life's Commonplaces, Jesus and Angels in Disguise, The Shepherd's True Home.

At the commencement of this inspiring book the Twenty-Third Psalm is quoted in full in the Authorized Version, and in a Supplement, other versions are given; such as Latin, Ojibway, Portuguese, Afrikaans and Gaelic, in addition to the lovely Paraphrases and Metrical Versions from the Scottish Psalters.

Strongly and attractively bound in green cloth, this book telling of refreshment and restoration will be cherished by many who peruse its pages, seeking to derive from the Word of God the strength needed for the pilgrimage of life, that they may be enabled, like the Psalmist, to lift their songs of praise to the Lord as they walk through the valley, as well as when they climb the mountain steeps.

—DR. O. L. CLARK

IDLENESS CONDEMNED

I am not the only one that condemns the idle; for once when I was going to give our minister a pretty long list of the sins of one of our people whom he was asking after, I began with: "He's dreadfully lazy." "That's enough," said the old gentleman; "all sorts of sins are in that one."—SPURGEON.

BOOK REVIEW

"THOUGH I SPOKE WITH TONGUES . . ." (A Personal Testimony) by Andrew Jackson Roddy—Published and obtainable from *The Harvester*, P.O. Box 505, Louisville, Kentucky, U.S.A., 45 pages; 50 cents each or 3 for \$1.00.

Here is a good forty-five page booklet by one who for a number of years was a member of a modern "Pentecostal" group. The author makes no claim to presenting a treatise on the subject of Pentecostalism or "tongues" but rather simply outlines his own personal testimony and observation. To our mind, this fact enhances the value of the brief and simple study.

Coupled with the simple, clear explanation is a commendable charity. Indeed we must confess that often it seemed that the writer went out of his way to avoid any charge of unfairness. In the end, we feel that he accomplished his avowed purpose which he expresses in this way:—"It is with a prayer that the witness of these pages may afford enlightenment and information that I set about their completion. It is likewise with a spirit of sobriety that I complete this testimony, seeking to lift from the original draft any trace of ridicule, to the end that the greatest good for both my former and my present (and permanent) associates may be accomplished."

The reader will find in these pages a good account of first hand contact with those who teach the second work of grace, the state of "sinless" perfection, the fact of divine healing and the phenomenon of "tongues". No cold doctrine here but personal observation!

On closing the booklet, the reader will rejoice with the author in the great Scriptural truths of grace and will be able to sing with more meaning "Amazing Grace!"

At present the author, Dr. Roddy, is Professor of New Testament in the New Orleans Baptist Seminary.

—L.K.T.

HOME-GOING OF MRS. J. F. NORRIS

As the year 1954 drew to a close, word was received here that Mrs. J. F. Norris had passed on to be with Christ. She was the widow of the late Dr. J. Frank Norris of First Baptist Church of Fort Worth, Texas. On hearing this sad news, Mr. Slade sent the following telegram to the First Baptist Church:

C.N.T. RUSH WIRE — 11 a.m. December 31, 1954
FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
FORT WORTH, TEXAS.

DR. SHIELDS AND JARVIS STREET CHURCH DEEPLY SYMPATHIZE WITH THE MEMBERS OF THE FAMILY AND WITH ALL WHO MOURN THE LOSS OF MRS. J. FRANK NORRIS STOP NO NOBLER WOMAN EVER LIVED STOP MRS. NORRIS WAS ONE OF THE LORD'S GREATEST SAINTS AND A REAL MOTHER IN ISRAEL STOP MAY GOD COMFORT YOU ALL IN THE ASSURANCE THAT SHE IS NOW RE-UNITED WITH HER HUSBAND, AND IS WITH CHRIST WHICH IS FAR BETTER.

The Scriptures give four names to Christians — *saints*, for their holiness; *believers*, for their faith; *brethren*, for their love; *disciples*, for their knowledge.

—A. FULLER

The Jarvis Street Pulpit

The Common Bush Afire With God

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Morning, July 29th, 1934
(Stenographically Reported)

(This sermon is taken from our files of hitherto, unprinted sermons and is printed verbatim as delivered. Dr. Shields has had no opportunity either to see or revise it since its delivery.)

"Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the back-side of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb.

"And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed.

"And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt.

"And when the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I.

"And he said, Draw not nigh hither; put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.

"Moreover he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God. Exodus 3:1-6.

MANY of the great lessons of history are entirely missed, and history is often misread for want of perspective. We view certain events, and perhaps look admiringly on certain great characters of the past, and we miss the stimulus that ought to come to us, and fail to receive the inspiration which might legitimately be ours for want of an eye to the long road that leads up to the great occasion.

For many years Moses was, to those who observed him, an unfulfilled prophecy. In his early life he promised much, and for a long time seemed utterly to have failed to realize the promise of his youthful years. There must have been those who looked upon him as somewhat foolish to sacrifice all the advantages of the Egyptian court to identify himself with a nation of slaves. There had been some compensation if after having done so he had been permitted to accomplish anything. But having renounced the treasures of Egypt, he seemed to have found no compensating advantage in the life which he had deliberately chosen. Instead of that, you find him feeding sheep in the wilderness, going roundabout in the exercise of the dreary routine of a somewhat irksome duty, when all the learning of the Egyptians, which was his in respect both to his wisdom and his deeds, seemed now to be utterly unprofitable.

So we might view that large section of four score years of Moses' life, if we lose our perspective, if we fail to see the work of preparation providentially being accomplished in those dull and dreary years. There must have been a time when Moses himself felt that he was a failure. It must have been difficult for him to endure, even prior to his great ministry, perhaps even more difficult to endure before he entered upon it than it was after he was plunged into all the activities of it.

I want to suggest to you this morning that we must learn to read properly our own record, and the record of the lives of others. We must not lose sight of this principle of perspective: we are to view this life in the light of another; we are to measure time in its relation to eternity: "Our light affliction, which is but for a

moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen." Because of that time element we are expressly told that the things which are seen are temporal. And if you look at the temporal things only, without appreciating their relation to the things which are eternal, you will fail to understand time, and miss entirely the glories of eternity.

Look, then, once again at this old story which we have read and studied, I suppose, scores of times. Moses saw a bush which burned with fire, but was not consumed. I want to find some very simple, practical, lessons for everyday life in this great record.

I.

THE FIRST IS THIS; THAT MOSES DID ACTUALLY FIND THE PATH OF PROGRESS WHICH LED TO THE GREAT OPPORTUNITY OF LIFE IN THE FAITHFUL DISCHARGE OF HIS DAILY DUTY. I say, Moses himself must have been disappointed. Moses had dreamed dreams which apparently had come, to nothing. For years Moses was just as truly a dreamer as Joseph was. Every man or woman whose life becomes useful is, in some respect, a dreamer. We all look forward into the future; we all hope for the accomplishment of better and greater things. It was to that our Lord referred when he said to Nathaniel: "Ye shall see greater things than these". Now begin to dream; look on into the future; anticipate the greater days that are to come. We ought always to be doing that, for we are saved by hope.

Moses had been hopeful of a great future. He had not blindly refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; he had not turned his back upon all the treasures of Egypt without some thought of some other, and higher, and better, and more enduring reward. The apostle Paul said: "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." It means something to be a Christian. It involves the surrender very often of temporal advantages. It means the payment of a price, of sacrifice, if, indeed, we measure all of life by temporal standards. There are many things which a Christian

must deny himself or herself. If there are no compensating advantages beyond, if we get nothing out of it by and by, and miss everything here, well, then, what profit is there? That appeared to be the case with Moses. He had sacrificed all temporal advantages, and for a long time seemed to have gained nothing in exchange.

But Moses had dreamed of a great future for his people. He had looked upon the distressed Hebrews, and had anticipated a day when God would stretch forth His hand in a mighty deliverance. But Moses had not anticipated that in that great day he would have no other part in that great matter than that of attending sheep. He expected to be something more than a shepherd in God's providential plan. And yet for years together he had nothing to do but look after his sheep. I say he must have been often puzzled to know why there seemed to be no way out of the wilderness into the larger life of which he had dreamed.

So is it often with us. We wonder why it is that we seem to make no progress at all. I remember some years ago telling a bootblack a story, and my story fell rather flat. I thought to encourage him. He was polishing my shoes, and I told him this story: I said there was a man who, when he delivered his maiden speech in the House of Commons, in England, electrified the whole house, and when the session was over, as the members were going out, one remarked to another, "Who was the man who made that extraordinary speech this morning?" "Oh," said the other, "he is just a common sort of man, you know. He blacked my father's boots when he was a boy." He did not know that the orator was moving along, and was just behind him. But he overheard the remark, and said, "Quite so, sir. I blacked your father's boots, but did I not black them well?" I told my bootblack that as he polished my shoes. He looked up and said to me, "I ought to be able to shine shoes; I have been doing it for sixteen years." You see, my story did not apply to him. But you know, we have to do some very ordinary thing, and do it, perhaps, for sixteen years before we find our larger opportunities.

Moses attended to the sheep of his father-in-law; they were not even his own; he was a shepherd working for the family. And it was as he led his sheep one day, as he had led them hundreds of times before along the common beaten track, that the special revelation from God came to him, and he found a path which led to the larger life.

So must it be with us. We must find a way of doing our duty, and doing it well, and not repining because the door does not open immediately. I hear from a good many young people who dream of accomplishing something. They want to obtain training; they want to be ministers or missionaries, or trained Christian workers. And sometimes they complain because they have no money, as Russell Conwell would have said: "They have no C A P I T A L." And they are discouraged because they have to keep sheep and nothing more. But I remind you that God has invariably found his workmen in just such places as that. It was thus our Lord found Levi, sitting at the receipt of customs. He found other of His disciples while they were fishing, while engaged in their daily tasks. He met the Samaritan woman even as she came to perform the daily drudgery, and came with her pitcher to the well. It was when Gideon was threshing his wheat to hide it from the Midianites that the angel of the Lord appeared to him. It was while David was keeping his sheep that he obtained the necessary dis-

cipline which fitted him for the larger service. And you remember how Elijah seemed for a while to think there was no successor; he could see no one at all to take his place. But there was a man following a yoke of oxen, following the plough, whom the Lord pointed out to him. Elisha was not sitting down idly dreaming of some day accomplishing some great task; he was just doing the daily duty, ploughing the field, and God met him at his work, and there commissioned him for the larger tasks of life.

I really believe, dear friends, there ought to be something distinctive about a Christian workman — I do not care who he or she is. I am ashamed of the man who calls himself a Christian, and who does not put conscience into his work, no matter what his task. Try to do it better than anyone else. Put a moral quality into your daily endeavour so that those who see you will know that there is something different about you. I have not the slightest doubt that Moses was one of the best, most efficient and most faithful of all shepherds.

I recall a young fellow, an electrician, who had put a switch plate upon the wall, and it was off the square. I called him, and said, "Did you put that on?" He said, "Yes." And I said, "Can you go home and go to sleep knowing that you put a thing like that on? I should think you would have a nightmare for doing a job like that. Now take it off, and put it on right."

I remember once when we were building a church I came in one day, and there was a door put up. As soon as I came in I saw the door was off the plumb. I called to the foreman and said, "Do you see that door?" He said, "That is all right." I said, "But it is not all right." He insisted that it was all right. I said, "We are going to have hundreds of people in this church who are going to have an eye for things straight, and if I were a worshipper in a church and saw a door like that, I should not be able to listen to the sermon at all. Now take it off." He said, "But it is all right." I said, "It is not all right. Take it down if you have to tear down the wall. It must be properly put up." Shame on the man who does work like that. I believe a genuinely Christian woman ought to be a better housekeeper than anyone else. You say, "I do not like housekeeping." Well, learn to like it. You say, "I hate to wash dishes." Well, you probably don't do it properly. You must learn to like washing dishes. You say no one likes that. There are hundreds of people who like housekeeping, who live in it. Then you can make the kitchen a sanctuary, the shop the holy auditory. Whatever you do, do it well. Be ashamed to leave anything half done. That does not recommend your religion.

I have known a lot of dreaming preachers, young men who thought they were called to be this or that. They were going to do some great thing some day. And I would not give them twenty-five cents a day. The man who cannot be straightforward in his daily task, the man who cannot be quick about his duty, the man who does not recognize that time is money, and who does not put religion into his duty, whatever it is, will never accomplish anything for God in this world. If you have it in you to occupy some sphere of larger service than that which you now occupy, do the thing that you are doing well now, and God will look after the rest.

II.

ANOTHER THING: IN THE DAILY TASK MOSES FOUND OPPORTUNITY TO WORSHIP. He led his flock through the

desert into Horeb, the mountain of God. I believe that Moses learned to like his work. I do not believe Moses would have thanked you for pitying him. He learned to find delight in doing the thing he did. And it afforded him space for meditation. It gave him opportunity to cultivate his soul, to worship God. Moses put his religion into his business, mixed the two, and made it a religion to do his work well, and to find God in all that he did. And it was while he was doing his daily task, leading his flock to the mountain of God that God commissioned him for his life's work.

It is possible to make a sacrament of everything. It is possible to find God in everything. I was going along the street one day, and I saw a man sweeping the street. I did not know him. But he was working for the city, sweeping the streets. As I passed by he looked up and said, "Hallelujah!" I said, "Amen! Are you a Christian?" "Yes, sir," he said, "I am; and I just feel like saying Hallelujah this morning." He knew me; I did not know him, but I was able most fervently and heartily to respond to his Hallelujah with an Amen; and he was just pushing a broom; engaged in that manual task of sweeping up the streets.

Now Moses had a hallelujah in his heart as he looked after his sheep. And so may we. I believe some of the greatest lessons of life may be learned in that way. We used to have someone come here some years ago who, in our testimony meetings, had much to say about the kitchen, and the care of the children, and about the men who came to the door; the gas man, the electric light man; the grocer, the butcher. Somehow or other this woman found lessons in everything, and seemed to see God in everything. So can we find the mountain of God in the desert, and turn our daily task into an act of worship, if indeed we try to do so.

You will find that when that is so God's angels will not pass you by. When Moses came in that spirit to the mountain of God the angel of God was there waiting for him. I wonder do you believe in the ministry of angels? I do. The Bible teaches it: "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" The encampment of the angel of God is always roundabout those who fear Him. It was the religious spirit, the spiritual attitude of soul which Moses brought to his daily task, which enabled him to recognize God in it all. The angel of the Lord came to him then.

My friends, if we are to make progress in the Christian life at all that must be so in the very nature of the case, for most of our time is spent in doing ordinary commonplace things. I think that is true of all of us.

I do not know whether I told you the story once of a missionary who was spending a few days with me in my home. One evening he said to me, "What is your programme for to-morrow?" I told him, and I had a fairly full day. "Well," he said, "do not bother about me. I shall look after myself. You go on about your work." The next morning somewhere between seven and eight o'clock a couple of young fellows came up from the station to see me. They wanted a boarding place, and I telephoned roundabout to try to find them a place to stay. Before they had gone someone else had come. When evening time came my missionary friend said, "Well, how did you get on with your programme to-day?" I said, "I have not touched it. There is not one thing that I had planned to do last night that I have even put my hand to. Everything has been upset. I have been doing

little things all day that any office boy could have attended to. My time has been wholly taken up with this kind of drudgery." He said, "You do not seem to have enjoyed it very much." I said, "I confess that I am a little bit put out that I have not been able to do what I wanted to do to-day." "Oh, cheer up, brother. You ought to have been a missionary." I said, "What do you mean?" "Well you would find a very large part of a missionary's time is taken up doing little things like that. Furthermore, read your gospels over again, and see how much of the time of the Lord Jesus was taken up in doing commonplace things."

That is how your time is taken up. Many of you housewives spend most of your time looking after your house — hours and hours every week spent in the kitchen, dusting, and sweeping, and cleaning, and all that sort of thing. And where there are children, what a lot of time is taken up in looking after the children. And sometimes you say, "Well, if only I had leisure, if only I could just withdraw myself from all these activities so that I might have time to meditate! I wish I could just shut myself up to my Bible, and I think then I could grow in grace." Very probably you would not grow at all. Somehow or another, in view of the fact that God has so ordered it, most of our lives are spent, and the greater part of the time of each life is spent in doing commonplace things. Then it must follow that He designs that we should find the necessary discipline of life in these common things. If that were not so, then life would be a woefully inadequate preparation for the eternal ages.

There are people who have no leisure at all. I have known mothers who for years together have just lived lives of ceaseless drudgery, without any vacation, without anything to relieve the monotony of it. Unless we learn to turn all these fretting duties to account, and find spiritual discipline therein, we are not being prepared for the life that is to come. And God wills that we should so prepare. I believe that while it is a great privilege to go to the house of the Lord; it is a great privilege to have a little leisure to meditate upon this Book. It is a great privilege to be able to withdraw ourselves occasionally from human society, and to spend some little time in solitude alone with God. But if we have not these privileges, and must keep on — and on, leading the sheep through the desert, then it follows that we must somehow or another combine the two. We must learn what lessons we have to learn while we are about our task.

William Carey became one of the greatest linguists of his time, and was recognized and honoured by all the learned societies of the world, but he was a cobbler, and he learned to read his Greek New Testament while he was cobbling shoes. It is possible for us to combine the two somehow, and find lessons at the mountain of God even while the sheep are grazing hard by. If we are waiting for God's angels, you may be sure they will not pass us by.

What is it to be a Christian? To have a title to a mansion in the sky? Yes, to have our sins forgiven? Yes. To be children of God? Yes. To be joint heirs, with Christ? Yes. What else does it mean? It means to have Someone with us every minute of the day and night to help us. It is to have resident and regnant within us a supernatural power that will enable us to do things that of ourselves we could not possibly accomplish. Moses met the angel at the bush. Have you not had the angels

help you? I have; times without number. I believe that if we could meet the morning in the spirit of Moses, if we took up that attitude toward life we should find that we could turn Monday into Sunday. There is only one Sunday in the week. It would be a sad thing if we could not serve the Lord anywhere but in Church. We should not serve Him much.

I told a story the other day of the one who was baptized here a Sunday or so ago. I asked her about her conversion. I told it in prayer meeting, and some of you were not there. She said several people had spoken to her, and she was not without interest and anxiety about the matter, but she was not saved. One day a peddler came to her door. He did not try to sell her anything, but was going to deliver some tea to someone, and he asked her if she could tell him where a certain person lived on that street. She did not know the address. He made some remark about the weather, and she in response made some remark in which she used the name of God. He was an elderly man, and he said: "Are you a Christian?" She said, "I am afraid I am not." "Well," he said, "would you like to be a Christian?" "Oh, there is nothing I desire more." He said, "May I come in and speak to you?" She said, "Yes," and he came in, and took out his Bible and showed her the way of life, asked her if she would get down and pray, and they prayed together. And she said, "I rose rejoicing in Christ. I know I am saved." I said, "What was his name?" She said, "I do not know. He did not tell me his name. He did say that he had attended Jarvis Street Church"—I do not know whether regularly or not, but there was some mention of the church. I said, "What was he supposed to be doing?" "Well, he was supposed to be selling tea, but he forgot all about the tea, and he went out and left me a Christian."

That is just what Moses did in his daily task. In looking to God the angel came and helped him. So it is possible for us in like manner to invoke the help of God's angels.

III.

Now just this simple word and I have done: LET US BE CAREFUL HOW WE TREAT THESE SPECIAL VISITATIONS FROM GOD. When you have a special consciousness of the Lord's nearness, and of His help, do not pass it by as though it were a simple matter. Moses had seen that bush hundreds of times before, and now he saw it ablaze with fire, and it was not consumed. He saw something in the bush, in that commonplace, everyday spot that he had gazed upon perhaps hundreds of times, for I fancy there was scarcely a boulder anywhere in the desert with which Moses was not familiar, so familiar that he was weary of looking at them often. As he looked at this bush he saw something new about it. He was made aware of the presence of God in a peculiar sense. What did he do? He said, "I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt".

Do you remember when Peter came out of prison? He was bound with chains, and had soldiers beside him to keep him. But the angel of the Lord came and broke his fetters, opened the prison door, and they came to the iron door, and it opened of its own accord, and he went out into the street, and it is said when Peter came to himself he pondered the thing. He said, "What is the meaning of this marvellous sight". And it is said, he "wist not that it was true which was done by the angel"; he thought he was in a dream; almost shook himself to

make sure that he was awake, and that life was real. And when he came to himself he said, "Now I know of a surety, that the Lord hath sent his angel, and hath delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews".

God comes to us — and I am speaking out of your experience I know, for there are many here who say God has been just as real to me in the shop and in the office, and on the street, in the school, wherever I have had to do my duty, as real and as precious to me as He ever has been in church. I have had real disclosures of His grace to me under such circumstances. Well, when it came, what have you done? Have you taken a moment to say, "What is the significance of this. Turn aside to see this great sight. Why did God come to me this particular day? What further communication has He to make to my soul?" Listen and see what God has to say. I do not mean in church, in the study, I mean down in the place of daily labour, wherever it is when God comes near, let your soul pause for a moment to ask, What is the significance of this special sensitiveness, this awareness of the nearness of God.

"When the Lord saw that he turned aside." My friend, if you want to know more of God listen while He speaks. Have you been engaged in conversation with someone, and you had several things on your mind to communicate to that person, but when you had spoken a minute or two you saw that person was very restless, and wanted to go, and you said, "I cannot speak now." I used to know someone who had a very peculiar habit, a very distressing, and I thought an impolite, habit. After you had spoken to him for about a minute he would take out his watch, as much as to say, "Don't you know it is time to go." There are some people who when God speaks to them they take out their watches; they are in a hurry; they have not time to stop. But when God saw that Moses turned aside He spoke to him, and He said: "Put off thy shoes".

My time is gone — it is a good thing I looked at my watch. I had much to say to you this morning. Moses was a man who was mighty in word and in deed, learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, but he took the sandals from his feet, and stood unshod in the divine presence, a shepherd in the desert, while God communicated to him that revelation which was to affect the destiny of the whole world. You do not know what God will say to you if you listen. You do not know what secret He may have to communicate if you are only attentive, and do not come with your microscope, and don't press your questions too far. "I am going to see" said Moses, "why this bush is not consumed with fire." And when the Lord spoke to him he said, "Stay where you are. Draw not nigh. You are close enough. Do not ask too many questions, but just listen. I have been waiting for a long time to talk to you. Now listen; it is my turn to talk."

There are some people who never learn that. Never allow God to talk! They are always talking — talking — talking, asking questions. And they say that that is the inquiring mind. Many a little child can see more in a rosebud than any botanist that ever lived. You can come too close even to a rosebud, you know, and tear it all apart; put it under your microscope, and call it Latin names, and say, "Now I am very learned", — and never see a rose at all.

Draw not nigh where God is. Keep a respectful distance. Stand unshod in His presence, and listen with a

reverent attitude toward God, that God may speak to you.

Had I time I should tell you very often that is true of an individual life. I have seen men who burnt with fire and were not consumed. Sometimes that is true of the church collectively when the fire of the Holy Ghost comes God is in the midst of us. Often is it true of the Holy Bible. Has this ever been a bush that burned with fire to you? It has for me, many a time. I do not need to read books to know whether this Bible is true. I know that it is true. I do not need anyone to tell me it is the word of God: I have heard God speak; I know. And oh, very often it has been lighted with a supernatural illumination, and I have not felt like asking questions, but just felt like a little child who wanted to listen while God whispered His secrets to my soul.

That is the way to study the Bible, to turn aside and listen as though you expected God to say something. And He will not disappoint you. Before the day is done you will have received your commission; you will know your appointed place. God will have given His angels charge concerning you, and you will be embarked upon some great mission which will touch the eternities with its influence. May the Lord give us reverent spirits.

Is there anyone here not a Christian? anyone here who says, "I do not believe the Bible". It is quite possible that if someone else had been standing beside Moses they might not have seen the flame of fire at all. It may have been visible to Moses, and to no one else.

I read of an interview with a certain professor last night. He said, "Thank God we have no Tennessee Fundamentalists in England" — and with a sneer "those who believe the Bible". To him it is nothing but a bush; that is all. Nothing but a bush, so many twigs, leaves, roots — a subject for microscopic examination, and chemical examination, and all the rest of it. That is all. He has never seen the fire. I know he has not. That is the explanation of the attitude of some ministers to-day. Why? They have never been born again. They have never been touched by the Holy Ghost. No man could ever speak so of the Bible if he had seen the fire of God burning.

Oh, may God keep us standing reverently in the desert places of life, and may we hear a voice from heaven saying: "This is the way; walk ye in it"! Oh, young man or woman, if you have not put your trust in Christ, just turn aside and ask God to make the bush burn with fire! Then some text of scripture will leap out at you that you have heard a hundred times, and yet you have never heard it at all, and you will hear it for the first time. I will give you this one, the most familiar one in the Bible. May God set it on fire!—"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Let us pray:

O Lord, we pray Thee, bless our meditation this morning. Send us from this place with a deeper sense of the reality of God, of the divine authority of this holy Book.

So help us to gild these common tasks of life with glory, by learning how to seek God in the morning.

We ask it for Thy name's sake, Amen.

Do not fear the face of man. Remember how small their anger will appear in eternity.

—ROBERT MURRAY MCCHEYNE

From Our Files

Thirty Years Ago, THE GOSPEL WITNESS, January 8, 1924—This issue contains the account of the New Year's Eve prayer meeting and the New Year's Day Morning meeting: "It is doubtful whether, even in the long history of Jarvis Street Church, two such extraordinary meetings have been held as were held New Year's Eve and New Year's morning. Wednesday evening the meeting began at nine o'clock; and by ten o'clock the lecture hall was crowded, every seat being occupied. A spirit of prayer was upon the people; and without any cessation, the tide of prayer flowed on until about ten minutes to twelve, when a hymn of praise was sung; and then the last five minutes of the year was spent in silent prayer, while the New Year was hailed with songs of rejoicing.

Ten-thirty was the hour for the New Year's morning meeting; but so many came at ten o'clock that the meeting was begun, and by a few minutes after half-past ten, the lecture hall was again packed. There was some singing; but it was evident that the people had come with a desire to pray, and prayer continued unceasingly till eleven-forty-five. The Pastor then spoke briefly, referring to the New Year's motto for 1924, "Thou shalt see greater things than these," and to the abundant fulfillment of that promise in the church's experience during the year. He then gave as the motto for this year, II Corinthians 3:5: "Our sufficiency is of God."

As soon as testimony was called for, people rose all over the building, as many as four and five being on their feet at once. This continued till far past half-past twelve; so that the Pastor was obliged to ask all those who would like to give a testimony to stand. A great company responded to this invitation, and remained standing as one by one they expressed their gratitude for blessings past, and expressed their confidence that larger blessing was in store. This great New Year's meeting closed with the singing of one of Jarvis Street's favorite hymns, 'All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name'."

The following is the account of the work of the Lord's Day of that week:—

"The first Sunday of the New Year was a day of great blessing. Notwithstanding the heavy snow of the morning, nearly eight hundred were present in the Bible School; and at the close of the morning service, in response to the appeal for members of the church, and Christians generally, to dedicate themselves to the work of personal evangelism for the year, hundreds came forward, filling the front of the church and all the aisles; and large numbers of others who could not move from their seats, indicated the same resolution by raising their hands.

In the evening, there was a great congregation. At the Communion service following, every section of the ground floor of the church was well occupied, though not in all parts crowded. The Pastor gave the Hand of Fellowship to nineteen, five of whom had been baptized during the first service."

Woe unto the mouth which is silent at the mercy seat, for it will one day be dumb at the judgment seat.

—C. H. SPURGEON

AMONG THE CHURCHESby **H. C. Slade****Roseland — A Pioneer Venture**

Two front views of new building.

THE CONSERVATIVE REGULAR BAPTIST ASSOCIATION OF CANADA this year has engaged in an extensive program. Emphasized especially is the establishment of gospel-preaching churches in large and growing areas. The apostolic plan was obviously one of concentrating first upon the centres of population and then from these radiating out to the surrounding districts. To this end, new works are being started in some of the large cities of our land. One such work is that at Roseland, Ontario. Roseland is a growing suburb of Windsor — one of Canada's leading industrial cities. There in the midst of the many new homes of this residential area has been raised a new Baptist church to preach the glorious gospel.

Concerning the new work, Rev. B. R. Oatley-Willis writes:—

"The Roseland work was commenced as a result of canvassing by the Young People's Department of the First Baptist Church, Essex (whose pastor is B. R. Oatley-Willis—Ed. G.W.). A Sunday School was commenced, October, 1952, in the local public school which had to be vacated after a few months, when the Women's Institute building was rented. About this time Mr. Russell Cherry took over the work upon graduating from the Seminary. This he did, knowing there could be no remuneration and thus he supported himself and family by taking secular employment. Happily, through a grant made recently by the Board of our Association, Mr. Cherry is now able to give his full time to the work.

"The need for a building of their own was soon apparent to the Roseland people. A well-located lot was secured which was largely paid for through the generosity of the churches of our Association and gifts from interested individuals.

"Sacrificial giving on the part of the Roseland people has made it possible for a start on the building which thus far has been erected on a "pay as you go" process. The building consists of the auditorium and the pastor's quarters in the rear. He is now paying a high rent for a small apartment out of a small salary. Most of the

work upon the structure has been volunteer labour by the Roseland folk and members of First Baptist Church, Essex. This will reduce the cost of the building from a much higher figure to about Seven Thousand Dollars. Only Three Hundred Dollars has been paid for hired labour.

"In order to enclose the building and protect it from the weather as well as to complete the interior, it was necessary for the Roseland group to take out a mortgage for \$5,000. Needless to say, this has placed a heavy burden upon the work which has pledged, outside of its normal expenses, \$75 monthly towards its pastor's salary. As always occurs, there have been unanticipated expenditures, due to local conditions, which have to be taken from the mortgage money. To date we have not been able to think of interior furnishings such as chairs and pews, which a conservative estimate places at \$600. In all, the work needs at least \$2,000 to complete their task. It is hoped that the building will be ready for opening in the spring.

The Prospects

"Now — what of the prospects? Roseland is a fast-growing suburb of Windsor and the church building is located in the centre of this district to reach upward from 3,500 people. In addition to this, it is the only evangelical testimony in the whole area. Until recently, another evangelical Sunday School was located about two miles distant from our work in another division. We were asked to absorb these into our work, which we have done. The average attendance in Roseland has been to date 35."

The story of the struggles, setbacks and victories of this church is typical of the early days of works that now are flourishing. This pioneer work in Roseland is one of the new works of the Association; others will be outlined in the pages of THE GOSPEL WITNESS in the months ahead. Money sent to the Association's secretary at 337 Jarvis Street, Toronto, will be used to erect similar buildings and testimonies to the glory of God and the salvation of souls.

"EVER THIS OUR WAR CRY - VICTORY! VICTORY!"

A Sermon by C. H. Spurgeon

"Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors: and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors."—Isaiah liii. 12.

OUR great concern is concerning Christ. "For him shall constant prayer be made." It does not much matter what becomes of us, the common soldiers, so long as our great Captain is to the front. As the men of Napoleon's Old Guard could defy death for themselves, but were ever anxious about the emperor, so every loyal soldier of Christ feels that the one question in the present conflict is, "How goes it with the King?" Is he crowned? Is he exalted? Is he winning his way among the sons of men? Brothers, it may be that our star is waning. Does it matter, if *his* sun is reaching its noon? It may happen that the company with which we are associated is not so much to the front as it used to be, and the regimental flag is in the rear, but what of that? Let us do the best we can to retrieve its honour; but, after all, the main consideration is the royal standard. Where is that? "Let my name perish," said Whitefield, "but let Christ's name last for ever." Such a feeling should actuate us all. What are we, my brethren, and, what is our father's house? What if ten thousand of us should fall merely to fill a ditch for him to march over? What if he took the whole of us and crushed us to the dust, if he were lifted an inch the higher, it were none too costly sacrifice for such a One as he is, who has redeemed us unto God by his precious blood.

Our first and last concern is about the result of our great warfare in regard to Christ; and my text will be consoling to your hearts in proportion as you are consecrated to Christ. If you are a worker for Jesus, and your heart is tremulous for the cause of God, — if you feel dismayed at times, and often anxious about the progress of the kingdom, — such an assurance as this will be like a voice from the Comforter himself. It is the Father who speaks, and he says concerning the Well-beloved, "Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong."

I

The first truth taught us here is that THE VICTORY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST IS SURE.

Sure, first, because *these words are a divine promise*; and every word of promise that comes from God is established. "Hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?" If God has said, "I will divide him a portion," that portion shall be divided. If the Lord has delivered that he shall divide the spoil with the strong, who is he that shall keep him back from the prey? We might have doubted if this word had been a prediction as to the probabilities of the life of this religion or of that; we might have supposed that the religion of Christ would be crushed out by rougher faiths that could use the carnal weapon, or that its exceeding spirituality might cause it to wither away in an atmosphere so uncongenial. We might, I say, have had some trembling because of the ark of the Lord if this had been a mere inference or opinion; but we have none now; for as surely as this book is the infallible

Word of God, so surely must Christ win the day. As surely as God cannot lie, so surely must he upon whom the Lord laid the iniquity of men, rise from all his sorrows to a glorious victory.

The text is a promise placed very singularly in connection with facts which have been accomplished. We are told that Christ shall divide the spoil with the strong, but that promise is set side by side with the declaration that he is "brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth." Just as surely, then, as that part of the prophecy is fulfilled in which Christ suffers, so surely shall that be fulfilled in which he triumphs. You have no doubt whatever about his being taken from prison and from judgment, about his making his grave with the wicked and with the rich in his death. Well, the same book and the same chapter which contains the prophecy of those sorrowful facts contains this prophecy that he shall divide the spoil with the strong. Therefore the ultimate victory of Christ is made sure by a divine promise.

Notice, moreover, that it is *the Father himself who here puts forth his hand to guarantee the victory*. He writes, "Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great." "I will do it; I will see that he conquers; I will see that he has the reward of his labour. My own right hand and my holy arm shall so be with him that he shall tread down his enemies, and he shall take from them mountains of prey." Who is this that saith "I will divide him a portion?" It is he at whose voice the earth trembles.

"The pillars of heaven's starry roof
Tremble and start at his reproof."

When he says "I will do it," who shall stay his hand or resist his will? God, the everlasting Father, has staked his honour and his glory upon the success of Christ. I make bold to say that if Christ win not the world, and if he be not crowned King of kings and Lord of lords, it is not Jesus that is dishonoured so much as the Great Father by whom he was ordained, sent, and anointed. The stain would not only be upon the manhood but upon the Godhead too; for God himself appointed the Lord Jesus, and said of him—"This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." He must see the Messiah through with it. It is the pleasure of the Lord that is in his hand, and that pleasure must prosper there, or else God's name would be dishonoured. How sure I am that Jesus will win the victory.

I am delighted to notice a change of expression in the next sentence. *The Son of God himself also puts hand to the work of ultimate victory*. Read the text again. "Therefore will I divide him a portion," and *he shall divide*. God gives him the victory, and he takes it himself. The Father grants it, and the Son grasps it by his own right hand. The glorious Jehovah cries, "He shall divide," and the ever-blessed Son of the Highest as a

conqueror comes forth actually to divide the spoil. Oh, my brethren, Jesus is as gentle as a lamb; but I might say of him as they of the Red Sea said of Jehovah, "The Lord is a man of war: the Lord is his name." This Lamb is the Lion of the tribe of Judah, and who shall stand before him when he goes forth to war? Who shall rouse him up? They that came against him to take him in the days of his humiliation stumbled and fell when he uttered the words, "I AM"; and if the full power of that "I AM" had been let loose upon them they had not merely staggered to their falling, but each man among them had stumbled into his grave. It is he that stilled the waves upon Gennesaret: it is he that ruled the powers of the deep, and made the devils fly at his bidding: if he putteth his hand to the battle, woe to those that strive against him! The defeat of Christ! Laugh the idea to scorn. Nay, the thorn-crowned Prince is victorious. Well spake the apostate Julian in his dying moments, "Nazarené, thou hast conquered." All his foes will have to own it. In the day of judgment trembling, and in the lowest pit of hell despairing, they shall acknowledge his supremacy. The despised and rejected of men with rod of iron shall break his enemies in pieces; yea, he shall break them in pieces like potters' vessels. "Be wise now, therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, O ye judges of the earth: kiss the Son, lest he be angry and ye perish from the way when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him."

That is the first thing, then; the Christ will conquer. It is a divine promise; its fulfilment is guaranteed by the Father, it will certainly be achieved by the Son.

II.

Secondly, THE VICTORY IS AS GLORIOUS AS IT IS SURE: "Therefore will I divide him a portion *with the great.*"

The great King rewards our Champion. You have heard of great champions who have been knighted on the battle-field by their sovereigns: deeds of special prowess have been thus rewarded. Others, amid the acclamations of their troops and while yet their hands were unwashed from gore, have been crowned on the field only because of their superior valour and the decisive nature of the battle. Now, what is it to be knighted or crowned by kings or nations? It is as nothing. But to be crowned of God! For God himself to give the reward in the light of eternity! What must such a victory be? I trow that many an act which man applauds is despised by the Most High, and many a fierce fight that has stirred the heart of nations, and made the poets ring out their hymns for centuries, has been not only despicable but abominable in the sight of the Most High. But when God rewards, what must be the glory of the achievement! And here we have it: God, even the Father, the selfsame one whom it pleased to bruise his Son, when he made the iniquity of us all to meet upon him — that selfsame God who knows all things, and weighs all things aright, and is the very source and soul of honour, he shall crown our Lord Jesus. Must it not be a glorious victory? He has crowned him; he is crowning him; he shall continue to crown him; for thus it is written, "Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great."

The glory of this victory may be seen, next, not only in the reward coming from so high a source, but from *its being manifestly a great reward in the esteem of men,*

since our Lord is to have "*a portion with the great.*" It is difficult to say what makes a great man. When I look over the lists of great men some of them seem to me to be very little; but still men have among themselves a sort of standard by which to measure, and they say of such and such persons that they are "great". From different points of view they are so. Now, Christ is to have a portion with the great. Perhaps you have been grieved to see how certain ungodly men in these times make nothing of Christ; like Herod, they set him at nought; but these people are mostly very second-rate individuals, of small account even among their own order. Almost all intelligent men, even if they do not accept all that Christ says, agree that he is a great man, and many confess that there never was such another man as he. There have been sceptics whose admiration of Christ has been extreme. I, for one, cannot understand how any honest mind can do other than reverence his marvellous character and the grandeur of the truths which he has revealed. He is great, inexpressibly great, and the day will come, must come, is every day coming nearer, when Christ will be seen even by his enemies to be supremely great. His cross to-day towers o'er the wrecks of time, and he himself rises before my faith's vision so much above all the sons of men, that I see all philosophies, theories, and human dogmas crouching at his feet. His victories are not victories among pigmies; but victories among the great, such as shall make all men see that he himself is the greatest of the great.

My brethren, think for a minute what a battle Christ has waged with all the powers of evil; with all the wit, and craft, and unbelief, and pride, and lust of man; with all the foul devices, and cruelties, and wickednesses of the devil, and all the principalities and powers that obey his bidding; and with death and all that goes with it, and shall come of it. Against all these he has set the battle in array, and over all these he has triumphed, so that he divides the spoil with the great. Thy adversaries, O Prince Emmanuel, are not such as a common warrior might rout; they are foemen worthy of thy steel. What desperate tugs they gave thee when they forced the bloody sweat from out thee in the moment of thy sternest wrestling; but thou hast flung them to the ground, and trodden down strength.

Of course this language can only be used as speaking part of the truth, because the portion which God has given to his dear Son is indisputably greater than the greatest things that earth can hold. I take it that the question that Christ has come to answer is the greatest question that ever moved eternity. The work that Christ has come to do is the grandest work that ever stirred the ages. It is God's work and God's question. How shall evil we driven out of the world? How shall justice, without a stain, smile on a sinner? How shall God be seen as the holy One with all the glory of his character manifested, receiving to his bosom the guilty sons of men? The grandest work that e'er was done of God himself Christ has come to perform, and not only has he his portion with the great, but of all the great he is the greatest, and his portion is above their portion. They are not to be mentioned in the selfsame day.

Notice, too, that a part of the description of this victory represents *the Lord as himself dividing the spoil "with the strong"*. Not merely with great enemies did Christ wrestle, but with strong powers. I might give you a hundred illustrations of this, but I prefer to give you

one. When the Lord Jesus Christ came into my heart—came to battle there—he did, indeed, divide the spoil with the strong, for I was strong-willed, and desperately set on mischief and for a while I was in the hand of a strong despair, out of which it seemed impossible that I should escape. The bands which held me were of iron, tough as steel, hardened in the fires of hell; and yet this day I am his, for he has won me, and taken the prey from the mighty. I have been just now to see our venerable Elder White. He is dying. I looked at his venerable beard as he sat up in the bed, and I looked at the bright face that shone above it, and I was charmed at the joyful sight. He said, "I have no trouble; I have not a troubled thought; I am the happiest man in the world; I am going home, and I rejoice in it; though I am perfectly satisfied to wait." Death is just nothing at all to him. Just like a dear sister who went from us some time ago: when I went to see her, you might have thought she was going to be married, she was so happy in prospect of departing. Charles Wesley once said, "They may say what they will about Methodism, but our people die well." That is my comfort: our people die well, they die gloriously triumphant in the Lord. When I think of it I can see how my Lord divides the spoil with the strong. Death comes and he says, "That is mine." He has taken the poor, wrinkled body; and Christ smiles, and lets him have it; for he takes for his share the soul, the life, and as he bears him off he takes the best part of the spoil. He has left death the husk, but he has himself secured the kernel. Yea, the day will come when he will take the body, too, out of the custody of death; for not a wreck or a rag of all his saints shall remain in the domains of death. There is a resurrection of dead bodies as well as an immortality of spirits. Glory be to Christ. In this way, here and hereafter, he divides the spoil with the strong. Strong is death, but stronger still the omnipotent Son of God.

There is another aspect under which we may speak of the glory of Christ's victory; *he will share it with his people*. The second paragraph of the text is, "he shall divide the spoil with the strong." That is, he will divide it out, and allot portions to all those who came to the help of the Lord against the mighty. Just as David after Ziklag when he had taken the prey from the Amalekites, sent portions all round to his friends in Judah, so when the King Eternal takes the spoil, he will give a share to you and to me, if we have been faithful to him. There shall be a portion e'en for us whom the Lord made strong for himself in the day of battle. Does it not make your heart laugh to think of it? Jesus wins the victory, but he will not enjoy it alone; he will glorify his people. Even the sick folk that go not down to the battle shall have their share of the spoil; for this is David's law, and the law of the Son of David, that they that abide with the stuff shall share with those that go down to the fight. He will give to each faithful sufferer or worker a portion of the prey. Make haste, O champion, make haste to give to everyone of us a prey of divers colours, meet for the necks of them that take the spoil!

III.

Thus we have seen that CHRIST WILL WIN THE VICTORY, AND THE VICTORY WILL BE GLORIOUS. Now let us declare, thirdly, that *the results of this victory will be very substantial*.

Let me remind you that, in consequence of what our

Lord has done, *myriads of souls will be redeemed*. How many will escape from sin and death and hell to live for ever is not revealed. We have every reason to believe that a number that no man can number, out of every nation, and people, and kindred, and tongue, shall praise their redeeming Lord. Christ's death will not spend its force in the conversion of here and there one, but he will see of the travail of his soul and will be satisfied; and we are convinced that no little thing will satisfy him. The great result of our Lord's death will be eternal salvation of myriads untold.

Next to that will be *the overthrow of every form of evil* which now reigns in the world, and the extermination of religious falsehood, vice, drunkenness, war, and every horrible mischief born of the fall and of human depravity. Christ will conquer these, and there shall be new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. For ever and ever boundless honours shall be given to Christ for his victory over every force of evil. The seed of the woman shall trample on the serpent.

As the result of Christ's death *Satan's power will be broken*. He will no longer go forth to rule among the nations.

Death also will have lost its dominion over the sons of men. The Son of David shall restore that which he took not away. More than our first father lost shall Christ bring back. There shall be glory substantial to himself in the lives of his people on earth, in their deaths, and in their lives for ever. Glory shall be brought to God of a new and unusual kind. A light will be shed upon the character of God which, so far as we know, could not have come to us by any other means except by the death of the Only-begotten. Hallelujahs louder than before shall rise up before the throne. *Praises shall ascend unto God* such as creation never produced, "for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us unto God by thy blood, and we shall reign for ever and ever."

Now, my brethren, do not get into a state of fright and fear about the Christian religion. Do not go to your chambers and sigh, "Everything is going to the bad, and we shall be all eaten up by the devil." Nonsense! There is a stronger arm yet than that black arm of Satan. In God's eternal goodness resides a power and majesty that cannot be found in the infernal malevolence of the devil. I know which is the winning side, — I am sure of it. Though we may drearily imagine that things go amiss, and fancy that the vessel is ready to break up and become a wreck, she will enter the harbour yet with all her cargo safe, and from every wave that tossed her and every wind that beat upon her she shall derive eternal advantage. Courage, brethren, we are not beaten, and we are not going to be beaten. We are succeeding all along the line. Shout victory, universal victory, from stem to stern of the good old ship. Not a foe has been able to live upon her deck. Give the enemy's black hull another broadside. When you think that the crew of the Black Prince are about to board us, grasp your pikes and give them a warm reception. This good ship bears the red cross at her masthead, and shall never be taken, but shall win the victory as surely as God lives, and his Son lives who has risen from the dead.

IV.

So I close with this last remark: THE WHOLE OF THIS VICTORY RESULTS FROM CHRIST'S OWN WORK.

Lend me your best attention for two or three minutes,

because this is the pith and marrow of it all: "Therefore will I divide him a portion" — that is logic. Why this "therefore"? What is the argument? Christ shall divide with the strong because . . . How does it run? "Because his doctrinal teaching is singularly in keeping with the progress of the age"? I have heard that observation, and smiled at it. "Because his gospel is preached with such remarkable eloquence and singular clearness"? Indeed, No. Why, then, will Christ win the victory? The answer is—"Because he hath poured out his soul unto death." If God himself deigns to take upon himself our nature, and in that nature pours out his life like a libation even unto death—if, I say, he thus pours out his life, it is impossible to conceive that he will be defeated. Blasphemy may imagine it, profanity may speak it, but truth abhors the idea that Jesus can be baffled. A dying God! It is an inaccurate expression, yet I know of no expression that is so accurate — God putting himself into human form, so as to be capable of suffering and death, cannot suffer and die in vain. He must, he shall, he will win that for which he died. He must reign, because he has poured out his soul unto death.

Listen again, here is the second reason: "HE WAS NUMBERED WITH THE TRANSGRESSORS;" this is mentioned secondly, as if there was something even more in that than in the first. To die is wonderful condescension; but for the pure and holy One to deign to be numbered with the transgressors, and stand as if he had transgressed himself, though transgress he never did, nor could — I say this is more wonderful. If Jesus did that, then he must win the victory. When I am dispirited, where do I find encouragement? Where the stars of Bethlehem burn, and where men make merry on their Christmas days? Nay, their mirth is weariness to a heavy heart. I will tell you where I go for comfort — to Gethsemane, to Golgotha, to the garden, and to the tomb. Christ cannot have suffered there in vain: Christ cannot have been despised, slandered, and actually numbered with transgressors, and all for nothing. It cannot be: it cannot be. Death and hell, ye can defeat armies of men, but the Crucified treads you down. When our Champion of the pierced hand comes to the front the battle no longer wavers. We glory in his death and in his making common cause with transgressors. But this is not all; it is added, *And he bare the sin of many.* This denotes his actual and literal substitution — his acting as the sin-bearer. This is something more than being numbered with the transgressors; he actually takes the sin of the transgressors, and bears their burden upon his own shoulders by a wondrous system of substitution which is easier to be believed than to be explained. Because he did this he must conquer. He *must* conquer. Sin cannot be victorious if Jesus has carried it on his shoulders and hurled it into his sepulchre. If the darkest days were to come, and all the churches of Christ were to be extinguished, if there were left only one Christian, and he as good as dead by reason of weakness, yet might he believe that God from the dead would raise up seed unto his Son, and fulfil his covenant and keep his word. It must be so. The offering of Christ's soul for sin secures to him a seed for ever.

And lastly, there is this fourth reason given — "*He made intercession for the transgressors.*" I can conceive you praying, my dear friend, and God's not hearing you; but if the man who was despised and rejected should say, "Rise, poor suppliant, rise and I will take thy place;" and

if the Blessed and Beloved of the Father, whose eyes are as the eyes of the morning, and whose lips are as lilies dropping sweet-smelling myrrh, kneels down and prays, "My Father, by my blood, and wounds, and agony, save this sinner;" why, it must be done! And if he says, "Father, give me those whom I have redeemed," it must be done. And if he pleads, "Father, keep them by thy word," it must be done. And if he prays, "Father, make them one as we are," it must be done. And when he shall ask, "Father, give them power and victory," it must be done. And when he shall ask, "Father, let my servants all become champions, and send them forth, east, west, north, and south, against idolatry, and infidelity, and popery, and clothe them with the Holy Ghost" why then it must be done! The power of Christ's intercession is irresistible. Queen Mary reckoned the prayers of John Knox to be worth many regiments; but what shall I say of the prayers of Jesus, the Son of God? They are with us to-day. While we are sitting here, and troubling our minds about the Lord's work, and saying, "What shall we do?" and "What will come of it?" and all that—Jesus is pleading. Hush, till your hearts leave off beating — till not a thought is heard! You may hear him saying, "Father, I will." Here is the power of the church. The plea of Christ with authority before the throne is the majestic force upon which the church depends. "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Wherefore pluck up courage. Jesus will yet win. You weak, faint-hearted ones, rejoice. The victory is sure, not because of anything you are, or of anything you can do, but for Jesus' sake. In the name of the Lord we set up our banners. Hallelujah!

For Younger Readers

"BUBBLES"

Bryan sat on the extreme edge of the flower park seat, utterly unconscious of all the riotous beauty that surrounded him. His dark hair was ruffled and stood up in tufts where his fingers had run through and through it. His eyes, which could twinkle with fun and merriment, were hard, and their expression, moody. One foot kicked backwards and forwards, bruising and crushing in its motion a clump of primroses, which grew close to the path. "I couldn't care less," Bryan muttered, as if to justify his treatment of such innocent beauty.

There was a firm step on the path, the seat creaked a little as someone's weight was lowered on to it, but Bryan went on heedlessly kicking.

"It must be some very serious trouble that makes a big chap like you treat the lovely little flowers so cruelly." Bryan looked up with a start to meet the questioning gaze of a pair of very serious blue eyes. Their owner, a young school-girl in the local college blazer, tossed back a pair of long fair plaits, then dropped on her knees and carefully gathered up the poor dilapidated blooms. "If you just move further up the seat you can kick for all your worth without harming anything." Bryan, too astonished at what he termed "the girl's cheek", said nothing, but moved slowly up the seat.

Tenderly she grouped the plant together, propping up the most crushed stems with pieces of twigs and thick leaves. Then, first-aid treatment over she resumed her seat with a terse, "What's the trouble? It always helps to talk, and as I don't know you it can't matter much if you tell me."

Bryan studied her for a moment, "Not a bad looking kid, kind of chummy," was his private reflection. Aloud he said, "Oh I'm just fed up, that's all."

"Awful isn't it when you feel like that? I felt terrible when Dad and Mum went back to India and left me with an elderly aunt who thinks, 'all children should be seen and not heard.'"

"But I guess you didn't crush the nearest flowers." Bryan actually grinned.

The girl's hearty laugh rang out. "No, I didn't, for one thing I happen to adore flowers, and for another, it happened to be December."

"What did you do?" Bryan was curious.

"Made up my mind to 'play the man' as Dad said, study for all I was worth and get a Scholarship which would take me far away from my poor elderly aunt and land me where I've always wanted to be, at a University," she added simply.

Bryan whistled through his teeth. "Some pluck!" he muttered.

"Oh no, not a bit," she retorted. "If one tries hard enough one can achieve anything within reason."

"Well I haven't," Bryan's voice was full of bitterness. "I sat an exam last term. Everyone said I was sure to pass, but I didn't. I got the results this morning."

"So that's the trouble." The girl looked sympathetic. "Look here, my name's Jaqueline Hardy — commonly called 'Jackie' by my friends — suppose you tell me all about it?"

Bryan found himself pouring out all the unhappy tale. The master's hopes of him passing were so assured that he had entered a year earlier than he needed to. His younger age would get him certain marks added, so it had seemed that the coveted scholarship was as good as his, but the result showed otherwise.

"But then as you sat a year early you can have another go next year." Jackie paused a moment then added slowly, "And I'll give you my motto to help you. This is it—I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

Bryan's lips met in a thin hard line; there was a short silence; then he said grimly: "No good to me. My Dad talks like that. Got me to pray regularly, but it just didn't work."

Jackie's eyes were stern as she whipped round on him. "You expected God to do His part, but did you do yours?"

Bryan was on the defensive. She seemed so sure of herself. "I don't know what you mean," he mumbled.

"Why, just this." Jackie was hot on his trail. "Did you pray that you might pass?" Bryan nodded assent. "Then did you study for all you were worth?"

Bryan had to admit he hadn't. In fact he had to confess he had deliberately avoided the special study groups that his form master held every Saturday morning from nine-thirty to twelve-thirty. "You see they all seemed to think I would pass," he ended lamely.

"Yes—and you thought if you said a little prayer God would do the rest," Jackie sounded fierce. "Now if I were you I'd attend that study group, work hard, pray hard, then next year..."

"I'm not going to sit next year," Bryan cut in. "I've had enough."

Jackie's eyes were fixed on a group of children by the lily-pond. A tall girl was blowing bubbles to please a little curly-headed fellow, sitting in a push-chair, who

was clapping his hands with delight as the gleaming balls floated through the air.

Bryan followed her gaze. The girl was slowly blowing a huge bubble, taking care not to burst it. The sun turned it into a dazzling rainbow of colour. Bigger and bigger it grew while the little fellow wriggled and gurgled with delight. Stretching out his chubby arms he tried to grasp it. One moment it quivered on the pipe, and the next moment it was gone. The little fellow kicked on his chair-rest with gusto, went blue in the face, stuck grubby knuckles into his eyes to wipe off the bubble's splash, opened his mouth wide, and YELLED!

Bryan grinned. Jackie whispered, "Watch!" The girl hastily plunged the pipe into the soapy mixture, swirled it round and round, then cried, "Look, big sister's got another one coming."

The yelling stopped and the happy gurgling began as another huge bubble formed.

"There you are," Jackie urged. "Your bubble burst so you are all upset, but there's another one coming."

"No need to yell and kick," Bryan added sheepishly while Jackie chuckled. A nearby clock struck. "9.15! I must fly." Jackie leapt to her feet. "I'm really taking a short-cut through the park to the shops, special ticket of leave to buy a birthday present for a pal. By-the-way, what's your name?"

"Bryan O'Neill."

Jackie's eyes rounded. "No relation of the Rev. O'Neill, I suppose?"

"Yes, his son."

"Why Bryan, he is our chaplain this term. Dad knew him years ago at College, says he was always a fine Christian."

"Yes Jackie, he is, but I've been a bit of a rotter—I'm afraid, not taking things seriously and just fooling about."

"I understand; thought prayer was just for getting what you wanted, I was just the same once, but it's much more than that."

Bryan nodded. "So I'm beginning to think."

"Now I'm off. I'll be seeing you again, your Dad is giving me special coaching every Monday evening as I'm hopeless at Latin. Don't forget my motto and don't forget the bubble." A cheery wave and she was gone.

He sat down again. The elder sister was still patiently blowing bubbles cheerily calling each time they burst, "There's another one coming!" Suddenly Bryan started up, smoothed his hair, grabbed his cap, and, startling the young bubble blower by thrusting a packet of toffee into her hand, raced off through the park at breakneck speed.

His breath was coming in quick short gasps as he reached the school gates. The clock pointed one minute to 9.30. He tore across the quad, through the swing doors, down the corridor and rounding a corner was just in time to see his Form-Master, his hand on the door-handle, about to enter the Lecture Hall. Hearing the racing footsteps he paused and turned.

Bryan pulled up, gasping. "Sorry Sir—didn't want to—be—late, can—I enroll—for the Study Group?"

The Master's hand rested for a moment on Bryan's heaving shoulder, "To prepare for next year?"

Bryan nodded, "Yes Sir."

The Master's eyes were warm and friendly as he said, "Splendid O'Neill, you'll do."

The boys' chattering ceased as they entered the hall. Bryan slipped into a vacant seat, utterly unconscious of the significant nods and smiles cast in his direction. He took up the pencil, arranged the writing pad to his satisfaction, and in the moment of waiting murmured to himself, "I can do *all things* through Christ which strengthen me. That's my motto now."

The Master started to deal with the first subject. Bryan's pencil literally flew over the paper as he took down notes.

The lecture had begun, and so had Bryan.

—*The Child in the Midst.*

Bible School Lesson Outline

Vol. 19 First Quarter Lesson 3 January 16, 1955

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

THE SHUNAMMITE'S SON RESTORED TO LIFE

Lesson Text: 2 Kings 4:25-37.

Golden Text: "Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live."—John 11:25.

I. The Sorrow of Death: verses 25-28.

Elisha, the successor of Elijah, began his ministry in the miraculous power of the Holy Spirit, dividing the waters of the Jordan, healing the waters of Jericho and calling down fire upon those who mocked the prophet of the Lord (2 Kings 2). He had been used to bring spectacular victory to the whole nation (2 Kings 3:16-27), but he was not above ministering to a poor widow who was in distress (2 Kings 4:1-7).

Elisha did not forget to reward the great woman of Shunem for her gracious kindness in offering hospitality to him. She desired no honour or high position, but God gave to her a son (2 Kings 4:8-17).

Death comes alike to young and old (Psa. 90:9-12); the great woman of Shunem could not prevent the last dread enemy from laying hold upon her young son, the darling of her heart (Luke 7:12). It would seem that he died of sunstroke. The mother's natural grief was enhanced by the fact that this son had been given to her by an unexpected miracle of grace (verses 13-17), and she was sore troubled when he died. She had not asked for a son, nor had she wished to be deceived in the matter (verses 16, 28). She was to learn that for all those who love God, He maketh all things to work together for good; the death of her son would be for the greater glory of God (John 9:2, 3; 11:4).

The mother's distress of soul was so great that she made all haste to go to the man of God. He had lived the life before her, and she had every confidence that he would be able to help her now. When her husband enquired the reason for the journey, remarking that it was not the time of the new moon or the sabbath, when burnt offerings would be made (Numb. 28:11), she replied, "Peace" (Compare with "Hold ye your peace"—2 Kings 2:3, 5); she would not wait to discuss the matter with him at that time. How blest are all who know the Lord as Saviour and Friend, for to Him they may go to find comfort, grace and strength (Psa. 9:9; 27:5; 118:5; Heb. 4:16).

Elisha sent his servant to the foot of Mount Carmel to meet the sorrowing mother, but she would not disclose her errand. To all questions she answered as before "Peace". Gehazi misunderstood her importunity and thought that she was but troubling his master (Matt. 20:31; Mark 10:13, 14; Luke 8:49). Gehazi did not have the understanding sym-

pathy that Elisha had. Those who would minister to sorrowing ones in the name of the Lord must have kind and loving hearts (Rom. 12:15; Eph. 4:15; Phil. 1:8, 9).

Elisha did not know the exact cause of the woman's distress, indicating that the prophets had supernatural knowledge only when it was given to them by the Lord (1 Pet. 1:10, 11).

II. The Restoration to Life: verses 29-37.

Of his own own accord Elisha sent Gehazi the servant to the house of mourning with the command to lay the staff, the badge of the prophetic office, upon the face of the dead child. But there was no result. We cannot delegate to another the work which the Lord would have us perform for Him. Nor will mechanical devices avail in the spiritual realm; we must put personal effort into our task, and be willing to make sacrifices for the Lord. God uses human lips, human hands and human feet to deliver the message of life to those who are dead in sin (Isa. 52:7; Matt. 28:18-20).

Powerful, private and importunate prayer was a necessary factor in restoring life to the child. We need to exercise this holy ministry of intercession on behalf of others (Luke 11:5-10; 18:1-8). As we pray in faith the Lord will touch them with the touch of life, which He alone can give.

The prophet identified himself as fully as possible with the little child who lay upon his bed, putting his own eyes on the eyes of the child, his mouth upon the child's mouth, and his hands upon those of the child. It is the need which we make our own that we can help. When by the Holy Spirit we feel the burden of another's sin as though it were our own, we are in a position to pray for them earnestly and believably (Exod. 32:32; Rom. 9:1-3; 10:1). God gave to us all such a passion for souls!

God answered the prayer which was inspired of the Holy Spirit and accompanied by persistent effort and by faith in the power of God, even as He did in the case of Elijah and the son of the widow of Zarephath (1 Kings 17:17-24). The healing was not immediate, but it was complete (1 Kings 18:44, 45; Mark 8:23-25; Acts 20:9-12); God is sovereign in all His acts. When it is for His glory He can bring instantaneous health or life, but the miracle is just as great when performed in progressive steps.

As teachers and workers we are constantly in touch with those who are spiritually dead (Eph. 2:1). Only the voice of the Lord can raise them to life, but we can be used as His instruments (Eph. 5:14).

In this hour of emergency Elisha had disregarded the danger of ceremonial uncleanness which he would incur by his contact with a dead body (Lev. 21:1). Nothing mattered, if only the Lord would bring the dead to life again.

Daily Bible Readings

Jan. 10—The Widow of Nain's Son	Luke 7:11-18
Jan. 11—The Widow of Zarephath's Son	1 Kings 17:17-24
Jan. 12—The Prodigal Son	Luke 15:11-24
Jan. 13—The Nobleman's Son	John 4:46-54
Jan. 14—The Disciple's Son	Mark 9:14-29
Jan. 15—The Begging Son	John 9:1-7
Jan. 16—The Only Begotten Son	John 17

Suggested Hymns

Safe in the arms of Jesus.
I am not skilled to understand.
Low in the grave He lay.
Brief life is here our portion.
Rejoice and be glad!
By Jordan's stormy banks I stand.

S.S. LESSON CARD FOR 1955

The Sunday School lesson card for the 1955 Evangelical International Lessons has been printed by the Jarvis Street Baptist Sunday School. This card, which contains the list of lessons and golden texts for the year, is set up in a handy size and can be carried in the Bible. The cost of these is one cent each or fifty cents a hundred.

—L.K.T.