

The Gospel Witness and Protestant Advocate

Authorized as Second Class Mail. Post Office Department, Ottawa

Vol. 33, No. 44

130 Gerrard St. E., TORONTO, FEBRUARY 17, 1955

Whole Number 1708

The Jarvis Street Pulpit

"COME UNTO ME"

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Morning, October 24th, 1926
(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.)

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."
—Matt. 11:28.

"COME unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," particularly the first three words, "Come unto me." And I desire to give you a very few reasons this morning, in a very simple way, why everyone ought to come to Christ. My message is directed, of course, particularly, to those who have not come as yet; but perhaps our simple meditation will help those of you who have come, to rejoice that you are already Christians. Nothing, I think, warms the heart of a true disciple of Jesus Christ like seeing other people come to Christ; nothing makes our hearts leap for joy like hearing the old gospel over again, when afresh we are made to feel our deep need of Christ.

I.

This is His invitation to everyone here, "Come unto me." WHY SHOULD WE COME TO CHRIST? Well, I think I will put it this way, first of all, because *some day He will be our Judge*. This life is full of sin, this world is full of wrong-doing; but some day there is going to be a judgment, some day all wrongs will be made right, all evils will be judged, all sin will be punished. God is infinitely patient, He waits a long, long time, for He is "not willing that any should perish". He desires "that all should come to repentance"; notwithstanding, He has appointed a day in the which He will "judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel." Jesus Christ will be the Judge. Not always will He say, "Come unto me"; not always will He be the gracious, patient, persuasive, Saviour; some day He will say, "Depart from me, ye cursed". He will come to be our Judge; and He will judge us, not as men have seen us to be, but as we

really are, for He will judge the secrets of men — not merely our words and our acts, but He will judge us according to the motives from which these have sprung. The whole record of our lives will be there, and He will turn the pages, and everyone of us will give account of himself to God some day.

I am glad that He is coming. We may patiently endure the present with that day in prospect. But as we desire there should be law and order in the State, that we should have policemen and magistrates and judges, in order that life and property may, in some measure, be secure, so surely there ought to be a day when all wrongs will be judged, when all sin will be taken account of, and when every man shall receive a reward according to the things done in the body, whether they be good or evil.

And, my dear friends, when that day shall come it will be Jesus Himself Who will sit upon the judgment-seat. He will know then whether we have really received Him or not; everything will be open to His view, and He will judge according to the gospel. That will be the rule of judgment. The great sin for which everyone of us will be judged, who has committed it, will be the sin of rejecting Christ; for when He comes they are to be punished "who obey not the gospel". How terrible that will be, when the Lord Jesus will no longer stand knocking at our heart's door, no longer plead and patiently wait, no longer wooingly say, "Come unto me"! And when the day of mercy shall be ended, and the day of grace is over, and the dreadful day, the indescribably awful day of judgment shall come, when He Who was crucified, shall be robed, not now in robes of mercy and

of grace, but when He shall come with the garments of the Judge — what a terrible day that will be! He will sit upon the judgment-seat, and all shall be gathered before Him.

Because that day is certainly coming when to some He shall say, "Depart from me," I beg of you to come to Him now while he says, "Come unto me." All our difficulties may be settled out of court; our sins may all be forgiven if we settle it now. Therefore I give you another reason why we should come unto Christ, because *no one else can forgive our sins*. There would be no question, I suppose, no dispute about the fact of sin. If there is any man or woman, or boy or girl, here this morning who has never sinned, will you stand up? Is there anyone here who will dare to say, "I have no sin to forgive"? We all know that we have sinned, — "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." What are we to do about it? Face it we must, there is no escape from it, sin will have to be dealt with. Let me say to you that if there is one thing the Word of God clearly teaches, it is this, that every single sin must be punished — every sin must be punished. God could not be just if He were to allow the sinner to escape punishment. What would you think of an earthly judge if a criminal were brought before him charged with some offence, and the witnesses are brought into court, and the criminal's guilt is absolutely established; there are eye-witnesses who saw him commit the crime, he has broken the law of the State — what would be said of the judge, who, in face of that, were to say, "I acquit you"? Why, such a judge would be removed from the bench. Shall we ask God to do what we know would be wrong in a human judge? Wrong must be punished, and he who says the sinner can escape without his sin being punished, is a man who does not know God, I do not care who he is. Our God is a thrice holy God. He is "of purer eyes than to behold evil", and cannot "look upon iniquity"; sin is the abominable thing which He hates, and every sin, your sin, my sin, must be, will be, punished. And if it is not punished in the Person of Jesus Christ, then you bear your own punishment. There is no other way. And I say to you there is, therefore, no one but Jesus Christ who can forgive our sins.

You boys and girls, you did some wrong. It was a sin against mother, or against father; it was a sin of some sort, it was wrong. And then you came to mother, and she forgave your sin. But did you ask God to forgive you? "Oh no," you say, "I did not ask God to forgive me; I asked mama to forgive me, and when she forgave me I thought it was all right" — mother cannot forgive you; she can merely forgive you as your mother; but the sin you have committed against mother is committed against God. David committed a great sin, and do you remember when God showed him his sin, and he was brought to repentance, do you remember what he said? He said, "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight." Every sin is a sin against God; and no one but God can forgive it; and God can forgive it only through Jesus Christ, Who "died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures." No, mother cannot forgive you, father cannot forgive you, the church cannot forgive you, no priest or preacher can forgive you. "The Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins"; and if ever that sin of yours is forgiven, you will have to come to Christ, no one else can do it.

The Gospel Witness and Protestant Advocate

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

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

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

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Therefore, hear His Word this morning: "Come unto me", and have your sins forgiven.

Then another word: *no one but our Lord Jesus can give us overcoming power*. No one but Christ Jesus can make us new creatures inside; no one else can give us new hearts, and new consciences, and new desires, and new will power. There is no one else who can help us. And even if we could get rid, by any means, of all the sins of the past, there is no one but the Lord Jesus who can help us to-morrow — but He can do it, —

"He breaks the power of cancelled sin,
He sets the prisoner free;
His blood can make the foulest clean,
His blood avails for me."

Oh, boys and girls, young men and women, there is no one in the universe can enable you to be now the boy or girl, or by and by the man or woman, or ultimately the perfect saint in the presence of God, without fault before His throne — no one can do that for you but Jesus Christ Himself. Joining the church will not do it — I believe only those who really believe in the Lord Jesus ought to be church members — but to go to the church without coming to Jesus, will not make you whole. We must come to Christ, poor, lost, undone, empty-handed, —

"Nothing in my hand I bring;
Simply to Thy cross I cling" —

and He will make us what He wants us to be.

And then may I say this to you too: we should come to Him because *He is the only true Friend we have*; He is the only true Lover of our souls. As we go on in life, we learn how few people there are upon whom we can really depend. You thought you had a friend, but your friend forsook you, betrayed you, until by and by you wondered whether anyone is true, whether anyone knows how to be loyal. There is One Who is a true Friend, there is One Who never fails; He is the same summer and winter, in the spring, and when the leaves

are falling — and He will be the Friend of any boy or girl here. And, do you know, when you get to be old and grey-haired, He will be the same true Friend; He does not change. You can come to Him a hundred times a day, and He is never too busy to receive you; He never grows weary of your coming; you cannot exhaust His kindness; you cannot drain His storehouses; He is the one true Friend.

Is there anyone here who does not need a friend? Is there anyone here who has not needed a friend? Oh, He bids you come unto Him. I have trusted Him for a great many years now; I have given Him very poor service; I wish I could begin all over again; I wish I could go back to the day when I first trusted the Lord Jesus, with what I now know, and I wish I could serve Him through these years all over again. I think I could serve Him better — I know I would try. But, notwithstanding all the faults and failures — and they have been so many — He has never failed me once. Oh, He has been better to me, ten thousand times, than I deserved; and every promise that He has ever made to me has been kept to the letter. I have found it to be true, that the Word of Jesus Christ is the Word of "God, that cannot lie." Other people may say that my Lord Jesus sometimes was mistaken, but I know better; other people may say that He was limited to the knowledge and circumstances of His time — but not the Friend I have trusted: He is the infinite God, and He is the Lover of our souls. Oh, He is a wonderful Saviour; I wish you would come to Him this morning if you have not come; and if you have, I wish you would come again; let us all come again.

Then another reason, dear friends, and a very simple one — I can just give you the A.B.C. this morning. Another reason why we should come to Him is that *so many seem to hate the name of Christ Jesus the Lord*. Oh, there are so many people who are called Christians who seem to think they are rendering the world a great service if they can reduce Jesus Christ to the level of a man, if they can persuade men that He was limited in His knowledge, that He was limited in His power, that He did not die for our sins. I do not know what they think they are doing, I do not know what service they think they render to men when thus they minimize my Lord Jesus; but because so many people do that, the rest of us ought to magnify Him; because some people do not love Him. I feel that I want to love Him more than ever. That is a great reason why we should come to Christ. I spoke to you a few months ago on that word of His, when the multitudes melted away until by and by the twelve only surrounded Him — the thousands had all gone, and He said to the twelve, "Why do you not go too? Will ye also go away?" And one of them said, "No, Lord, we cannot go, for thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God. We will not go." Oh, when others go, that is all the more reason why we should come." "Come unto me," He said.

Then I think all who come unto Him ought to let the whole world know they have come. If some are ashamed of Jesus, that gives me additional reason for not being ashamed of Him; if some forsake Him, then that is the reason why I should cleave to Him; if some deny Him, then that gives me an additional reason for confessing Him wherever I go. And, my friends, may I reverently say that the Lord Jesus needs faithful witnesses to-day. I believe He wants every man and woman, every boy and

girl, who knows Him, to bear witness for Him: Do you really trust Him? Would you go with the crowd? Would you go with the majority? People talk about "majorities" to-day, but this great and wonderful Book says that "wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat." And then it says that "strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."

II.

HOW SHALL WE COME UNTO HIM? How shall we come to Christ? I wonder if there is anyone here who says, "Well now, if the Lord Jesus were standing at the front of the building, and I could just walk down the aisle and take Him by the hand, if that is what coming to Christ means, then I think I would come, because I think I could understand that." What does coming to Christ mean? Surely it means *believing what the Lord Jesus said*. It means coming into agreement with Christ, in the first place. What does He say? He says that you are a great sinner. Do you believe that? Do you believe that you have "sinned and come short of the glory of God"? That is exactly what the Bible says.

And then another thing, *do you believe that Jesus did actually die in your room and stead?* that the strokes that ought to have fallen upon you fell upon Him? that "he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for, our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed" — I wonder is that punishment? I wonder how people can get over that? — "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." Is that true? ("Amen!" "Hallelujah!") I do not know any other gospel than that. Why, my dear young friends, it means that the punishment for your sins has already been endured by Jesus Christ; it means that He has rendered satisfaction to the divine law, "the just for the unjust, to bring us to God." And the moment you accept what the Lord Jesus did in your behalf, that He died for you, that He was buried, that He rose again, and that He is up yonder in heaven interceding for you, the moment you say, "I am a sinner, Lord; God be merciful to me a sinner", the Lord Jesus says, "I will be responsible for him, I will be responsible for his sin." "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father." Of course, if you are not a sinner, He will not plead your cause; but the moment you say, "I am a sinner," Jesus takes hold of that, and immediately begins to pray for you. He pleads your cause; and God answers it always. To come to Christ is to trust Him.

Then I give you this word — listen: you have heard it a thousand times, but will you listen and hear it to-day as you never heard it before — "The word of God is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach" — what is it? — that *if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus (or, Jesus as Lord) and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead* — what does it mean? I think it means that if you believe in your heart that He died for you, and He was buried, and God raised Him from the dead, and you will confess that great truth with your mouth — "thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness" — with the heart, not with the head. "Oh," someone says, "I do not understand these things, but my heart goes out to Jesus Christ. A woman came one day to join the church, not this church.

She came before the pastor and the deacons applying for church membership, and they asked her about her hope in Christ. She had not known the Lord Jesus very long, and she did not know very much about the Bible, and she could not quote very much Scripture. When the pastor and the deacons asked her so many questions, some of them very hard questions, she could not answer them; and so the pastor very kindly said to her, "Well, Sister So-and-So, we think you had better wait a little while: we are afraid you do not quite understand, you had better wait a while before you come into the church." Her eyes filled with tears and she said, "Well, sir, I cannot speak for Him, but I could die for Him." "Then," he said, "you had better come into the church." Oh, it is with the heart man believeth unto righteousness.

Do you love Him? Whether you can express it in an intellectual way or not, do you love Him? If you really love Him with all your heart, and trust Him, I beg of you, come unto Him. "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

Shall we bow in prayer:

O Thou gracious, tender, Saviour of men, we are all poor sinners and nothing at all; but some of us can say, "Jesus Christ is my all in all." We thank Thee that Thou art still inviting men to come to Thee. Wilt Thou not lead many to come this morning? Oh, may the Holy Spirit bring many to the feet of Christ. Just now help us every one to pray, if we have never prayed it before, "Lord God, be merciful to me a sinner; Lord, forgive all my sins; wash me in the precious blood of Christ; give me a new heart; give me eternal life; make me one of Thy children." And when we thus have prayed, help us to believe Thy promise that Thou hast heard us, for "whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved." Save many this morning, for Thy name's sake. Amen.

REV. JOHN BYERS RESIGNS

At the Annual Business Meeting of Victoria Avenue Church, Hamilton, held on Wednesday, January 26th, Rev. John Byers presented his resignation as Pastor, due to continued ill-health. It was regretfully and prayerfully accepted.

Mr. Byers, a native of Scotland, came to Canada in 1927, and largely through the influence of Dr. Shields was called into the ministry and enrolled in the first class at Toronto Baptist Seminary. His first charge was at Bethel Baptist Church, Orillia, where he ministered for 14 years. Under the good hand of God many were saved, a fine edifice erected and a strong New Testament church established. Mr. Byers went to Hamilton in 1942, and for 13 years has laboured faithfully, courageously facing the difficulties which are peculiar to a church in a large industrial city. He is greatly beloved by his people, and during the years has done a wonderful work for the Lord.

The members of the church expressed appreciation of the strong Biblical preaching of Mr. Byers, his faithfulness to the Lord and to His people, his kindness toward the suffering and afflicted, as well as his fragrant personal witness to the grace of God, especially during these recent months of physical disability. The prayers of many will attend his steps as he seeks by rest and change to regain his health.

—O.L.C.

Alas, we do not weary God now with our wrestlings, (in prayer) but with our sins.

—ROBERT MURRAY MCCHEYNE

ANGLICAN CHURCH BUILDING DESTROYED BY FIRE

One of the oldest church buildings in Toronto, the one hundred and ten year old Anglican Church of St. George the Martyr, situated at John and Stephanie Streets, was destroyed by fire early Sunday morning, February 13th. Situated in a downtown business district, in what was once a residential section, the historic building has remained the spiritual home of its parishioners throughout the years. The sweetly-toned bell in the tower, which called the faithful to worship, is now silent, its last call being a soft peal when a stream of water touched it at the height of the fire. The building is a complete loss.

The sympathy of THE GOSPEL WITNESS is extended to the minister and his people, who have been so suddenly and sadly deprived of their church home. With dauntless courage the people gathered in the rectory for the evening service. Jarvis Street Baptist Church experienced such a disastrous fire on March 4, 1938, in similar icy weather.

—O.L.C.

THE WEEK-END IN JARVIS STREET

Rev. George B. Fletcher of Newport News, Virginia, was the guest speaker for the week of February 7th, and his ministry in the Church and in the Seminary will not soon be forgotten. The week-end services commenced with the Thursday evening Bible Lecture on "Christ our Mediator", ably delivered by Mr. Fletcher. It is printed in this issue of THE GOSPEL WITNESS.

The Saturday night Prayer Meeting proved an excellent preparation for the blessing of Sunday. The services on the Lord's Day were seasons of great inspiration. In the morning Mr. Fletcher preached on the theme "Man's Only Hope", and the presence of the Lord was abundantly manifest when a mother with her two daughters and two others professed faith in Christ. In the evening, Mr. Fletcher's text was, "Ye must be born again".

—O.L.C.

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Jesus Christ Our God-Man Mediator

An Address by REV. GEORGE B. FLETCHER

Given in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Thursday Evening, February 10, 1955

"But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name."—John 20:31.

"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."—I Timothy 2:5.

THE gospel testimony is summed up in this proposition that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. "Jesus" sets forth the fact of His true human nature: He was very man of very man. "Christ" sets forth the fact of His Messiahship. He was the one of Whom all the prophets did speak from Samuel and those that follow after. "Son of God" sets forth the fact of His Divine nature. This Name and these titles, therefore, set before us the One Who in the Scripture is declared to be our Mediator. "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." As such, He is invested with the offices of Prophet, Priest, and King in order to bring His chosen to faith, and to effect the salvation of His elect. For salvation, as to the actual dispensation of it, is revealed by Christ as a Prophet, procured by Christ as a Priest, and applied by Christ as a King.

I.

First of all then let us consider the FACT THAT CHRIST OUR MEDIATOR IS INVESTED WITH THE OFFICES OF PROPHET, PRIEST, AND KING AND PERFORMS THE FUNCTIONS OF THEM. The Scriptures declare that Christ is a Prophet. On one occasion subsequent to the day of Pentecost Peter preached, and spake these words as recorded in Acts 3:22: "For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people." He is also declared to be a priest after the order of Melchisedec in Hebrews 5:6. He is likewise set forth as King: "Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion," Psalm 2:6. Moreover, the Scriptures bear testimony to His executing these offices as Prophet, Priest, and King. In 1 Corinthians 1:30, we read these words concerning our relation to Him: "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom (as a Prophet) and righteousness (as a Priest, for it is by His atoning blood and imputed righteousness that we are reconciled to God), and sanctification and redemption (as a King)." He not only has been invested with these offices for the outworking of God's great purpose in redemption, but He executes them, and manifests both the wisdom and power of God.

Again, Christ is invested with these offices as is evident from the title that is His, namely, Christ, which means Messiah. As such He is God's anointed. In the light of the Old Testament there were three classes that were anointed, as you well know: the prophet, priest, and king. In 1 Kings 19:16 we have two cited in one verse, the anointing of a king and of a prophet. In Exodus 29:7 we have the anointing of the priest. All of these offices meet in Christ. It took all of them to set forth the completeness, perfection, and the excellencies of His glorious Person, and His great Mediatorial work in our

behalf for the redemption of our poor lost souls. Hence, all of these offices meet in Him Who was anointed for the execution of them. We read in Isaiah 61:1: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek (as a Prophet); he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted (as a Priest, by virtue of His atonement that brings pardon and peace), to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound (as a King)." And these ministries that are His as our God-Man Mediator result in giving to us "beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness." And again in Acts 10:38, we read: "How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with Him." Moreover, He was not anointed with oil as the prophets, priests, and kings of the Old Testament, but with the Holy Ghost, which was given unto Him without measure (John 3:34). Yea, He was anointed with the oil of gladness above His fellows.

II.

Now in the second place CONSIDER THE NECESSITY OF CHRIST EXERCISING THESE OFFICES AS THE MEDIATOR BETWEEN GOD AND MEN, Himself being very God of very God and very Man of very Man. Seeing He was pleased out of His great lovingkindness to us to become our Redeemer, it was necessary that He should execute all of these offices with respect to the salvation of His people. This is evident if we *consider first of all our state by sin*. Our state by sin is most deplorable in the light of the Word of God. As fallen creatures we are ignorant of the way to return to God. The sinner's mind is blinded, his understanding is darkened, he is alienated and estranged from the Almighty and walks according to the course of this world. He needs Christ as the Prophet to come and reveal to him the way to the Father, and to teach him the way of salvation and life. He needs a Divine revelation of truth, and he needs the One Who is sent from the Father to give it. Again, covered with shame and guilt as we are out of Christ, we dare not look upon the face of God. In view of the total depravity that characterizes the whole of the natural man, we need Christ as our Priest, the One Who Himself is our atoning sacrifice, and will plead the merits of His atoning for the guilt of our souls. Then too, we need Christ as King to deliver us from our servitude to sin, and captivity to Satan. He alone can apply the benefits of His atonement and make His people willing in the day of His power. Thus, as a Prophet He gives light to the blind, as a Priest He brings forgiveness to the guilty and condemned, and as a King He manifests His power in actually delivering us from the deplorable state from which we could not deliver ourselves. "If the Son there-

fore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (John 8:36). Our Lord declares Himself: "I am the way (as a Prophet), the truth (as a Priest), and the life (as a King). His Kingship is manifested in this that the Father "Has given Him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him" (John 17:2). The destiny of every soul is in the hands of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is King in the realm of creation, providence, and grace (Daniel 4:35; Romans 9:15).

Secondly, when we consider the salvation which the elect are made partakers of, it was necessary that it be revealed to them, seeing they could never discover it of themselves. Man by searching cannot find out the Almighty. Who among us will stand and say, "It was because of my intelligence, my wisdom, my sagacity, that I discovered the truth." There is none who has ever been so taught of the Holy Spirit who would say that. It was necessary, therefore, the Redeemer should become the Prophet to reveal the things concerning our salvation. He came forth from the bosom of the Father for this purpose. And if we know Him as the Prophet like unto Moses, Whom God raised up, and Who has brought to our hearts the salvation that is with eternal glory, we have great occasion to praise His Name, and to give to Him thanks continually for such great mercy. As fallen creatures, we are "without strength" to overcome sin, deliver ourselves from the power of Satan, the curse of the law, or from the wrath our sins justly merit. It was necessary, therefore, that Christ become our Priest to "make reconciliation for the sins of the people", and thus to obtain eternal redemption for us. As sinners we could neither purchase nor apply the salvation of God provided of Him for our souls. Slaves have never raised their ransom: how could we? Nor could we know it even after it was paid, except it be revealed! Moreover, we were unwilling to come out of our bondage, for we loved our sin, and darkness rather than light. We needed Somebody Who is the Wisdom and the Power of God, Who could make us willing in the day of His power, Who could draw us by the chords of love and the hands of a Man, Who could subdue us by His grace, Who could conquer our stubborn will. It was necessary that Christ be a King, and thank God, He was anointed of God to be King, that He might reign in us in a way of grace, and in a way of righteousness unto holiness and eternal life.

Thirdly, it was necessary for Him to exercise these offices as our God-Man Mediator in the work of our conversion. The soul must be enlightened to see its misery and the suitability of the Divine remedy by the convicting power of Christ as a Prophet. The biggest task today is to get people lost. Only Christ by His Spirit can enable them to see and realize it. One can reason with them, talk with them, argue with them, persuade them, but until the Lord Jesus Christ by His Holy Spirit through the Word gives them to see themselves in the light of God's holiness, they will never realize their guilt, shame, and misery. Somehow they will cling to a little bit of merit, or creature worth or works, and glory in it. They will be willing to admit sins on the circumference of the circle, and say, "Well yes, I have lied," or "I did do this," or "I did do that," but they are not ready to own that from the top of their heads to the soles of their feet they are nothing but a bundle of sin, lighter than vanity, and utterly corrupt in the sight of a Holy God

Who will cast them into hell for sin. Only Christ as the Prophet can enable a soul to see himself in the light of the law, holiness, and justice of God. It is not possible for a soul to be saved until they first realize that they are lost. And when they do, then Christ as a Priest who appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, will mean everything to them. Nevertheless, the human will is so obstinate and perverse, that it will never yield to the overtures of Divine mercy, even under the most favorable circumstances. "The carnal mind is enmity against God, it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Except Christ as King subdue us by grace, conquer our stubborn will, and make us willing in the day of His power, we would go right on rejecting the light, preferring our sin to the holiness of God, and this world to the one to come.

Thirdly, consider our daily necessities. There is hardly ever a day in the life of a child of God, but what there is something wherein he stands in need. What should become of us if we did not have a Prophet to go to for knowledge, instruction, direction, guidance, and light upon the way? So even in my daily needs as a child of God, I need to know Christ as the Prophet, to Whom I can go in every situation, whether it develops gradually or rises suddenly in crisis. Thank God there is One Who knows the end from the beginning and understands our infirmities, and is able to fill us with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding. In all the changing vicissitudes of life He will be a Prophet unto my soul to give light upon my path in the knowledge of His will. Besides, every true child of God contracts both guilt and defilement in his daily walk. What would be our case if there were not a Priest to Whom we could go, in the merits of Whose atoning blood we could be cleansed from all unrighteousness, and all filthiness of the flesh and spirit? Back in the Old Testament the Israelite was accepted in the acceptableness of his sacrifice. If his sacrifice were accepted, he was accepted. God will never accept us as we are in our sin, but only in the Beloved (Ephesians 1:6). We are accepted in the acceptableness of our atoning sacrifice, Jesus Christ our Lord, which God evidenced in raising Him from the dead. We are also needing deliverance and protection from all our foes, whether we consider the enemies as the subtleties of the self-life, the enticements, temptations, and allurements of the world, or the spiritual forces of the kingdom of darkness. If there were not a King with all power in heaven and earth, Who could give us the victory over all our foes of sin, the world, death, grave, and hell what would we do? But thank God, Christ is our Deliverer Who causeth us to follow in the train of His triumph and makes us more than overcomers through Him that loved us.

III.

FINALLY, WHEN DID CHRIST EXECUTE THESE OFFICES? Both before and after His incarnation, and in that twofold state of His incarnation, namely, the period of His humiliation, and that of His exaltation. He was a Prophet upon earth, and still is, to make known to us the will of the Father. He was and still is a Priest. He was a Priest when He offered Himself as a sacrifice for sin on Calvary's Cross, and ever liveth to make intercession for His people. He was on earth a King, and still is, and is now exalted upon the Throne of God and the Lamb. Christ is now a Priest-King upon His Throne (Zechariah 6:13). In Hebrews 1:3, we read of His having "purged our sins". That is the only purgatory we believe in, isn't

it? "When He had by himself purged our sins, (he) sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." There is a Priest-King, it looks like to me, upon His Throne. (Hebrews 10:12, 13). So then, because that is true, what do we have in the way of privilege? "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." (Hebrews 4:16) There is a Priest-King upon His Throne, exalted in human nature, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is able to save completely all that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them. He will continue to reign until He has subdued all His enemies, and the last enemy to be destroyed is death. He is reigning now, and over all created intelligences. He is subduing every man, either in a way of justice because of unbelief, or in a way of grace. He is reigning and ruling now as a Priest-King upon His Throne.

Whosoever is taught by Him as a Prophet so as to be made wise unto salvation, is redeemed by His blood as a Priest, and will be subdued by His grace as a King and brought home at last with the many sons to glory. All whose sins are expiated by Him as a Priest, shall in His own time and way be savingly taught by Him as a Prophet, and shall overcome sin, the world, death, the grave, and hell by Him as a King. In Melchisedec we see the Priest-King; in David the Prophet-King, but in Christ we see them all united in His person. There is no case that a poor sinner can be in that but that he will find a remedy for his soul and his situation in the Lord Jesus Christ.

However, may I remind you that you cannot take Christ as Priest, and refuse to own Him as Prophet and King. These offices are distinct one from the other, yet there are not divided. Many pretend to take Christ as their Saviour from hell, who do not harken to His Word as a Prophet, and reject His rule over them as a King. When He saves a soul it means unconditional surrender, and to take Him for all that He is, namely, Prophet, Priest, and King. I read a catechism recently, and it had something in it that I thought was so good that I wrote it here in my Bible. The question was this: "Can any trust in Christ as their Priest who do not submit to Him as their King?" And the answer in the catechism was: "No; they who will not be governed by His Word cannot expect to be saved by His blood." And I found my heart giving a loud "Amen" to that.

Beloved, do you receive Christ in all His offices as Mediator between your soul and God? Have you given up yourself to be taught by Him as a Prophet, renouncing your creature wisdom and knowledge in spiritual matters as utterly worthless? Have you given yourself up to Him as your Priest to be redeemed by His blood and justified by His righteousness, recognizing that all your righteousnesses are as filthy rags? Have you given yourself up to Him to be guided by Him, ruled and governed by Him as King, even as the prophet in Isaiah 26:13 said: "O Lord our God, other lords beside thee have had dominion over us: but by thee only will we make mention of thy name." He is a mighty Redeemer, and we desperately need Him in all of these offices. Bless God for such a Redeemer as He. Therefore, "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."

From Our Files

THE GOSPEL WITNESS, of twenty years ago, February 21, 1935, contains an interesting article entitled "Among the Children", which illustrates this great work of the Jarvis St. Bible School, as carried on then and now:—

"Some years ago the late Dr. A. C. Dixon told us the following story about Dr. Russell H. Conwell, the incomparable. Beyond almost any man we have ever known, Dr. Conwell lived for other people. Days and nights he weariedly travelled, lecturing, for many years, more than two hundred nights a year. The proceeds of his lectures he devoted to the help of poor students.

"Often after a week of lecturing he would reach Philadelphia of a Sunday morning, sometimes having had to sit up all night without a berth. One Sunday after just such a strenuous week, Dr. Conwell preached in the morning, and on coming down from the pulpit accidentally overheard two women discussing the sermon, one of whom said there had been very little in the sermon for anybody that morning, while the other gave her assent to the statement. Dr. Conwell would not, in his modesty, have disputed the stricture; notwithstanding, this criticism rather depressed his spirit.

"Sunday afternoon he went to the Bible School, as was his wont, and played the organ. The Superintendent of the Primary Department asked him if he would go into that Department and talk to the little ones, to which Dr. Conwell replied, 'Yes; that is the proper place for me; I ought never to have left that Department.' Accordingly, he talked to the little ones; told them stories in his inimitable way, and then said to them something like this: 'I want you to promise me that this afternoon at tea, when you are seated about the table, you will each ask your father whether he is a Christian, and if he says, "No," ask him why he is not a Christian. Listen carefully to his reply, and next Sunday afternoon I will come again, and you shall tell me what your father has said.'

"Dr. Dixon told me one example of what followed. A little girl asked her father, who was a druggist, if he were a Christian, and he carelessly said, 'No.' When she asked him why he was not a Christian, he flushed with anger and told her she must not ask such impertinent questions. In response the child related her experience of the afternoon, and how she had asked the question because Dr. Conwell had told her to. Her father said, 'I will not allow Dr. Conwell to put such notions into your head, and to make you so impertinent. It is none of Dr. Conwell's business why I am not a Christian.' Thereupon the little girl said, through her tears, 'I am sorry, daddy; but I will tell Dr. Conwell next Sunday what you said, for he said I was to do that.' The father said, 'Oh no! You must not do that. I do not like Dr. Conwell's teaching you to ask me such a question, but I have a great respect for him. It is a long time until next Sunday, and before then I will give you an answer.'

That father, in common with many others, spent the week trying to find an answer to the question as to why he was not a Christian. Dr. Dixon said that Dr. Conwell baptized forty fathers on profession of faith as the result of that one afternoon in the Primary Department.

We told that story a week ago Sunday morning, and asked the children in the School to ask the same question of their parents. We have no doubt hundreds of them did so, and if so, blessing will follow. But we can relate

only one incident in connection with it. One of our young lady teachers, who is a student at the Seminary, told us that one of her little girls asked her mother if she were a Christian; and she quite warmly replied in the negative. When she asked her why she was not a Christian, the mother said, "Because I am English." By which we presume she meant that she attended the English Church, but what she said was, "Because I am English." To this the little tot replied, "That does not matter, Mamma: our Pastor says that God can save even the English."

—O.L.C.

DANGER — STAY AWAY!

By Alexander Maclaren

"This is the true God and eternal life. Little children, keep yourselves from idols." (1 John 5:20, 21).

"Little children, keep yourselves from idols," seeing that "this is the true God," the only One that answers to your requirements, and will satisfy your desires. Do not go rushing to these shrines of false deities that crowd every corner of Ephesus — ay! and every corner of Manchester. For what does John mean by an idol? Does he mean that barbarous figure of Diana that stood in the great temple, hideous and monstrous? No! he means anything, or any person, that comes into the heart and takes the place which ought to be filled by God, and by Him only. What I prize most, what I trust most utterly, what I should be most forlorn if I lost; what is the working aim of my life, and the hunger of my heart — that is my idol. We all know that.

Is the exhortation not needed, my brother? In Ephesus it was hard to have nothing to do with heathenism. In that ancient world their religion, though it was a superficial thing, was intertwined with daily life in a fashion that puts us to shame. Every meal had its libation, and almost every act, was knit by some ceremony or other to a god. So that Christian men and women had almost to go out of the world, in order to be free from complicity in the all-pervading idol-worship. Now, although the form has changed, and the fascinations of old idolatry belong only to a certain stage in the world's culture and history, the temptation to idolatry remains just as subtle, just as all-pervasive, and the yielding to it just as absurd. You and I call ourselves Christians. We say we believe that there is nothing else, and nobody else, in the whole sweep of the universe that can satisfy our hearts, or be what our imagination can conceive, but God only. Having said that on the Sunday, what about Monday? "They have forsaken Me, the fountain of living water, and hewed to themselves broken cisterns that can hold no water." "Little children" — for we are scarcely more mature than that — "little children, keep yourselves from idols."

And how is it to be done? "Keep yourselves." Then you can do it, and you have to make a dead lift of effort, or be sure of this — that the subtle seduction will slide into your heart, and before you know it, you will be out of God's sanctuary, and grovelling in Diana's temple. But it is not only our own effort that is needed, for just a sentence or two before, the Apostle had said: "He that is born of God" — that is, Christ — "keepeth us." So our keeping of ourselves is essentially our letting Him keep us. Stay inside the walls of the citadel, and you need not be afraid of the besiegers; go outside by letting your faith flag, and you will be captured or killed. Keep

yourselves by clinging "to Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless." Make experience by fellowship with Him who is the only true God, and able to satisfy your whole nature, mind, heart, will, and these false deities, the whole rabble of them, will have no power to tempt you to bow the knee.

Brethren! here is the sum of the whole matter. There is one truth on which we can stay our hearts, one God in whom we can utterly trust, the God revealed in Jesus Christ. If we do not see Him in Christ, we shall not see Him at all, but wander about all our days in a world empty of solid reality. There is one gift which will satisfy all our needs, the gift of eternal life in Jesus Christ. There is one practical injunction which will save us from many a heartache, and which our weakness can never afford to neglect, and that is to keep ourselves from all false worship. These golden words of my text, in their simplicity, in their depth, in their certainty, in their comprehensiveness, are worthy to be the last words of Revelation; and to stand to all the world, through all ages, as the shining apex, or the solid foundation, or the central core of Christianity. "This — *this*, and none else — "is the true God and eternal life. Little children, keep yourselves from idols."

DON'T WE CARE?

By Billy Sunday

I left the tent where we were holding meetings down in Paris, Illinois, one night, and among the number who left last was a young man that I was especially attracted to by his fine looks. I walked down the street with him, and put to him the invariable question, "Are you a Christian?"

He said, "No sir; I am not."

Then I used every Scripture and every argument to get him to promise me to give his heart to God, but could not succeed. When about to separate, I asked him, "Are your father and mother alive?"

"Both alive," said he.

"Is your father a Christian?"

"Don't know; he has been a steward in the church for several years."

"Is your mother a Christian?"

"Don't know; she has been superintendent of the Sabbath school of the same church for some time."

"Have you a sister?"

"Yes, sir."

"Is she a Christian?"

"Don't know; she has the primary department of the Sunday school."

"Do your father and mother ever ask the blessing at the table?"

"No, sir."

"Did your father, mother, or sister ever ask you to be a Christian?"

"Mr. Sunday, as long as I can remember, my father or mother or sister never said a word to me about my soul. Do you believe they think I am lost?"

I could not answer such an argument. It is six years this coming October since I heard this. I can hear his words ringing in my ears, "Do you believe they think I am lost?"

Can any of ours say that we do not care for their souls? May God save us from the crime of unconcern!

—Fellowship News

THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD

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

Bible Lecture Delivered in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, on a Thursday Evening.

(Stenographically Reported)

I SHALL not take a particular text this evening; but read to you a verse or two from the fourth chapter of Daniel:

"And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the most High, and I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation:

"And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?"

We can know nothing of spiritual truth apart from God. Religion — not Christianity, but religion — is universally prevalent. All men are at some time, and in some measure, religious, in the sense that they recognize another life than this, and that there is somewhere, unknown to them perhaps, a supreme Person, a Will which exercises itself in the universe, and manifests itself in the lives of men; but who and what God is, no man can ever discover for himself: "Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know? The measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea. If he cut off, and shut up, or gather together, then who can hinder him?"

When the Apostle Paul came to Athens his spirit was moved within him when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry. He later referred to that which he had observed, for he said, "As I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you." That there was a God they believed, but who and what and where He was they had no means whatever of discovering.

The very idea of God precludes the possibility of His discovery by the finite mind. If God — how shall I put it? — if God were discoverable to the finite mind, He would cease to be God; because the very idea of God postulates infinity, something that is beyond us entirely, something above us, something that outreaches our utmost understanding. Therefore I say, it must be so, in the very nature of the case, that the Infinite cannot be discovered by the finite.

You cannot measure the ocean with a teacup. You cannot fathom its depths, nor ascertain the area of its surface, with a foot-rule. It is too big for you. You say see it, and wonder at it, and admire it, and fear it, and perhaps, in some of its moods, love it; but you cannot measure it, nor adequately understand it.

But it is often so that the thing which is beyond the capacity of our understanding is, by our little minds, reduced to the meagre measure of our own comprehension. How easily people can make up a story! What little capacities some people require to understand matters

which humble, when they do not actually humiliate, the expert. So, though men cannot order their own affairs, nor wrest the veil aside to peer even into to-morrow, yet they presume to sketch for themselves a picture of God, commensurate with the dimensions of their own understandings, and so set up for themselves standards by which they propose God Himself shall be regulated!

Have you not observed that a man's inability to manage his own affairs almost invariably, in his estimation, qualifies him to be adviser-in-chief to everybody else? Have you noticed that? If a man cannot run a little corner store, but leads it into bankruptcy, he is likely to be put up for alderman next year, — for if a man who has failed himself is not qualified to be the adviser of half a million people, and to decide how their money to the tune of millions is to be spent, then where in the world shall we get a competent administrator! But you have seen that again and again, have you not? And is it not true that those who make so signal a failure of the business of living, as we all have done, and effect such a tangle of life that we have no skill to disentangle the skein, though we cannot exercise our will over the limited area of our little merry-go-round of existence, nor wisely plan within the limits of our own vision, yet full often sit in judgment upon God, and presume to tell Him what He ought to do!

That, indeed, is the sin of this age. That is the error that lies at the base of what we call Modernism, and of the heretical and erroneous cults. In fact, the foundation of all evil is a misapprehension of God. In the beginning — if we accept this as the inspired record, as we do — in the beginning, the tempter laboured to effect in the minds of his victims a misunderstanding of God. He misrepresented God in order that they might misunderstand Him, and, misunderstanding Him, might be led into rebellion against Him.

So to-day men try to interpret God by what they see of His works. I may look upon a magnificent piece of architecture like St. Paul's Cathedral, and gaze upon that brass inscription under the dome which tells us, if we would see the monument of Sir Christopher Wren, to look around. It is a marvellous building. As you walk about it you cannot be other than impressed with its magnificence. Yet if you think a little, you will say, Sir Christopher Wren must have been a wonderful man to create this, but surely he was bigger than any of the works of his hand; and nothing he ever did could adequately represent him. It could offer a suggestion as to his greatness, but the architect must be greater than the building.

Thus as we scan the works of God, those that are immediate, to which we have direct access, upon which we can put our glass and magnify them to within the range of our vision and understanding, or span the ethereal spaces and bring those distant worlds, or whatever they are, near — we may do all that, and by years of investigation and experimentation, discover the opera-

tion of principles which we call law, and observe the manner in which certain natural forces ordinarily work. But when one has spent a lifetime at it, he will be able to say, "It is a wonderful building. It is marvellously designed, and beautiful in its proportions and in its furnishings." But whether you view the distant, the great and magnificent, or inspect a snowflake under a microscope (and of the countless billions of flakes there are no two alike, and yet every one of them is a work of art, of matchless, incomparable, beauty)—I say, look at it all, and you may exclaim, "God must be wonderful."

But you have not seen God! God is greater than that. It is not to be wondered at therefore that the Bible says, "No man hath seen God at any time"; "The invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse."—We can see enough for our condemnation, but the fact that God is infinite involves the necessity that He shall reveal Himself in order to be known.

But I am to speak this evening of the sovereignty of God. That is a doctrine that is much hated by the natural man. By "sovereignty" we do not mean any particular quality of Deity, any attribute, that is, any quality attributed to Him—not that. We mean the rule of God in the universe—that it is unlimited, unrestricted, and cannot successfully be opposed. We mean, indeed, what Nebuchadnezzar learned at last. As he walked on the terrace in the palace of Babylon, and looked over the great city, he exclaimed, "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty." What a great man he was! He was a magnified little Jack Horner! The world is full of little Jack Horners, sitting in corners, eating their Christmas pie. They stick in a thumb, and pull out a plum, and say—if not, What a good boy, then, "What a great boy am I!"

Nebuchadnezzar thought he was great until he was made to eat grass like oxen, and his nails grew like birds' claws, and his hair like eagles' feathers. Then by and by, his understanding returned to him, and when it did, he said, "I blessed the most High, and I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever."

No man's understanding returns to him until in his thinking he gets God in the right place, or rather, gets himself in right relation to God.

What did Nebuchadnezzar discover? That the inhabitants of the earth before the most High were reputed as nothing, and that "He (God) doeth according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, What doeth thou?" He is sovereignly independent of every one and of everything, of all conditions, of every sort of circumstance; He dwells apart and alone in splendid isolation, in unique and solitary grandeur. He is God, and "beside him there is none else".

Your professor must not try to stretch his little rule upon the divine sceptre. He must not assume that his little reason is competent to write a constitution which is to control the Lord of all worlds. It is folly to try to form a human parliament to which the King of kings shall be subject. He laughs at it all! He is above it all! He is God!

We need an adequate idea of God. How can we form an adequate idea of God? By such knowledge of God as they may have who yield heart and mind to the revela-

tion God makes of Himself. The important thing for us to know and to rejoice in is the truth of that hymn we were singing just now. I am glad Brother Greenway selected that hymn. I think we will appoint him Professor of Hymnology at the Seminary, because I notice if you leave it to him, he selects a hymn with sound doctrine in it, something to get your soul's teeth on. You are not fed on bran muffins, or a soda biscuit. Who can become enthusiastic about the singing of religious piffle? But when you sing a hymn like this, there is something in it to inspire you to sing. What a word this is —

"Thou sweet beloved will of God,
My anchor ground, my fortress hill,
My spirit's silent fair abode,
In Thee I hide me, and am still.

"O will, that willest good alone,
Lead thou the way; thou guidest best:
A little child, I follow on,
And trusting, lean upon thy breast.

"Thy beautiful sweet will, my God,
Holds fast in its sublime embrace
My captive will, a gladsome bird,
Prisoned in such a realm of grace.

"Within this place of certain good
Love evermore expands her wings,
Or nestling in Thy perfect choice,
Abides content with what it brings.

"Oh, lightest burden, sweetest yoke!
It lifts, it bears my happy soul,
It giveth wings to this poor heart;
My freedom in Thy grand control.

"Upon God's will I lay me down,
As child upon its mother's breast;
No silken couch, nor softest bed,
Could ever give me such deep rest.

"Thy wonderful grand will, my God,
With triumph now I make it mine;
And faith shall cry a joyous. Yes!
To every dear command of Thine."

Who would not live in a prison like that? Would you not like to be shut up in a palace, forbidden to go beyond the limit of God's care?

"I know not where His islands lift
Their fringed palms in air;
I only know I cannot drift
Beyond His love and care."

What lies back of the truth of divine sovereignty, that God has His way, that He has always had His way, that He is having His way now even when we do not know it? What underlies that? We shall see later some manifestations of that sovereignty, but what—what shall I call it?—I do not want to be technical, or confound you with theological technicalities, but what is the moral philosophy of it? What is the moral reason for it? What is the ethical justification for divine sovereignty? You cannot safely invest a man with full sovereignty. I know there are some that are reputed to be very "autocratic"! But the day of the unlimited monarchy, of the political despot, is over. Of course, a naughty little boy thinks his father is very despotic when he takes him out to the woodshed — but even that is a limited sort of monarchy!

The idea that Jack is as good as his master has invaded the religious realm. That is the defect of our modern theology: people want to drag God down to

human standards, and shut Him up to the dimensions of their own understanding. That is impossible. If God could dwell in temples made with hands, He would cease to be God. It is impossible to build a house big enough for God. "To whom then will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One."

What is the reason for it? I do not know whether I shall put you to sleep before time to-night. What time do you usually go to sleep? I remember once going to a doctor to try to persuade him to come to church. His wife asked me to do so. He had many excuses to offer; but I said, "Doctor, when you have a patient whose sleeplessness defies all your narcotics, all your efforts to make the patient sleep, come to church and find out how I do it!" But I do not want to put you to sleep before your time this evening.

There is a word that many play with as though it were a tennis ball. They do not know what it means. I have known people upon whose tongue it dwells continually. When they are asked, "Are you sure?" The answer is, "Absolutely". "That is quite correct, is it?" "Absolutely"! Did you ever meet Mr. Absolutely? or Mrs. Absolutely?

That word "absolute" is an immeasurable word. It is a word of infinite dimensions. You cannot measure it. And, properly speaking, it is a word that cannot define qualities that may be included in any category of human values. The absolute is God. That is the Last, the Final, the Utmost, the Ultimate, the Infinite. There is nothing more beyond that. And there is but One in Whose nature anything can be found in the absolute degree. The end of all perfection, of all estimation, of all computation, is absolute. You may stagger people with the astronomers' figures. You may astonish them with the light years of the stellar specialist—and the evolutionist comes a close second with his computation of millions, and hundreds of millions of years, until one grows dizzy with trying to think it out,—but roll them altogether, and then you have not the infinite or the absolute: Infinite and Absolute are terms which labour to denote the essence of Deity. Very well, then, we can understand the Infinite less than we can understand the sun, or measure the seas. *God ought to be God, because He is eternal.* There never was a time when God was not: there never will be a time when He will cease to be. "From everlasting"—whenever that was—"to everlasting" He is God. Such a conception is beyond us.

But what little shadows we see of Deity sometimes, little intimations of principles which find their ultimate in God! Why is the father superior to his children? He was there first. He is older. Why, what they call legally "the right of primogeniture", the right of the eldest son to inherit? Because he came first.

With whom do these rights dwell in their absolute degree? With God, for He was first; because He has always been. Before the worlds were made, before time was reckoned, before the angels sang, before there were cherubim or seraphim, before there was any creation, or any created thing, God was—and He will always be.

If we could conceive of God as the infinite, we should probably not try to shut Him up to our little spelling-book, to our multiplication table, or to such standards as the human mind can comprehend. In respect to that something which we call "time",—what is it? What are the rise and set of sun? What is it? Why does time register with us,—can you tell me? You reply, "I shall be old

at three score years and ten." But what do you mean by "years"? "It is a point of time. It is a span. It is a period. It is a measure." One says, "There is plenty of time." Yes, there is plenty of time—but not for you, but there is *plenty of time*. There is something in us that limits our views, that limits the possibilities of life, that makes time a factor with us. It is not so with God. He is independent of all these conditions. Eternity is with Him.

Another thing. *Goodness is with Him.* I use that term because it will serve. If you break it up into its constituents, if you do like a chemist and resolve it into its elements, you will find many things in it. There are truth, and faithfulness, and righteousness, and justice, mercy, love. Gather them all together and call the compilation goodness, or moral wholeness, moral perfection—holiness, if you like, for wholeness is another word for holiness; but it is only in God. It is nowhere else.

Goodness, with us, is a relative term. You say, "He is a good man." He might have been better? "Oh yes. I do not say he is altogether what he might be, but he is a good man." It is a relative term, it is ever literally in the comparative degree, but it is not the absolute; but the divine Goodness is Absolute. Goodness in absolute measure dwells with Him. And because of that, He must reign.

One says that sin bringeth forth death, that it does not pay to be other than good. That is all true, but He Who is Himself the Source, the Spring, the Fountain, and infinite Reservoir of all goodness, is God. Who else should rule, I should like to know, but God? You had an election the other day. You went to the polls and marked your ballot to the best of your judgment. You said, "I think that man is fairly good. I will vote for him." Yet sometimes after you vote you wish you had not, because you can not know what is in a man until he is proved. But if you knew of a man in Toronto who was good all through, if you knew of a man who could be identified as the best man, you would say, "Tell me who he is, and I will vote for him." Why? "Because", you say, "the best man ought to be elected in the general interest of the public."

If we had any enlightenment of intellect at all, we should all agree that God should be on the throne. If sin had not blinded our eyes, if we could know what goodness is, even if God gave all His creatures the franchise, and put Himself up as a candidate for election, He would be elected by acclamation! Why? Because Goodness ought to reign. It must reign. It does reign. "It" shall reign?—No! He shall reign and nobody shall dispute His right.

So I could go on to speak of His wisdom. God, being without limit as to life, or His existence without limit as to duration—"from everlasting to everlasting"—and being without imperfection of any sort in the moral sense, being goodness with all its constituents, or holiness—to use the larger, fuller term—dwelling absolutely in Him, then He ought to reign. And wisdom is with Him absolute also; therefore He should, He must, He does, and shall for ever reign.

I cannot go into that fully: it is only a suggestion I give you. But God never makes a mistake. He is never limited in His vision. He sees the end from the beginning. To Him there are no temporal boundaries, there is no boundary of time at all. A million years hence all that has occurred will be as present to the view of God as we

are to each other at this moment. Nothing is ever hidden from His view. There are no physical boundaries, as there are no temporal boundaries. You cannot localize God. You cannot shut Him up to a given place, or to a given time. He is everywhere, all the time. Therefore He cannot make a mistake.

The mother looks at that little child in the cradle and says, "I wonder what he will be? Will he be a good boy? Will he grow up to be a blessing to me? or will he break my heart? Shall I always thank God for him, or is it possible that I may live to see the day when I could almost wish he had never been born?" We know not what a day, nor an hour, may bring forth. We cannot peer into the future. But there is no future with God. There is no past with God. There is just one eternal now, and His infinite wisdom can order everything aright. He reigns because He must; He is the infinitely good, the infinitely wise.

I will say but this one further thing to-night: He is *the infinitely mighty*. He does what He wills, "and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" You say, "If that be so, what of my will?" Yes, I wonder? How often you hear it now,—men boasting that they are the captains of their souls, that they are master of their fate. If we are, we are making a bad job of our captaincy! "I am not going to surrender my will", is the proud boast. Why not, I should like to know. "I am not going to surrender my judgment." Why not? Is it so excellent as all that? I wonder why any one of us should want to have his own way? I wonder why anybody in his senses should pit his judgment against the judgment of God and say, "I know." You poor, ignorant, dunce, what do you know? What do you know? What does anybody know? Democracy, the rule of *demos*, the people! If one hundred people are only one hundred simpletons, if the hundred are put together, are you likely to have much more wisdom than in the singular. What a lot of simpletons we are anyhow! We are all a little bit "off". It is only a merciful Providence that shuts the door of the asylum and leaves us outside. You know that is true. You have said it yourself. You did not say it out loud, but you have said, "How foolish I am!" And for once, at least, you told the truth.

Do you not think you need somebody else's judgment instead of yours? When you are sick, you use the doctor's skill; and if you have a legal matter to decide, you employ a lawyer's mind. When you go riding on a train, you leave the piloting of the engine to the engineer. When you go on a ship, you leave it to the trained navigators to pilot you across the ocean. Yet we cannot leave anything with God! You say, "I am a man, and I am going to play a man's part. I am going to play the man." I wonder what sort of man we should be, any of us? How foolish! Little midgets that we are! And how great God is! The only time a man shows he has any sense at all is when he acknowledges he has none. That is a paradox, but it is true. A man never begins to be dignified until he humbles himself before God and confesses that he does not even desire to live. The only time Nebuchadnezzar was ever really great was when he bowed himself before the Most High.

After all, the doctrine of divine sovereignty means that we are under a paternal despot. Our Father is just that. He will have His way. He will do His will. But blessed be His name, through Him Whom He sent as a Revelation of His Person—and of that more by and by—we have

salvation. He it is Who said of the Father, "He is far off there where you cannot see Him. You do not know Him, and you wonder what He is like. You wish you could pray to Him, but you do not know how to address Him. I know Him, and I will tell you how. When ye pray, say, 'Our Father which art in heaven'."

Are you not glad your Father is on the throne? That is true, if you are a Christian. I cannot go into that this evening. I have been trying to lay the foundation for later lectures, just thinking out loud with you; but we shall see next week how He came out of the unknown and robed Himself in our flesh, and came speaking to us in our language, and touching us with a human touch, saving us at last by the washing away of our sins with His own precious blood.

THE BEARER OF INIQUITIES

"The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."

—Isaiah liii. 6

I am glad the prophet did not waste any time in telling us who he meant by "Him." It is Him of the manger. Him of the bloody sweat. Him of the crucifixion agony. Him of the resurrection throne. "The Lord hath laid on *Him* the iniquity of us all.

Says some one: "That is not generous. Let every one bear his own burdens." And there is something in that. If I owe a debt, and I have money to pay it, and I come to you and ask you to cancel my obligation, you would be right in saying to me: "Pay your own debts." If I am walking along the street with you, and we are both hale and hearty, and I want you to carry me, you are right in saying: "Walk on your own feet." But suppose you and I were in a regiment together, and I were fearfully wounded in the battle, and I fell unconscious at your feet with gun-shot fractures and dislocations, five bullets having struck me at once—you would say to your comrades: "Here, this man is helpless. Let us carry him out to the ambulance; let us take him out to the hospital." And you would take me up in your arms, and I would be a dead weight, and you would beckon to the corps of the ambulance: "Bring your wagon around this way, and take this man to the hospital." You would put me in the ambulance, and you would have done your duty. Would it have been mean to let you carry me then? You certainly would not have been so unkind as not to carry me. Now, that is Christ to the soul. If we could pay our spiritual obligations we might go up to God and say: "Lord, there is so much debt, and here I have the means with which to cancel it. Now cross it all out." The debt is paid. But the fact is we are pierced through and through with the sabres of sin. We have gone down under the hot fire, and we are helpless and undone. We will die on the field unless some help comes to us. God sends His ambulance, yea, He dispatches His only Son to carry us out and bind up our gashes and take us home. "On Him, on Him, the Lord hath laid the iniquity of us all." Oh, my friends, we were a dead weight in Christ's arms; all our sins about us; all our chains on us. If Christ raises us at all it will not be by the tips of the fingers, it will not be with one arm; it will be by getting down on one knee and putting around us His omnipotent arms and throwing all the energy of His Godhead into one dead lift, that He will raise us up to honour and glory and immortality. "On Him the Lord hath laid the iniquity of us all."

—T. DEWITT TALMAGE

THE RELIGIOUS BLACK MARKET

By C. D. Colé, Mortons Gap, Ky.

"Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven" (Matt. 5:3).

"But there was a certain man, called Simon, which beforetime in the same city used sorcery, and bewitched the people of Samaria, giving out that himself was some great one" (Acts 8:9).

OUR texts point a contrast. They give us two kinds of people. The first gives us the spirit of those in the kingdom of heaven; the other tells of a man who publicised himself as some great person. Those in the kingdom of heaven—the saved—are poor in spirit; those outside the kingdom—the lost—are proud in spirit.

We have heard it said of certain boastful fellows that if they could be bought for what they are worth and sold for what they think they are worth, there would be an immense profit.

On the wall of a tailor shop, catering exclusively to the men of our armed forces, there was a sign which read, "Hats altered to fit any promotion." This was a smart sign slyly aimed at those who let a little success go to their heads.

This thing of acquiring something illegally and selling above ceiling price is called a black market. It means to acquire unlawfully and sell at exorbitant price. This evil takes advantage of scarcity to exploit the helpless. And it has permeated almost every business and has given rise to hitherto unheard of kinds of business. We now hear of a black market in babies. There are baby brokers who acquire illegitimate babies and sell them to eager foster parents for large sums of money.

My texts suggest a religious black market. By this I mean there are people who are self-righteous, and who like to parade their so-called piety. Like Simon Magus, they give out that they are important people. Like the Pharisees of old, they blow their own horn to attract and receive the praise of others. They sell themselves for more than they are worth.

But those who are in the kingdom of heaven are not operating any black market. They are poor in spirit. In their conversion their spirit of self-righteousness was slain. They lost hope in themselves and found hope in Christ. They became poor in their own eyes and became rich in Christ. They became nothing, and Christ became all and in all. They gave self a vote of no confidence and Christ a vote of full confidence. With empty hands they cling to the cross of Christ as the only way of salvation.

Spiritual Photography

In the beatitudes we have spiritual photography. Photography is followed as a livelihood by some and as a hobby by many others. In Kodak albums you will see the same persons in many places and various postures. So in the beatitudes we have a moral album of the saint in many postures and from many angles. They are spiritual snapshots with no thought of posing for a picture. The first beatitude gives us a picture of the saved man as being poor in spirit. He does not think much of himself. The second is the same person as a mourner. He is a mourner over sins—his sins and the sins of others—to him sin is a grievous thing. The third gives his attitude towards earthly possessions. He is not fighting for them, for the meek will inherit the earth when it becomes worth having. The fourth beatitude gives us the desire of the saint for personal and practical

righteousness — he is longing to be perfectly whole. And some day he will be filled with the goodness he desires.

The beatitudes give us the feeling the child of God has when occupied with himself. They give us what the saint is in his own eyes. And they show us that he is not selling himself on any black market for more than he is worth. In his own eyes he is worth little. He gladly confesses that he is only a sinner and nothing at all.

The Poor in Spirit

"Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." What does it mean to be poor in spirit? It does not mean to be spiritually poor. There is no blessing in spiritual poverty. It is not what we are, but what we are in our own estimation, that is here intended. To be poor in spirit means to be consciously poor in personal worthiness. All are poor in personal righteousness, but all do not know it. Many think of themselves more highly than they should. It is one thing to be poor in personal righteousness and quite another thing to realize it. To be poor in spirit is the realization that in ourselves we are nothing, and have nothing, and can do nothing, and have need of all things. It is to be sin-conscious. To be poor in spirit is an attitude towards self. Saints are more sensitive to sin than are the lost. It does not take much sin to fill the saved person; yea, a very little makes him sick at heart, and causes him to cry with the apostle Paul, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death?" To be poor in spirit is the very antithesis of that proud haughty, self-important disposition manifested by the world in general and by Simon Magus in particular. The spirit of those in the kingdom of heaven was strikingly manifested by Job who said, "I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes." And by Isaiah, when he cried, "Woe is me for I am a man of unclean lips," and by Paul who exclaimed, "When I would do good evil is present with me."

To be poor in spirit is not the same as an inferiority complex. It is not what we are in comparison with other men like ourselves, but what we are in comparison with Christ, and with what we ought to be. My father in the ministry was Dr. A. S. Pettie. He used to say when asked feel that way and still be poor in spirit. Spurgeon used to say: "In the kingdom of heaven the question is not, are you a peer, but are you poor in spirit? It is those who are of no account in their own eyes, who are of the blood royal of the universe."

To be poor in spirit is foundational in any experience of grace. It marks the beginning of the withering work of the Holy Spirit, and it is also a mark of growth in grace. Salvation begins with a feeling of dissatisfaction with self, and the saved man continues as he began. The saint is ever conscious of his need of grace and of more grace.

To be poor in spirit is not natural to men. Man by nature is self-important, self-sufficient, and self-righteous. It was only after grace had wrought mightily in Saul of Tarsus that he felt himself to be the chief of sinners. The natural man wears two kinds of spectacles. If he is looking for sin he puts on the kind that diminishes when he is looking at self, and magnifies when he is looking at his neighbour. If he is looking for good he wears the pair that magnifies when he is looking at self and minimizes when he is looking at his fellow man. I looked at my brother with the microscope of criticism and said, "How coarse my brother is!" Then I looked in the mirror

of truth and said, "How like me my brother is!" The best way to take the starch of pride out of a man is to let him look at himself in the mirror of God's word.

The government has been rather severe on people who operate a black market, and God will be severe on those who operate a religious black market. Those who exalt themselves will be abased. The man who sells himself for more than he is worth, saying, "Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy Name, and in Thy Name cast out devils and in Thy Name done many wonderful works!" will hear the Lord say, "I never knew you."

The poor in spirit are said to be blessed because this spirit belongs to those who are in the kingdom of heaven. Such an attitude towards self is one of the evidences of the new birth. It is to have a disposition exactly opposite to what they had by nature. And notice, the promise is for the present: "Theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Many are the gracious promises addressed to the poor in spirit. "I am poor and needy; yet the Lord thinketh upon me". (Ps. 40:17). "To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and that trembleth at my word". (Isa. 65:2).

No Gospel in the Beatitudes

I think it will help us to see that there is no gospel in the beatitudes or in the sermon on the mount. The beatitudes do not tell us what we are in Christ. They have nothing to say about the death of Christ; nothing to say about faith in Christ; nothing to say about the imputed righteousness of Christ. Our Lord is not describing the feeling which results from faith in Christ, but rather his thoughts and emotions when he is occupied with himself; and not the forward and upward look at Christ. He is telling us what the saint is in his own eyes on account of his own record. Every Christian reader must surely see his own portrait in this beatitude. This is a snapshot taken by the Holy Spirit of those who are in the kingdom of heaven. They are not proud and self-sufficient, but are poor in spirit. They are conscious they are not what they ought to be, nor what they want to be, nor what they shall yet be, by the grace of God.

Our Lord began His sermon on the mount with benedictions on the saved rather than with maledictions on the wicked. He makes us know wherein true blessedness consists. He describes those who are truly blessed or fortunate. The word "blessed" in the beatitudes does not speak of feeling, but of state or condition. Those here spoken of do not feel good or happy. One may have a happy feeling and at the same time be in a sorrowful or miserable condition. The drunkard has a glorious feeling, but is in a miserable condition. The Laodiceans felt fine, but their feelings were not a true index of their condition. They felt rich and increased with goods, and in need of nothing, but actually they were wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.

There Is Christian Joy

We are not saying that the Christian is without joy, but his joy is not in himself. He rejoices in the Lord and has no confidence in the flesh. He is happy to know that his name is written in heaven. His cause of rejoicing is not in his attainments or personal worthiness. Paul says, "We are the circumcision, which worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh". (Phil. 3:3).

A well-balanced ministry will promote humility as well as hope; it will turn the eyes of the believer upon him-

self and his failures as well as upon Christ and His finished work. None but the poor in spirit can properly hope in Christ. Nobody but a conscious sinner can be trusting Christ as Saviour.

In the beatitudes our Lord is not telling the lost how to be saved; He is telling the saved how to identify themselves as members of the kingdom of heaven. He is not presenting the way of salvation, but describing those who are already in the way. Every child of God can find his portrait from many angles in the beatitudes.

For Younger Readers,

BRAVE CAPTAIN EDGAR

"I wish it would snow!" cried Edgar. "Oh, dear!" exclaimed his mother. "Snow is very cold to walk in all day. But then," she added, "I should not be so selfish; I'll wish with you, Edgar. But, of course, wishing may not bring the snow."

Edgar's mother was a widow and made their meagre living selling things from house to house, so she had much walking to do.

"Oh, I forgot, mother," said Edgar, "Let's don't wish for snow."

Whether they wished it or not, the snow came that night. Next day being Saturday, the neighbourhood boys soon ganged up to play. They decided to form two armies and wage the first battle at Forest Hill—a large and rather steep vacant lot on the edge of the small town—where children were welcome to play. Edgar was captain of the company that laid siege to the Hill which was held by Captain Baxter and his company. Captain Baxter held the Hill until Captain Edgar was reinforced by Lieutenant Jimmie and his men; then the enemy was chased off the Hill and far out to the end of Yale Avenue.

"Oh! Oh-o-o!" cried several boys at once as a loud tinkle of glass told them a snowball had smashed a window.

"Oh, my it's Kent's house—beat it from here, boys!" cried Captain Baxter. "There's old Mandy now!"

"Jes' wait! Kunnel Kent gwine ter put yo' all in jail!" screamed the old negro servant.

"What's up, Mandy?" the old colonel asked, as he hobbled out to the kitchen.

"Dis heah pile o' glass am what's up, suh—only h'ts down 'stead o' up! I dunno, suh, who dis young 'un am"—Mandy pointed to a pale-faced boy walking slowly toward the Kent house—"but I knows dat Baxter boy what runned off wid de res' o' de peck."

Edgar raised his cap and tried to speak, but the words wouldn't come.

"Come in," said Colonel Kent. It sounded like an order.

"Broke my window, did you?" demanded Colonel Kent.

"I—I don't know, sir," stammered Edgar. "Some of us did, I don't know who threw the snowball. We were all throwing, and you know how the balls get mixed up. I'm very sorry, sir."

Edgar looked fearfully at the old gentleman's cane. Rumor had it that Colonel Kent had caned more than one grown man in days gone by. Was he going to use that cane now?

"Kunnel, suh"—black Mandy's wrath had cooled—"dis heah chile nevah break dat winder! I done see dat Baxter boy aim his ball fere to hit it hisself!"

"Ah, Mandy! you have wonderful eyesight—sometimes!" twinkled Colonel Kent knowing that Mandy didn't see any such thing.

"The others ran away from the crime, eh? Why did you stay, Boy?" asked the Colonel.

"To—to say that we didn't mean to do it, sir. I'm sure nobody did it on purpose; it—it just happened."

"It could have been an accident—I can see that," admitted the Colonel. "But, you could have run away, too, as the others did. I'm curious to know why you stayed."

"I started to run, sir, and then I thought a Christian ought not to run off and not apologize. I don't have any money, but if there's any work I can do to pay—"

Colonel Kent cleared his throat, "Humph! a Christian, eh? Well, well, what's being a Christian got to do with snow-balling and smashing the other fellow's window, and such like! And so you have religion through the week! A good many people just have it on Sundays, and so it never checks them up on week days about mistreating their fellowmen, and so on — the way yours has. What about those fellows that ran away — not Christian?"

"Oh, they were terribly scared," replied Edgar unhappily. He didn't want to pose as being better than his friends. How could he excuse them?

"You see I was captain, sir," explained Edgar on sudden thought, "just in our playing, I mean. The captain ought to see you. It was his duty, not his men's, wasn't it, sir?"

"Bless my soul!" cried the Colonel. "I salute you, Captain! You're a soldier after my own heart! I've known officers in my day that thought the glory was for them, and all hard things for the buck privates—"

"Mandy" Colonel Kent broke off to call the cook. Mandy appeared promptly. "Bring the cookie jar and some milk. I wish to take up a matter of important business with the captain. He is a Christian soldier—just the fellow I've been looking for to fetch my mail from the post office."

"At your service, sir!" cried Edgar. Oh, that will help mother!" he added.

"You've earned a medal today, Captain," said Colonel Kent, "but your soldiers should have come along and given you their moral support.—*Heart and Life*.

Bible School Lesson Outline

Vol. 19 First Quarter Lesson 9 February 27, 1955

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

JEHU'S REFORMS

Lesson Text: 2 Kings 10:18-31.

Golden Text: "For the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart."—1 Samuel 16:7.

I. Idols Destroyed: verses 18-28.

Teachers of younger scholars may prefer to deal with some of the principles of the lesson rather than to describe the life of Jehu in detail. Some of these main truths are as follows; the infallibility of the word of God, the fact of sin, the certainty of judgment for sin, the necessity of absolute obedience to the Lord, idols in the heart and the sin of compromise.

Elisha, the prophet of the Lord, continued to exercise his ministry for the Lord in Israel for about fifty years after the withdrawal of the Syrians from the city of Samaria, when they left food, possessions and equipment for the famine-stricken Israelites (2 Kings 7). One of Elisha's duties was to send a young prophet to anoint Jehu, the son of Jehoshaphat, the son of Nimshi, as the tenth king of Israel (2 Kings 9:2).

The command to anoint Jehu had been given in the first place to Elijah 22 years before this (1 Kings 19:16, 17), but was executed by his successor. By inspiration Elijah uttered

a two-fold prophecy: (1) that Jehu's reign would be characterized by blood-shed; (2) that this Jehu would be associated with Hazael, king of Syria, and with Elisha the prophet.

Jehu is introduced to us as the bold captain of the army of Israel, the general who commanded the battalion stationed at Ramoth-gilead, the city which had been recaptured from the Syrians (2 Kings 9:1-10). When he appeared before the officers of the army after his anointing, they immediately proclaimed him king, a sure proof of his popularity (2 Kings 9:11-13).

Without waiting for the Lord to open the way for His word to be accomplished, Jehu planned and executed a successful conspiracy against Joram, also called Jehoram (2 Kings 8:1), the reigning king of Israel. Joram, son of Ahab, was slain at Jezreel (meaning "God will scatter"—Zech 10:9), and also Ahaziah, the great grandson of Ahab (2 Kings 9:14-29). Thus did Jehu commence in Jezreel the slaughter of the house of Ahab, against whom the Lord had announced judgment because of his great sin (1 Kings 21:19-26). Sin is a moral plague against which strong measures must be taken.

According to a similar prophecy (1 Kings 21:23) Jezebel, the wicked wife of Ahab was the next to perish (2 Kings 9:30-37), followed by the sons and descendants of Ahab (2 Kings 10:1-12). Jehu was "a man of might", and the furious driving for which he is commonly remembered is indicative of the passionate and relentless character of the man (2 Kings 9:20; 10:34). The judgments of God are sure to come to pass, although they may sometimes be delayed (1 Kings 21:27-29; 2 Pet. 3:9). His word must be fulfilled (Psa. 119:89; Matt. 5:18; 24:35; 1 Pet. 1:25).

Of the descendants of Ahab, Jehonadab alone was spared (2 Kings 10:15-17). This godly man, known as Jonadab (Jer. 35:6-19), gave prestige to the cause of Jehu and was called upon to witness Jehu's "zeal for the Lord". This zeal for the Lord found expression, not only in his executing the sentence of God against the house of Ahab, but also in exterminating Baal worship in Israel.

Jehu performed this deed in a deceitful manner. Claiming to be a more devout worshipper of Baal than Jeroboam had been (1 Kings 16:31-33), he gathered the people together to a great sacrifice. Every single priest of Baal was present, wearing full regalia, and every worshipper. After the burnt-offering, the 80 men commissioned for the task slew the priests and the people, while the guards and the captains took the images and idols from the house of Baal, burned them and completely demolished the temple (1 Kings 8:40; 2 Kings 11:18). Thus Jehu put an end to Baal worship in Israel.

II. Idols Tolerated: verses 29-31.

Jehu was commended for carrying out the will of the Lord in regard to the death of Ahab's house. In return for his zeal the Lord promised that his children to the fourth generation should sit upon the throne of Israel, a prophecy which was literally fulfilled (2 Kings 15:12).

Although Jehu was zealous in exterminating the worship of Baal, it would seem that he was actuated chiefly by selfish or political motives, and that he desired merely to secure the approval of the people. At any rate, he was not opposed to idolatry as such, for he tolerated the worship of the golden calves erected at Bethel and Dan by Jeroboam (1 Kings 12:25-33). Thus, like Jeroboam, he sinned himself and caused Israel to sin (1 Kings 14:16; Matt. 5:19).

Jehu obeyed the Lord in some respects, but he refused to follow Him with his whole heart (Deut. 10:13; 1 Kings 8:23; 14:8). Those who follow the Lord wholly, as did Caleb and Joshua, are in the minority (Deut. 1:36, 38; 2 Kings 23:3; Dan. 1:8; 3:12); the majority are content to compromise.

Jehu died after a long reign of 28 years (2 Kings 10:34-36). He was held individually responsible for his own wicked deeds, even when he was the instrument in God's hands for punishing the evil deeds of Ahab (Hos. 1:4). The complementary principles of divine sovereignty and human responsibility are both taught in Scripture.

Daily Bible Readings

Feb. 21—Prophecy Regarding Jehu	1 Kings 18:11-18.
Feb. 22—Anointing of Jehu	2 Kings 9:1-10.
Feb. 23—Jehu Ascends the Throne	2 Kings 9:11-13.
Feb. 24—Driving of Jehu	2 Kings 9:14-21.
Feb. 25—Conspiracy of Jehu	2 Kings 9:22-26.
Feb. 26—Judgment through Jehu	2 Kings 10:1-12.
Feb. 27—Vengeance upon Jehu	Hosea 1:1-5.

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