

The Gospel Witness and Protestant Advocate

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We Are Still Waiting...

OUR CHALLENGE UNANSWERED

A CHALLENGE

The Editor of THE GOSPEL WITNESS challenges any responsible official or member of The Canadian Council of Churches to deny that, in Dr. Nels F. S. Ferre, this Council, through one of its boards, has sponsored a speaker who has denied or cast doubts upon the following truths:

- (1) The sinlessness of Jesus Christ.
- (2) The Virgin Birth of Jesus Christ.
- (3) The unique inspiration of the Bible.
- (4) The substitutionary atonement.
- (5) The real deity of Jesus Christ.
- (6) The fact of eternal punishment.

Further, we challenge any member or official of the said Council to deny that Dr. Ferre positively teaches these anti-Christian doctrines:—

- (1) That Jesus Christ could and did sin.
- (2) That He COULD have been the son of a German soldier!
- (3) That He probably was the Son of Joseph.
- (4) The existence of purgatory.
- (5) The ultimate restoration to divine favour of all men.

The pages of THE GOSPEL WITNESS are open to any who will dare to deny these facts. We expect no such denial for we have on hand definite references from Dr. Ferre's own pen to support our charges. Copies of this issue will be sent to Dr. Ferre and to the President and Secretary of The Canadian Council of Churches.

IN LAST week's issue of THE GOSPEL WITNESS there appeared a story concerning the visit to Canada of Dr. Nels Ferre who spoke under the auspices of the Board of Christian Education of the Canadian Council of Churches. Ordinarily the visit of an American theological professor and writer would arouse little interest. Dr. Ferre, however, is such an outspoken critic of the Bible and the historic Christian faith that THE GOSPEL WITNESS felt that his infidelity should not remain unnoticed. Further, the fact that the Canadian Council of Churches sponsored the speaker made it even more necessary to inform Christians that this Council is giving active support to those who deny precious Biblical truths.

The above challenge was printed on page two of last week's GOSPEL WITNESS but, as yet, we have received no answer. *The Toronto Telegram* of May 6 also carried the story, quoting freely from THE GOSPEL WITNESS. If we receive no answer from the President or the Secretary of the Canadian Council of Churches, we can only assume that the Council was fully aware of Dr. Ferre's anti-Biblical teaching and that the views of Dr. Ferre are substantially the views of the Canadian Council of Churches. This is a solemn and disturbing thought—the leaders of Canadian Protestantism are committed to a view which can only dishonour God, confuse Christians, damn souls and close churches.

Regardless of whether we receive an answer by next week, we shall publish in the next issue of THE GOSPEL WITNESS a full account of Dr. Ferre's teaching in order to verify all our charges. We ask our readers to cooperate in giving these issues of the paper a wide distribution.

OWEN SOUND — MAY 23

The new Baptist Church building in Owen Sound (Pastor, Reginald Brown) will be officially opened on Monday, May 23. Because this is a holiday, it is expected that hundreds of Christian friends will descend upon the Georgian Bay city to rejoice with the believers there. A full program has been planned and spiritual blessing will come to any who attend.

The afternoon session will be held at 2 p.m. Speakers will be Rev. Samuel Dempster, pastor of the new Baptist work in Kingston and Mr. Leslie Tarr, Editor of The Gospel Witness. In addition to these messages, special musical numbers will be presented by friends.

The evening session will begin at 7:30 sharp. The speaker at this great rally will be Rev. H. C. Slade, Pastor of Jarvis Street Baptist Church.

Meals will be served at noon and at 5.30 p.m. Any who plan to attend for the whole day would be well-advised to write Pastor R. Brown, 843 — 7th St. E., Owen Sound.

A THIRST FOR GOD

Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.—Matt. 5:6.

What a wonderful breadth of divine charity! He who is altogether righteous will accept from us even the thirst after righteousness. He will not reserve his blessing until I become actually pure; he will bless my very effort after purity. He will accept the mere desire of him; the mere wish of my heart to be like him; the mere throb of my pulse to be near him. Tho I have not reached him, if only I see in him a beauty that I long for, he will count it unto me for righteousness. Tho I claim not to be like him, and despair ever to touch the hem of his garment, if only I can admire afar off the kingliness of his beauty, he will bless my hunger and my very thirst for him. Yet, say not, Oh my soul, that thou hast salvation without goodness. Thou couldst not hunger after him, thou couldst not thirst for him, if he were not already in thee. Thou couldst not see in him any beauty to desire if thou thyself hadst not the germ of the same beauty. "We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is"; thy vision of him is the proof of thy likeness to him. If thou were not like him, thou wouldst not see him, as he is. If he were not in thee, thou couldst not wish to imitate him—couldst not even feel thy despair of imitating him. Thou canst not admire what is out of thy nature, nor seek what is not kindred to thy being. Therefore, my soul, thy hunger pleads for thee, thy thirst-intercedes for thee, thy longing advocates for thee, thy very sense of moral want predicts that the spirit is at the door. Thou canst cry for outward food before thou knowest the taste thereof, but thou canst not cry for righteousness until thou hast "tasted that the Lord is good." He who sees the King in his beauty has himself begun to be beautiful; he who hungers and thirsts after righteousness is already beginning to be filled.

—GEORGE MATHESON

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A REMINDER TO SEMINARY FRIENDS

The students of Toronto Baptist Seminary are grateful to the many friends who assist the institution by sending gifts of food and canned goods. These gifts enable the prospective preachers, missionaries and Christian workers to obtain meals at a very low cost. As summer approaches, we are reminded that the time draws near to preserve fruits and vegetables. We trust that all our supporters will remember the Seminary at this time and set aside some provisions for this important institution. If you feel that you could help, simply write The Secretary, Toronto Baptist Seminary, 337 Jarvis Street, Toronto 2.

SUNDAY IN JARVIS STREET

"Be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." The teachers in the Bible School and the workers in Jarvis Street Church can testify experimentally to the truth of this verse. During the past eight weeks over two hundred new scholars have been brought into the Sunday morning Bible School. The systematic visitation will continue and, under God's blessing many more will yet be reached for the Lord.

The preacher at both services on Sunday was Mr. Slade. In the morning he stressed the work with the young, dealing particularly with the mother's influence in the spiritual life of the child. In the evening the subject was "Reservations For Heaven Secured." One man publicly professed faith in Christ at the conclusion of the evening service.

The Jarvis Street Pulpit

"LIKE SHEEP"

A Sermon by Dr. T. T. Shields

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Morning, March 2nd, 1930
(Stenographically Reported)

"Then drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him.

"And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them.

"And he spake this parable unto them, saying,

"What man of you having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost until he find it?

"And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing.

"And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost.

"I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance." Luke 15:1-7.

Prayer Before the Sermon.

O Lord, we are in Thy Holy presence, and we have come to hear what God the Lord shall speak. We pray that we may have the direction and the illumination of the Holy Spirit, that our hearts may be opened to the reception of Thy Word. As Thou didst open the heart of Lydia, so we beseech Thee to open ours. May the word preached profit us because it shall be mixed with faith in those who hear it. The hearts of all in Thy presence are open to Thee. Thou knowest our special need this morning. Give to us, we pray Thee, in an unusual degree, the power of Thy Spirit. May this morning be a morning of decision for many who have long delayed their surrender to Jesus Christ. Help us who are Thy people greatly to rejoice in God our Saviour. We ask it for Jesus Christ's sake, Amen.

YOU WILL remember that on this occasion, in the company to whom our Lord spoke, there were many publicans and sinners, needy men and women, many of whom were conscious of their need. But there were present also many religious people who were called Pharisees, and they said, "This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them." They had an idea, apparently, that religion was for good people, that they were numbered among the good, (and they were among the good!) and they could not understand how a prophet like Jesus Christ could mingle with the riff-raff of the day, the publicans and the sinners.

On another occasion a Pharisee called Simon invited our Lord Jesus to dinner, and while He was in his house there came a poor woman from the street. She began to bathe His feet with her tears, and to wipe them with the hair of her head. When the host, Simon, saw it he said, "If this man Jesus were a prophet He would know what manner of woman this is; that she is a sinner." Our Lord knew his thoughts, and He said, "Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee." And he saith, "Master, say on." Then He said, "When I came into your house you offered me no water for my feet"—which was a custom of the country. When they came from a journey with sandalled feet they were offered water to bathe their feet, to remove the sand and dust of travel. He said, "You omitted the ordinary courtesies of life. You gave me no water for my feet, but this woman since I came in hath not ceased to bathe my feet with her tears. Wherefore, her sins, which are many, are forgiven."

There are few who understand the purpose of Christ's coming into the world. The revelation of God in Christ is unique in this, that it reveals Him as being graciously disposed toward sinful men, and ready always to receive such as repent of their sins. When, on this occasion, the Pharisees complained among themselves that Jesus Christ received sinners, and actually sat down to meat with them, He spoke these three matchless parables, of the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the lost son.

To the first of these parables we shall direct our thought for a little while this morning. How very simple it is, and how important that it should be simple! It was in order to simplify the truth of God that Jesus Christ came. He Who was infinite took upon Him our finite nature. He Who was invisible rendered Himself visible by clothing Himself with our flesh. And He Who was the high and lofty One inhabiting eternity, came down in the form of a man that He might touch us, and talk with us, and lift us up to God. It is important that I should be simple this morning, because I want the boys and girls, even the youngest, to understand what I say. And I am inclined to think when little children understand the preacher it helps their fathers to understand too.

I

We are none of us so gifted that we are able either to fathom the depths or scale the heights. AND HERE, THE LORD, WHO KNOWS ALL ABOUT US—WHAT WE ARE BY NATURE, OUR DISPOSITIONS, ALL OUR TENDENCIES—LIKENS US, EVERY ONE OF US, TO SHEEP. It is not a very complimentary simile; it is not a figure that leaves us much ground for boasting. That is what we are like, sheep! "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." "I have gone astray like a lost sheep", said the Psalmist. You will remember he spoke of the Lord as his Shepherd, and of himself as a sheep. "The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want." And so my business is to talk to a lot of sheep: Yes, even if you have been to college! A lot of sheep's heads too!—for a sheep is the most stupid of all God's creatures. A sheep has less sense than any other creature I know. If a dog be lost it will find its way home again. If you

were to take that cat of yours out into the country fifty or a hundred miles it would very probably find its way home. But a sheep when lost can never find its way home, even from one field to another. It has no sense at all. Even its instinct will not guide it. You remember on one occasion the Lord said, "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider." We have less sense than an ox! And if will allow me to say so, we are more stupid by nature than an ass. Even an ass will find its way home. It knows where its provender is. But men and women, and boys and girls, are blind to their own interests. They are just like sheep. A sheep is the most defenceless of all creatures. It has no way of fighting, of defending itself against dogs or wolves. You will remember how David tells that when he kept his father's sheep there went out a lion and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock. The sheep had no power to resist the lion or the bear: it was dependent for its safety upon help outside of itself, upon a power not its own.

And that is true of every one of us. We have no power to help ourselves in spiritual things. I know it is common nowadays for the preacher to tell people how wise they are and how strong they are—and all the time people know that it is not true. So far as spiritual truth is concerned we are anything but wise; and in respect to the powers of evil which would destroy us, we are utterly at their mercy, and unless a power that is not human, that is superhuman, intervenes, we cannot be saved at all. We are just like poor helpless sheep at the mercy of the dogs of hell, always.

That is true of these boys and girls. Oh, how we ought to love them! How we ought to seek to save them! How concerned we ought to be for their moral and spiritual welfare, when we think of the unfriendly attitude of this world toward all the things of God! The Lord said, "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves." And that is what all these children are, at school, and at play, what these young people are at business, or at college, wherever they are; and what all the rest of us are, young or old, just sheep in the midst of wolves—no weapon, no power, no ability to defend ourselves at all. Our lives are not worth a moment's purchase, dear friends, because we are beset with enemies, and have no protection unless God affords it us.

Then this particular sheep was a lost sheep. And we are lost. We do not even know the Father's address. We do not know the road that leads to His home. No man by searching can find out God.

I may have told you, but if I have I think I will repeat it, of a little girl I saw once in Hamilton when I was pastor there. I was going down the street, and I saw a little girl of five or six years of age outside a store window, crying, and rubbing her eyes. Nobody was paying any attention to her, so I stopped and said, "Why, girlie, what is the matter?" She said, "I want my Auntie Mi." "Well", I said, "dry your eyes, and I will see if I can find your Auntie Mi for you." She looked up and smiled through her tears, pleased that somebody was taking an interest in her. When I got her calmed down a little I said, "Now tell me where Auntie Mi lives?" "Why", she said, "she lives with grandma"! I said, "That is fine. We will have to find grandma then as well as Auntie Mi, shall we not?" The little girl was excited, and I tried to keep her cool, as I said, "Now tell me, Auntie Mi lives with grandma?" "Yes." "Well, where does grand-

ma live?" "Why, she lives with Uncle Bob"! We were making progress! I tried once more, and I said, "Tell me now, where does Uncle Bob live?" "Oh, Uncle Bob lives with grandma"! Then she went further and assured me that grandma lived with Auntie Mi, and Auntie Mi lived with Uncle Bob, and Uncle Bob lived with grandma.

I took my little friend into a store, and got a telephone directory, to try to find out what her name was. She knew her first name, but she could not remember the other. She did not even know her own name. I tried to find out what Uncle Bob's other name was, but to her he was simply "Uncle Bob", and grandma was "grandma", and Auntie Mi was "Auntie Mi". After a while I saw that there was no possibility of finding out anything from her, so I took her to the police station. The sergeant received us very kindly. I told him who I was, that I had picked up this little girl on the street as she could not find her way home. So he put her up on a stool, and began to question her. Of course he had had more experience with lost children than a poor preacher! He tried his hand, and when he had got through he had learned this: that this little girl lived with Auntie Mi, and that Auntie Mi lived with grandma, and that grandma lived with Uncle Bob! I said, "Sergeant, what do you do in cases like this?" "We cannot do anything but wait until someone comes to look for her. Auntie Mi will be along after a while, or Uncle Bob; somebody will be here. It will not be very long before we shall have enquiries for a lost child."

That was just a little girl's experience, but we are all about as well informed respecting spiritual things as this little girl was about her Hamilton address. We are lost, and like sheep we must wait until Somebody finds us. We shall never get home unless Somebody comes to look for us.

Then again: like sheep, we follow the example of others; like sheep, we have gone astray. I remember once being in Wales, and I saw a flock of sheep coming down a road, with a man behind driving the sheep. He had a couple of dogs with him, which he was keeping in the rear. There are hedges on either side of the roads in the Old Land, some of you know them. In the hedge on the left side of the road there was a gap, just a little hole. One sheep saw it, and up the bank he went—and every other sheep after him. The man called, but they paid no attention whatever. Then he sent his dogs after them; they went after the sheep to drive them back again to the road. They were all going one after another through that gap—for what, they knew not; but one had gone, and the rest were following.

We are all like sheep, every one of us. Because one does a thing, everyone else does it. "By one man sin entered into the world"; and we have been following in Adam's footsteps ever since: You girls—and the men are not a bit better—you will all be changing your hats in a week or so, and the ones you will get will probably not look a bit better than the one you now have. But it will make no difference what they are like at all; whatever the fashion of the day is you will all follow it. So will the men, especially the boys. Oh how we do like to be up-to-date! You see some other boy with a hat that is new this season, and you go and buy one. You are as bad as your sister, every bit of it. We are all like sheep.

I do not know how many boys there are here who smoke. I wish you would all give it up. The best time

to give it up is now. But I will venture to say there is not one man in a hundred who now smokes who smoked for his own pleasure first of all. He simply did it because he saw other people doing it, that is all. The women are as bad as the men. Do not compliment yourselves. Just buy a picture of a sheep—the more stupid it looks the better—put it in a frame, and hang it up in your bedroom, and say, "That is just like me. I am like a sheep doing silly things all the time, running away from my best Friend." That is the picture of men and women and boys and girls, as they are by nature.

II

THEN THIS SHEEP, BEING LOST, HAD SOMEONE TO GO TO LOOK FOR IT. The man left the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and went out after the lost one. That is the explanation of Christ's coming to earth. That is why "Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king". That is why He left the highest throne in glory for the cross of deepest woe. That is why Deity walked in the midst of humanity, why God speaks to men by human lips, because the Good Shepherd is going out after the lost. That is why we have a Bible. From Genesis to Revelation it is the voice of the Good Shepherd. It is directed toward the finding of lost sheep. That is the purpose of God in this service this morning, to find that which is lost.

I love to think of this particular phrase in the parable, that the Shepherd goes out after the lost "until he find it". There were many obstacles in the way, many difficulties to encounter, many valleys to descend, many hills to climb, many foes to meet; but in spite of everything this good shepherd went out after the lost "until he find it."

I remind you that in seeking us, the Lord Jesus has had great difficulty. He had to deal with our sins. He had to deal with our foes. He had to bear our guilt in order that He might redeem us. But in spite of all obstacles Jesus Christ never ceased His search until He was able to cry, "It is finished". And then in His work of grace in respect to the individual sinner, how He has gone after us! There are people here who have known the Lord for many a year, but I am sure you could tell this morning your experience of how you tried to run away from Him. You turned your back upon Him. You disguised yourself. You did everything in your power to keep away from God—and yet He pursued you. He hedged up your way with thorns, or He sent His dogs after you. He visited you perhaps with affliction, with privation, with a multitude of adversities, until at last you were ready to cry like Jacob, "All these things are against me." But He kept after you "until He found you". At last, when you felt the touch of His Spirit upon you, and you were brought from poverty to wealth, from strangerhood to fellowship, from alienation from God into a place in His family, you were able to look back on your life's experience and say, "Now I can understand; He loved me with a love that would not let me go." There is not one of us here this morning who would ever have been a Christian if it had not been that the Good Shepherd went out after us, seeking us, determined to have us, and pursuing us until at last He found us.

There are some of you who have not yet yielded to Christ. But he is seeking you, He is calling you, and if He has set His heart upon you He will never let you go "until He finds you". You had better hear His voice before

trouble comes upon you, before you hear the barking of His dogs! I do not know how He will deal with you; but, seeking you, He will not let you go until He finds you.

I desire to pass this word on to you who are Christian workers. We ought ourselves, being found of the Lord, to have the shepherd-heart. We ought to be concerned about the lost. We ought to be filled with His Spirit. We ought to be as anxious for the salvation of men and women and boys and girls as the Lord Jesus Himself is. And if we are, then we shall be seekers, even as He is a Seeker. "Follow me", said He, changing the figure, "and I will make you fishers of men." If we follow Him we shall go out after the lost "until we find it".

I appeal to you who are teachers, never to give that scholar up, that scholar that tries your patience, the one who, after one or two attendances, is absent. You go after him or her, and he or she may promise you ten times, twenty times, fifty times, a hundred times; until you say, "What is the use of wasting time on that scholar? I may as well try to get somebody else." Let me beg of you not to give anybody up. Go out after the lost "until you find him". Keep on at it. Do you say, "I have invited him twenty times"—then make it forty. "But I have already invited him fifty times" then make it one hundred. How many times did God invite you? How many times did He call you? If He had had no more patience and perseverance than we have had, who of us would have been saved? Do not let any scholar slip out of your class. If they have forsaken you, that is a reason why you should go after them—and keep after them.

I read once of a man who invited someone to church, and he laughed at him. He called again and invited him, and he said "I never go to church." He kept on calling until at last he began to tell him how many times he had called. "Mr. So-and-So, this is the twentieth time I have come, and I beg of you to come where you can hear the gospel. I am concerned about your soul." "But I never go to church!" Still the friend called, until at last he said, "This is the thirtieth time"; and after a while the fortieth time, and the fiftieth time, and the sixtieth, and the seventieth, and the eightieth, and the ninetieth. One day he called and said, "Mr. So-and-So this makes the hundredth time that in the name of the Lord I have come to you to bid you come to Christ, and as God lives you shall answer for these hundred invitations." At last the man said, "What in the world has moved this man to take an interest in me? If he invites me one hundred times I ought in common courtesy to go once." And so at last he said, "I will go." When he crossed the threshold of the place the Spirit of God was there before him, and his heart was broken, he was saved because someone would not let him go.

Go out after the lost, and keep seeking him until he is found.

You women who are praying for your husbands, you have prayed for many a year, until it has seemed as though the case were hopeless. I beg of you, pray on. The Good Shepherd will answer by and by. Or there is a man here who has long prayed for his wife. Do not give up. God never gives up. The Good Shepherd goes on until He finds the lost. You do so too.

I remember reading of George Muller, a great man of Bristol who lived to be past ninety, that he was made particularly happy by a bit of news. He said, "There are two men for whom I have prayed daily without ceasing for sixty years, and I have just heard that one of them

has been converted." The other one was not, but Mr. Muller believed that the prayers offered would be heard. When at last the great man died, and they lowered his body into the grave, among those who stood about that grave was an old man, the other man for whom Mr. Muller had prayed for sixty years. As the clods of earth fell upon that coffin, they fell upon his heart and broke it before the Lord; and at Muller's open grave the prayers for the salvation of the other man were answered, and he entered into peace through believing in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Consider for a moment Admiral Byrd down at the South Pole. Think of his work in the north. This man who braved everything, ice, snow—and death itself—in the interests of science; and perhaps, in some small measure, that he might bring to himself a little fame. But oh, the outstanding example, I repeat, is the example of our Lord Jesus Who came from the glory. Let us emulate Him. Let us follow His steps, and go out after the lost "till we find it."

I was coming across the plains from Los Angeles about a year ago. I do not know whether it was in Wyoming or Nebraska, but it was one of those level states out in the West. The train stopped somewhere that was *nowhere* to me. There was no town or village roundabout. I looked out of the window and I saw a mud puddle—not a pond, just a mud-puddle. Presently I saw a little girl of about fourteen years galloping across the plain on a pony. There were two boys approaching this mud-puddle ahead of her; they climbed over the wire fence, and the little girl came and tethered her pony and got over the fence. I looked more closely and I saw, right in the mud at the edge of that puddle, a poor sheep, just the color of the mud. I had not noticed it at first. It was just like the mud that was around it, like a little mound of mud. The girl came over and felt it to see if it was still breathing. There it was in a mud-puddle, no depth of water, but mire, and it could not help itself at all. It needed a couple of boys and a girl to lift that poor sheep out of the mud.

There are lots of boys and girls like that in this city. I see them sometimes in the Ward and elsewhere, literally in their filth and their rags. I say to myself as I see them, "What chance in life has that boy?" "What chance in life has that girl?" They are just like the mud roundabout them, not a bit better. If you hear their speech, you may hear those little tongues uttering blasphemy and obscenity. Who is going out after them? "Oh, they are just the riff-raff!" That is what you are, what I am; and what Jesus Christ came into this world to save. We had fifteen hundred scholars in Bible School this morning, but there are hundreds of boys and girls and young people in the mire who needs someone to save them. Go out after them "until you find them", no matter how long it takes you; let that be your business.

And you young people, let me remind you that out yonder in Africa, in India, and in China, there are lost sheep by the millions with nobody to look after them. We ought to be sending out missionaries by the score, and the hundred, going out to the uttermost parts of the earth looking for the lost until they find them. Will you lay it to heart, you young people who have not decided just what God wants you to do? It may be He wants you to preach the gospel at home or abroad. In many cases He wants you to find His lost sheep. That is what we are here for, to go out after them "until he find it".

What a story this is! How simple, how beautifully

simple after all! I saw those two little boys and their sister apparently ministering to that poor filthy sheep in the mire. The sheep could not lift a leg. It had to have somebody lay hold of it, and by sheer force lift it and carry it to a place of safety.

III

AND FINDING THIS LOST SHEEP, WHAT DID THE SHEPHERD DO? "When he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders." That is what the Good Shepherd does. What is it to be saved? It is to be laid upon the shoulders of the Almighty. It is to be undergirded by the very power of God, by the power of Him Who is our Saviour, Who "upholdeth all things by the word of His power." If He weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance, and taketh up the isles as a very little thing, how easy it is for Him to take a poor sheep and lift it out of the mire and put it on His shoulders!

There are people here this morning who have made no profession of faith in Christ, yet they are not without religious interest. You have been interested in salvation for years, you believe intellectually the truth of the gospel that Christ died and rose again; and yet whenever the appeal has been made to you, you have answered, "I am afraid I should not be able to hold out." Let me tell you that salvation depends upon the strength of the shoulders of Jesus Christ. Nothing can be plainer than that truth, that when the sheep is lifted out of the mire and put upon the shoulders of the Divine Shepherd, its safety depends not upon itself, but thereafter upon the strength of Him Who is its Saviour. Jesus Christ can do that for every one of us.

I heard a man say once that he had seen a shepherd pick up a sheep and carry it, and he said, "I thought that he would pick it up and put it over his shoulder, but he lifted it and put it upon his shoulders—not one shoulder but both shoulders." How did he do it? He took that poor sheep by the legs, and lifted it up and put it upon his shoulders—both shoulders, both hands, and he held it there. "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."

I travelled on Friday about one hundred and twenty miles through a hill country, on a bus. It required about as much skill to ride the thing as it would to ride a broncho! It rocked first this way and then the other way, and one wondered whether he was going out the back or the front, or out of one of the windows. However, we got through at last. But I do not think there is a place so comfortable for the believer in all the universe as to be held upon the strong shoulders of the Divine Pastor, for that is what He is, the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls. He holds us and keeps us.

The poor sheep, I suppose, was about as stupid and weak as ever, in the beginning, and scarcely knew where it was. But the Shepherd did, and as soon as He got it on His shoulders He rejoiced. Far from home, but He rejoiced! Our Lord says that in heaven, as soon as a man really repents, they begin to ring the bells and call for the music. I have known some people in whom you could not work any enthusiasm at all. You tell them that a dozen people have been saved, and they will say, "Well, I hope they will do very well." That is not how the Lord does. As soon as He gets us on His shoulders it is time to rejoice, because the moment the soul is committed to

Jesus Christ it is just as safe as if it were inside the gates of pearl. And if they rejoice in heaven, surely it would be fine for us to rejoice on earth.

And then when He cometh home—does the Shepherd get home? Does He half save anyone? When He cometh home, bearing the sheep, He calleth together His friends and His neighbours saying, "Rejoice with me for I have found my sheep which was lost." This Good Shepherd will not be alone in the Father's presence: He will come home, and when He comes He will say, "Behold"—changing the figure—"I and the children whom Thou hast given me." He will be there to "present us faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy." Whether the sheep knew it or not, the Shepherd knew when He lifted that sheep upon His shoulders. He said, "Everything is all right now. You are as safe as you will be when we get home. And now I am going to take you home."

"Will you ever get to heaven? Yes, if you are a Christian you cannot help it. You cannot help it. Mrs. Lillie used to quote a verse which she said was the Pastor's favourite. It is one of my favourites:

"For though here below 'mid sorrow and woe
My place is in heaven with Jesus, I know.
And this I shall find that such is His Mind
He'll not be in glory, and leave me behind."

He will take me home. He will take you home. He will take everyone home who rests upon His shoulders.

"But none of the ransomed ever knew
How deep were the waters crossed;
Nor how dark was the night that the Lord
passed through
Ere He found His sheep that was lost."

I think I can see that shepherd climbing the hills, going sometimes along a narrow path where there was a deep precipice. The poor sheep had not to walk; the sure-footed shepherd walked along the edge of the precipice, and the sheep was just as safe, though in the presence of danger, as it was when at last it reached home. But he came home! The lions may have growled and roared, the leopard may have thirsted for its prey, and the wolves howled in impotence to get possession of that sheep, but the shepherd had it, and he brought it safely home.

"But all through the mountains thunder riven,
And up from the rocky steep,
There arose a cry to the gate of heaven
"Rejoice. I have found my sheep!"

And the angels—can't you hear them? Listen!

"And the angels echoed around the throne,
"Rejoice for the Lord bring back His own!"

He will bring us home. Have you trusted Him? Will you trust Him now?

TORONTO BAPTIST SEMINARY GRADUATION EXERCISES

Rev. C. D. Cole Receives Honorary Degree

THE annual graduation exercises of Toronto Baptist Seminary were held on Thursday, May 5, in Jarvis Street Baptist Church. Those who have regularly attended these graduation services felt that the attendance was the largest for some considerable time. The great three hour meeting was a benediction to all who attended.

The highlight of the evening was the granting of the degree of Doctor of Divinity (*honoris causa*) to Rev. C. D. Cole, beloved Dean of Toronto Baptist Seminary. Mr. Cole was presented by Dr. O. L. Clark to Mr. Slade, the president of the Seminary. In presenting him Dr. Clark paid high tribute to this man of God as follows:—

"Toronto Baptist Seminary exists for the purpose of bringing glory to the name of our blessed Lord by training men and women for the ministry of proclaiming to the ends of the earth the Gospel of the grace of God. Over and over again throughout the years our beloved Founder and President, Dr. T. T. Shields, emphasized the fact that no Seminary in the world could bestow upon Christians the gifts of mind and heart necessary for such a ministry, saying that this was the prerogative of the Sovereign Holy Spirit of God, and that at best, the Seminary could merely provide guidance and opportunity for the exercise of those gifts. Hence, the spiritual qualifications of the members of the Faculty are of the utmost importance.

"In Rev. C. D. Cole the Seminary has found one who is eminently equipped by the Lord Himself for the position of leadership to which he has attained, although he is humbly not aware of his own greatness. In honouring Mr. Cole as a Pastor, Preacher, Teacher, Author and Scholar, the Seminary honours itself.

"Mr. Cole is a native of the South, and comes to us from Kentucky, United States of America, where Baptists flourish. He preached his first sermon on Easter Sunday, 1912, in Morton's Gap, Kentucky, and in the following year was ordained by the First Baptist Church, destined to be the

scene of a long pastorate of thirty years. He ministered also in Florida, holding pastorates in Titusville, Plant City and Orlando.

"As a Writer and Author, Mr. Cole has given an acceptable witness for the Lord which has extended to far distant parts. He was Associate Editor of the *Biblical Echo* and has contributed articles to a number of periodicals, including *The Western Recorder* of Louisville, Kentucky, and *The Florida Baptist Witness*. He is at present engaged in writing a series of works on Theology, of which the first volume, "Definitions of Doctrine," has already been published. This book is one of high merit.

"Rev. C. D. Cole, in addition to being a Godly Pastor and able Writer, is also a Teacher to the manner born. He taught for some years in Florida Baptist Bible School. He revels in the study of Theology, and as a scholar has devoted many years to the contemplation of the doctrines of our faith, as revealed to us in the Holy Scriptures. He has also the happy faculty of being able to impart to others the knowledge of which he himself has such a firm grasp. The patient, deliberate way in which he seeks to make plain the deep things of God has endeared him to all those associated with the Seminary, and to the many who have profited by his lectures in the English Bible Course on Thursday evenings. During this year of his ministry in Toronto, many have been instructed, inspired and uplifted by his profound, yet singularly clear expositions of the great verities of Scripture.

"In all his preaching and teaching ministry, Mr. Cole has ever maintained sympathetic contact with those to whom he is speaking. His warmth of heart and kindly genial disposition have endeared him to all, for he is supremely interested in the souls of men. Each individual student has profited by fellowship with Mr. Cole in the things of the Lord. His counsel has been invaluable. For this reason the Trustees have asked Mr. Cole to assume the office of Dean of the Seminary.

"It is an honour, Mr. President, on behalf of the Senate of Toronto Baptist Seminary, to present to you for the degree of Doctor of Divinity, *honoris causa*, Rev. Claude Duval Cole."

The Graduates

The graduates of the year were presented to the President to receive degrees and diplomas. Recipients of the degree of Bachelor of Theology were Mr. Kenneth Kimbley and Mr. Samuel Tulloch. Diplomas were awarded to Mr. Bruce Rowlandson (three year theological course) and to Miss Ruth Parker (two year Bible course). Mr. Kimbley will go to Lively, Ontario, where he will minister to the church there. Mr. Tulloch will remain in Jarvis Street as the Church Visitor. Mr. Rowlandson is the pastor of Bethany Baptist Church in Harriston. Miss Parker will engage in Daily Vacation Bible School work during the summer months.

The Valedictory

The valedictorian for the year was Mr. Samuel Tulloch who expressed the sentiments of the whole student body as he paid tribute to the late President of the Seminary, Dr. Shields. Any who heard the valedictory could have no doubts as to the soundness of the training received in the Seminary.

Proficiency Awards

The leading students of each year were awarded the Sarah Anne Kear Memorial Prizes, donated by Mr. Wil-

liam Reucassel. These students were:—Mr. Samuel Tulloch (fourth year); Miss Marion Veit (third year), Mr. Samuel Pourret (second year), Miss Eleanor Bouskill (first year). In addition to these general proficiency awards, the following prizes were presented: the Elizabeth Ellen Lindsay Memorial Prizes, the Martha Hollister Prize, the Levi Dodson Prizes.

The Convocation Address

The speaker for the evening was Dr. C. D. Cole. The students, graduates and friends rejoiced in his exposition of the Word as he spoke of the high calling of the Christian ministry. Out of a rich experience, he opened his heart to the graduates, making it an evening that they would long remember.

The attendance from the churches was good with many pastors and believers in attendance. All were impressed with the meeting and with the consecrated faculty of the Seminary. The President, Mr. Slade, has announced that already an unusually large number of students have written to inquire of the prospects of entering the Seminary for the next term. With God's blessing, we look forward to a large enrolment but more especially to having young men and young women of *His choosing*.

AMONG THE CHURCHES

with H. C. SLADE

Week of Blessing Follows Opening of Roseland Building

AFTER months of hard labour supplied by the members of our congregation and some friends from Essex we were able to open our church doors for the first time on Good Friday. We had set our opening for that date and worked night and day to have the auditorium completed in time. There is still much to be done in the parsonage and Sunday school rooms at the rear of the building, but the work is hindered by the lack of funds which are needed to fully complete the building. Like our other new causes in the Conservative Regular Baptist Association, Roseland leans heavily upon the support of God's people elsewhere.

Good Friday saw friends coming from far and near to celebrate the opening of the new lighthouse of God's truth and saving grace. We had friends from Essex, the founders of the Roseland work, also from Windsor, Delhi, Tilbury, Owen Sound, Sudbury, London, and other places as well. Rev. C. Rogers, Rev. B. R. Oatley-Willis, Pastor Reg. Brown, Rev. John D. Greenleaf, and Rev. Samuel Dempster, our special speaker for the occasion, made this happy time more enjoyable by their presence and remarks.

An afternoon session was held Good Friday at 2:30; this took the form of an informal service at which most of the ministers mentioned took part. The story of the work at Roseland and of the building was briefly recounted, and due appreciation was shown those who helped in the building and who gave gifts of furniture. Rev. C. Rogers offered the dedication prayer.

Over one hundred and fifty gathered for the evening session. Some of the brethren who had not spoken in the afternoon took part in the service. Rev. Samuel Dempster stirred our souls as he led us to Calvary to remind us of the work Christ accomplished for us.

Mr. Dempster remained with us for the Easter Sunday services and for a week of meetings. The meetings were well attended with fifty to one hundred being present each evening. The evident blessing of God was upon us each evening, and our souls were thrilled and blessed by the messages given. Already God has blessed this new house with the salvation of souls. Four adults were gloriously saved during the week. One family, which had come to the church only a few Sundays, came to a saving knowledge of the Saviour. In turn they immediately went out to their relatives and friends to tell them of the Saviour whom they had found. The sister of this man was troubled in soul by his testimony, so yesterday we went to present the claims of Christ to her and we left her rejoicing in Christ her new found Saviour. What a chain-reaction starts when one person comes to the Lord Jesus! Another man, for whom we had prayed for two years, came into the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus. He had been our strongest supporter and best helper on the building yet without Christ. Building this house means more to him now for now he is building for his Lord. God has still His ancient power and is mighty to save.

The end of the week came too soon and none wanted to see Mr. Dempster leave for he had led some to the Saviour and God's people closer to Calvary. None could help but come away singing each evening our theme for the week, and which shall always be our song.

Isn't He wonderful, wonderful, wonderful,
Isn't Jesus my Lord wonderful,
Eyes have seen, ears have heard
It's recorded in His Word
Isn't Jesus my Lord wonderful.

—PASTOR R. L. CHERRY

THE DEVIL'S MISSION OF AMUSEMENT

By Archibald G. Brown

A reader in England recently sent us a small booklet, "The Devil's Mission of Amusement", by Archibald Brown, the great British Baptist preacher who was contemporary with C. H. Spurgeon. Although this message was written about fifty years ago, it speaks even more to our day than it did to Brown's. We live in a time when even evangelicals in various movements are prepared to unite evangelism and entertainment; ponder these words and let us resolve to dispense with such carnal weapons.

The booklet is now out of print and we are pleased to revive it in the pages of *The Gospel Witness*. We feel that it is so much needed that we may issue it in a convenient booklet form. Read it and then write, telling us whether you would like to see it in booklet form for wider distribution.

DIFFERENT days demand their own special testimony. The watchman who would be faithful to his Lord and the city of his God has need to carefully note the signs of the times and emphasize his witness accordingly. Concerning the testimony needed now, there can be little, if any, doubt. An evil is in the professed camp of the Lord, so gross, so brazen in its impudence, that the most shortsighted of spiritual men can hardly fail to notice it.

During the past few years it has developed at an abnormal rate, ever for evil. It has worked like leaven until now the whole lump ferments. Look which way you may, its presence makes itself manifest. There is little if anything, to choose between Church, Chapel, or Mission Hall. However these may differ in some respects, they bear a striking likeness in the posters that figure upon and disfigure their notice boards. *Amusement for the people is the leading article advertised by each.* If any of my readers doubt my statement, or think my utterance too sweeping, let them take a tour of inspection and study "the announcements for the week" at the doors of the sanctuaries of their neighbourhood; or let them read the religious advertisements in their local papers. I have done this again and again, until the hideous fact has been proved up to the hilt, that "amusement" is ousting "the preaching of the Gospel" as the great attraction. "Concerts," "Entertainments," "Fancy Fairs," "Smoking Conferences," "Dramatic Performances," are the words honoured with biggest type and most startling colours. The Concert is fast becoming as much a recognised part of church life as the Prayer Meeting, and is already, in most places, far better attended.

"Providing recreation, for the people" will soon be looked upon as a necessary part of Christian work and as binding upon the Church of God, as though it were a Divine command, unless some strong voices be raised which will make themselves heard. I do not presume to possess such a voice, but I do entertain the hope that I may awaken some louder echoes. Anyway, the burden of the Lord is upon me in this matter, and I leave it with Him to give my testimony ringing tone, or to let it die away in silence. I shall have delivered my soul in either case. Yet the conviction fills my mind that in all parts of the country there are faithful men and women who see the danger and deplore it and will endorse my witness and my warning.

It is only during the past few years that "amusement" has become a recognized weapon of our warfare and developed into a mission. There has been a steady "down grade" in this respect. From "speaking out," as the Puritans did, the Church has gradually toned down her testimony; then winked at and excused the frivolities of the day. Then she has tolerated them in her borders, and now she has adopted them and provided a home for them under the plea of "reaching the masses and getting the ear of the people." The devil has seldom done a cleverer thing than hinting to the Church of Christ that part of her mission is to provide entertainment for the people with a view to winning them into her ranks. The human nature that lies in every heart has risen to the bait. Here, now, is an opportunity of gratifying the flesh and yet retaining a comfortable conscience. We can now please ourselves in order to do good to others. The rough old cross can be exchanged for a "costume," and the exchange can be made with the benevolent purpose of elevating the people.

All this is terribly sad, and the more so because truly gracious souls are being led away by the specious pretext that it is a form of Christian work. They forget that a seemingly beautiful angel may be the devil himself, "for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light" (2 Cor. xi. 14).

I.

My first contention is that PROVIDING AMUSEMENT FOR THE PEOPLE IS NOWHERE SPOKEN OF IN HOLY SCRIPTURE AS ONE OF THE FUNCTIONS OF THE CHURCH. What her duties are will come under our notice later on. At present it is the negative side of the question that we are dealing with. Now, surely, if our Lord had intended His Church to be the caterer of entertainment, and so counteract the god of this world, He would hardly have left so important a branch of service unmentioned. If it is Christian work, why did not Christ at least hint it? "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature," is clear enough. So would it have been if He had added, "and provide amusement for those who do not relish the Gospel." No such addendum, however, is to be found, nor even an equivalent for such, in any one of our Lord's utterances. This style of work did not seem to occur to His mind. Then again, Christ, as an ascended Lord, gives to His Church specially qualified men for the carrying on of His work, but no mention of any gift for this branch of service oc-

curs in the list. "He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers—for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." Where do the "public entertainers" come in? The Holy Ghost is silent concerning them, and his silence is eloquence.

If "providing recreation" be a part of the Church's work, surely we may look for some promise to encourage her in the toilsome task. Where is it? There is a promise for "My Word;" it "shall not return unto Me void." There is the heart-rejoicing declaration concerning the Gospel: "It is the power of God." There is the sweet assurance for the preacher of Christ that, whether he be successful or no—as the world judges success—he is a "sweet savour unto God." There is the glorious benediction for those whose testimony, so far from amusing the world, rouses its wrath: "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for My sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for *great is your reward in heaven*; for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." Were the prophets persecuted because they amused the people, or because they refused to? The Gospel of amusement has no martyrology. In vain does one look for a promise from God for providing recreation for a godless world. That which has no authority from Christ, no provision made for it by the Spirit, no promise attached to it by God, can only be a lying hypocrite when it lays claim to be "a branch of the work of the Lord."

II.

But again, PROVIDING AMUSEMENT FOR THE PEOPLE IS IN DIRECT ANTAGONISM TO THE TEACHING AND LIFE OF CHRIST AND ALL HIS APOSTLES. What is to be the attitude of the Church towards the world according to our Lord's teaching? Strict separation and uncompromising hostility. While no hint ever passed His lips of winning the world by pleasing it, or accommodating methods to its taste, His demand for unworldliness was constant and emphatic. He sets forth in one short sentence what He would have His disciples to be: "Ye are the salt of the earth." Yes, the salt; not the sugar-candy nor a "hump of delight." Something the world will be more inclined to spit out than swallow with a smile. Something more calculated to bring water to the eye than laughter to the lip.

Short and sharp is the utterance, "Let the dead bury their dead; but go thou and preach the kingdom of God." "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but *because ye are not of the world*, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." "In the world ye shall have tribulation but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." "I have given them Thy Word; and the world hath hated them, *because they are not of the world*, even as I am not of the world." "My kingdom is not of this world."

These passages are hard to reconcile with the modern idea of the Church providing recreation for those who have no taste for more serious things—in other words, of conciliating the world. If they teach anything at all, it is that fidelity to Christ will bring down the world's wrath, and that Christ intended His disciples to share with Him the world's scorn and rejection. *How did Jesus act?* What were the methods of the only perfectly "faithful witness" the Father has ever had?

As none will question that He is to be the worker's model, let us gaze upon Him. How significant the introductory account given by Mark, "Now, after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee preaching the Gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the Gospel." And again, in the same chapter, I find Him saying, in answer to his announcement of His disciples that all men were seeking for Him, "Let us go into the next towns that *I may preach* there also: for *therefore came I forth*." Matthew tells us, "And it came to pass when Jesus had made an end of commanding His twelve disciples, He departed thence to *teach and preach* in their cities." In answer to John's question, "Art Thou He that should come?" He replies, "Go and show John those things which ye do hear and see; the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up, and the poor *have the Gospel preached* to them." There is no item in the catalogue after this sort "And the *careless are amused*, and the *perishing are provided with innocent recreation*."

We are not left in doubt as to the matter of His preaching, for "when many were gathered together, insomuch that there was no room to receive them, no, not so much as about the door, He preached *the Word* unto them." There was no change of method adopted by the Lord during His course of ministry; no learning by experience of a better plan. His first word of command to His evangelists was, "As ye go, preach." His last, "Preach the Gospel to every creature." Not an evangelist suggests that at any time during His ministry He turned aside from preaching to entertain, and so attract the people. He was in awful earnestness, and his ministry was like Himself. Had He been less uncompromising, and introduced more of the "bright and pleasant" element into His mission, He would have been more popular.

Yet, when many of His disciples went back, because of the searching nature of His preaching, I do not find there was any attempt to increase a diminished congregation by resorting to something more pleasant to the flesh. I do not hear Him saying, "*We must keep up the gatherings anyway: so run after those friends, Peter, and tell them we will have a different style of service to-morrow. Something very short and attractive, with little, if any, preaching. To-day was a service for God, but to-morrow we will have a pleasant evening for the people. Tell them they will be sure to enjoy it, and have a happy hour. Be quick, Peter; we must get the people somehow; if not by Gospel, then by nonsense.*" No, this was not how HE argued. Gazing in sorrow on those who would not hear the Word, He simply turns to the twelve, and asks, "Will ye also go away?"

Jesus pitied sinners, pleaded with them; sighed over them, warned them, and wept over them; but never sought to amuse them. When the evening shadows of His consecrated life were deepening into the night of death, He reviewed His holy ministry, and found comfort and sweet solace in the thought, "*I have given them Thy Word.*" As with the Master, so with His apostles—their teaching is the echo of His. In vain will the epistles be searched to discover any trace of a gospel of amusement. The same call for separation from the world rings in every one. "Be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed," is the world of command in the Romans. "Come out from among them, and be ye separate and touch no unclean thing." It is the trumpet call in the Corinthians. In other

words it is COME OUT—KEEP OUT—KEEP CLEAN OUT—for “what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial?”

“God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom the world is crucified unto me and I unto the world.” Here is the true relationship between the Church and the world according to the Epistle to the Galatians. “Be not ye, therefore, partakers with them. Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them,” is the attitude enjoined in Ephesians. “Sons of God without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world: holding forth the Word of life,” is the word in Philippians. “Dead with Christ from the elements of the world,” says the Epistle to the Colossians. “Abstain from every form of evil” (Revised Version), is the demand in Thessalonians.

“If a man, therefore, purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use,” is the word to Timothy. “Let us go forth, therefore, unto Him *without the camp*, bearing His reproach,” is the heroic summons of the Hebrews. James, with holy severity, declares that “The friendship of the world is enmity with God; whosoever, therefore, will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.” Peter writes: “Not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance; but as He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of living” (R.V.). John writes a whole epistle, the gist of which is, “Love not the world, *neither the things that are in the world*. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof, but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.”

Here are the teachings of the apostles concerning the relationship of the Church and the world. And yet, in the face of them, what do we see and hear? A friendly compromise between the two, and an insane effort to work in partnership for the good of the people. God help us, and dispel the strong delusion. How did the apostles carry on their mission work? Was it in harmony with their teaching? Let the Acts of the Apostles give the answer.

Anything approaching the worldly fooling of to-day is conspicuous by its absence. The early evangelists had boundless confidence in the power of the Gospel, and employed no other weapon. Pentecost followed plain preaching. When Peter and John had been locked up for the night for preaching the resurrection, the early Church had a prayer meeting directly they returned, and the petition offered for the two was, “And now, Lord, grant unto Thy servants, that with all boldness they *may speak Thy word*.” They had no thought of praying, “Grant unto Thy servants more policy, that by a wise and discriminating use of innocent recreation they may avoid the offence of the cross, and sweetly show this people how happy and merry a lot we are.”

The charge brought against the apostles by the members of the Council was, “Ye have filled Jerusalem with *your doctrine*.” Not much chance of this charge being brought against modern methods. The description of their work is, “And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.” Then, if they “ceased not” from this, they had no time for arranging for entertainments; they gave themselves con-

tinually “to the ministry of the word.” Scattered by persecution, the early disciples “went everywhere preaching the word.”

When Philip went to Samaria, and was the means of bringing “great joy in that city,” the only recorded method is, “He preached Christ unto them.” When the apostles went to visit the scene of his labours it is stated, “And they, when they had testified and preached the *word of the Lord*, returned to Jerusalem, and *preached the Gospel* in many villages of the Samaritans.” As they went back to Jerusalem directly they had finished their preaching, it is evident they did not think of their mission to stay and organize some “pleasant evenings” for the people who did not believe.

The congregations in those days did not expect anything but the word of the Lord, for Cornelius says to Peter, “We are all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God.” The message given was, “Words whereby thou and all thine house shall be saved.” Cause and effect are closely linked in the statement, “Men of Cyrene spake unto the Grecians, preaching the Lord Jesus; and the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed, and turned to the Lord.” Here you have their method—they preached. Their matter—the Lord Jesus. Their power—the hand of the Lord was with them. Their success—many believed.

What more does the Church of God require to-day?

When Paul and Barnabas worked together, the record is, “The Lord gave testimony unto the word of His grace.” When Paul, in a vision, hears a man of Macedonia saying, “Come over and help us,” he assuredly gathers that the Lord had called him to preach the Gospel unto them. Why so? How did he know but that the help needed was the brightening of their lives by a little amusement, or the refining of their manners by a collection of paintings? He never thought of such things. “Come and help us!” meant to him, “Preach the Gospel.” “And Paul, *as his manner was*, went in unto them, and reasoned with them out of the Scriptures”—not about the Scriptures, mark, but out of them—“opening and alleging that Christ must needs have suffered and risen again from the dead.” That was the “manner” of evangelistic work in those days, and it seems to have been wonderfully powerful; for the verdict of the people is, “These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also.” Just now the world is turning the Church upside down; that is the only difference.

When God told Paul that He had much people in Corinth, I read, “And he continued there a year and six months, teaching the Word of God among them.” Evidently then, he judged that the only way to bring them was by the Word. A year and a-half, and only one method adopted. Wonderful! We should have had a dozen in that time! But then Paul never reckoned that providing something pleasant for the ungodly was part of his ministry; for, on his way to Jerusalem and martyrdom, he says, “Neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might *finish* my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to *testify the Gospel of the grace of God*.” This was all the ministry he knew. The last description we have of the methods of this prince of evangelists is of a piece with all that has gone before, “He *expounded and testified* the kingdom of God, *persuading* them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses and out of the prophets, from morning till evening, *preaching* the kingdom of God, and *teaching* those things

which concern the Lord Jesus." What a contrast to all the rot and nonsense now being perpetrated in the holy name of Christ! The Lord-clear the Church of all the rubbish that the devil has imposed upon her, and bring us back again to apostolic methods!

III.

Lastly. THE MISSION OF AMUSEMENT UTTERLY FAILS TO EFFECT THE DESIRED END AMONG THE UNSAVED; BUT IT WORKS HAVOC AMONG THE YOUNG CONVERTS. Were it a success, it would be none the less wrong. Success belongs to God; faithfulness to His instructions to me. But it is not. Test it even by this, and it is a contemptible failure: Let that be the method which is answered by fire, and the verdict will be "The preaching of the Word, that is the power."

Let us see the converts who have been first won by amusement. Let the harlots and the drunkards to whom a dramatic entertainment has been God's first link in the chain of their conversion stand forth. Let the careless and the scoffers who have cause to thank God that the Church has relaxed her spirit of separation and met them half-way in their worldliness, speak and testify. Let the husbands, wives, and children, who rejoice in a new and holy home through "Sunday Evening Lectures on Social Questions" tell out their joy. Let the weary, heavy-laden souls who have found peace through a concert, no longer keep silence. Let the men and women who have found Christ through the reversal of apostolic methods declare the same, and show the greatness of Paul's blunder when he said, "I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified." There is neither voice nor any to answer. The failure is on a par with the folly, and as huge as the sin. Out of thousands with whom I have personally conversed, the mission of amusement has claimed no convert.

Now let the appeal be made to those who, repudiating every other method, have staked everything on THE BOOK AND THE HOLY GHOST. Let them be challenged to produce results. There is no need. Blazing sacrifices on every hand attest the answer by fire. Ten thousand times ten thousand voices are ready to declare that the plain preaching of the Word was, first and last, the cause of their salvation.

But how about the other side of this matter—what are baneful effects? Are they also *nil*? I will here solemnly as before the Lord give my personal testimony. *Though I have never seen a sinner saved, I have seen any number of backsliders manufactured by this new departure.* Over and over again have young Christians, and sometimes Christians who are not young, come to me in tears, and asked what they were to do, as they had lost all their peace and fallen into evil. Over and over again has the confession been made, "I began to go wrong by attending worldly amusements that Christians patronized." It is not very long since that a young man, in an agony of soul, said to me, "I never thought of going to the theatre until my minister put it into my head by preaching that there was no harm in it. I went, and it has led me from bad to worse and now I am a miserable backslider; and he is responsible for it."

When young converts begin to "damp off," forsake the gatherings for prayer, and grow worldly, I almost always find that worldly Christianity is responsible for the first downward step. The mission of amusement is the devil's half-way house to the world. It is because of what I have seen that I feel deeply, and would fain write strongly. This thing is working rottenness in the Church of God,

and blasting her service for the King. In the guise of Christianity, it is accomplishing the devil's own work. Under the pretence of going out to reach the world, it is carrying our sons and daughters into the world. With the plea of "Do not alienate the masses with your strictness," it is seducing the young disciples from "the simplicity and the purity that is toward Christ" (R.V.). *Professing to win the world, it is turning the garden of the Lord into a public recreation ground.* To fill the temple with those who see no beauty in Christ, a grinning Dagon is put over the doorway.

It will be no wonder if the Holy Ghost, grieved and insulted, withdraws His presence; for "what concord hath Christ with Belial, and what agreement hath the temple of God with idols?"

"COME OUT!" is the call for to-day. Sanctify yourselves. Put away the evil from among you. Cast down the world's altars and cut down her groves. Spurn her offered assistance. Decline her help, as your Master did the testimony of devils, for "He suffered them not to speak, because they knew Him." Renounce all the policy of the age. Trample upon Saul's armour. Grasp the Book of God. Trust the Spirit who wrote its pages. Fight with this weapon only and always. Cease to amuse and seek to arouse. Shun the clap of a delighted audience, and listen for the sobs of a convicted one. Give up trying to "please" men who have only the thickness of their ribs between their souls and hell; and warn, and plead, and intreat, as those who feel the waters of eternity creeping upon them.

Let the Church again confront the world; testify against it; meet it only behind the cross; and, like her Lord, she shall overcome, and with Him share the victory.

From Our Files

Thirty Years Ago, THE GOSPEL WITNESS, May 7, 1925: This issue contains a great sermon by Dr. Shields. The question of modernism was then a red-hot issue in the church and hence the message was a timely one—"Dr. Fosdick's Infidelity and His Methodist Hosts". Apparently many came to hear this sermon for under the heading "Last Sunday" we read — "Last Sunday evening Jarvis Street Church was not full — it was packed. It was crammed in every part; and the ushers estimated that at least five hundred people who could not crowd even into the vestibules, were turned away."

THE DOCTRINE OF ELECTION

By DR. C. D. COLE

Dean of Toronto Baptist Seminary

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NEVER WRONG; FOREVER RIGHT

"Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" (Genesis 18:25).

IT WAS before the wicked cities of the plains that Abraham made this query of the Lord. The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah had been determined by God and with a heart of love, Abraham appeared as the advocate for the sons of men. He begged the Lord to spare the whole city if even fifty righteous could be found in all the place. He based his whole plea not upon any pretended worth in the dwellers of the city nor even upon his own love for his kinsmen that lived there. Confidently he approached a sovereign God with a plea based solely upon the essential character of God — "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"

We can think of no higher or safer ground than this; any person who really takes this position may be assured of a secure standing before God and may have a mind at peace about any contemplated spiritual exercise. This emphasis of Abraham's shifts man's gaze to where it should be — not upon himself but upon the Lord. Like the psalmist, his eye is "unto the hills from whence cometh my help."

I.

First we observe that this principle is valid in all spheres of life for God can never do wrong; especially would we encourage the believer with this thought. Because of Who He is, the Judge of all the earth must do right; regardless of how any particular act of God appears from our viewpoint, it is eminently right and wise. How prone we are to make mistakes! Our experience confirms the testimony of Scripture and tells us that sinless perfection in this life is a lie. Sin mars all touched by human hands so that even the most consecrated service of the choicest saint leaves much to be desired. Not so with God! The Judge of all the earth does right and has never done wrong. "He is the Rock, his work is perfect; for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he." (Deut. 32:4).

Especially should this be the testimony of the believer for to a limited extent he has experienced this truth in his own life. Not always are we prepared to testify to this truth for sometimes what is right does not seem pleasant for the moment nor does it appeal to the flesh. Still it is right for it is the doing of the Judge of all the earth who can do no wrong.

Ludicrous indeed is the thought of a believer complaining of the divine dealings! "O man, who art thou that repliest against God?" Will the created dare to engage in debate with the Creator? Will the guilty criminal dare indict the judge? Will the sinner presume to charge crime to the Holy One who can do nothing amiss?

"But," says some sorely tried Christian, "you are not aware of my peculiar trials or you would understand why I feel that God has not done right in my case." No, my friend, there are no exceptions to this rule. Whatever be your trials, if they be sent of God, rest assured that He is doing right and that you shall come forth as gold tried in the fire. What quiet confidence this should excite in the believer as the varying experiences of life become his portion.

Since we are in this mortal state, we cannot fully appreciate this truth; even the most advanced believer

will testify that there have come trials in which there was no manifestly evident divine purpose. It may be that, only in the blaze of another endless day, shall we see clearly the fact that the Judge of all the earth has done right in our peculiar case. In the meanwhile we accept this precious truth by faith and patiently wait for the moment when it shall be verified by sight.

II.

That the Judge of all the earth does right is most evident in the scheme of redemption. At Calvary all the attributes of God are manifested and the variegated divine demands are satisfied. This place and its great transaction stand in glorious confirmation of the truth which Abraham uttered in the solitude of the plains.

God's holiness declared that nothing that defileth should ever enter the courts of heaven. No redemptive plan could possibly be right that overlooked this demand. The One in Whose presence the seraphims must cover their faces, could not allow unholy, ungodly mortals into His abode. Yet at Calvary He did right with regard to His justice so that the writer of Hebrews could confidently affirm that by the blood of Jesus a new and living way has been opened into the holiest.

God's justice demanded that sin be punished so again no redemptive plan could be described as right that overlooked this punitive element. At the place of the skull, however, the federal head of the new race became the Representative of His people and took upon Himself their sin and bore their punishment in His own body.

Amazing love! and can it be

That Thou, my God, shouldst die for me?

Justice was satisfied as the Substitute was punished in the place of the transgressors.

"God is love!" If He is to do right then this fundamental attribute must be given a free expression. Once more the redeemed marvel and see in this transaction of the ages divine perfection for not only is holiness provided and justice satisfied but love is manifested. "Hereby perceive we the love of God because He laid down His life for us." The Judge of all the earth has done right in the work of redemption.

III.

Finally even in the condemnation of the unrepentant sinner, the Judge of all the earth does right. This fact may be overlooked if our whole emphasis is upon the love of God in salvation but still it is a needed, Scriptural truth. Just as the saints in the halls of heaven are trophies of divine grace so too the unsaved in the caverns of hell are terrible monuments to divine justice. Indeed hell is an eternal reminder that the Judge of all the earth does right.

God's Word is very explicit in declaring to all men that "he that believeth not shall be damned." The psalmist declares that "the wicked shall be turned into hell and all the nations that forget God." As long as men persist in wilfully disobeying God, then the Judge of all the earth can do nothing other than consign them to that place where the worm dieth not. In so doing, He does right.

At a public meeting in Toronto in 1933, a man asked Dr. Shields if the modern mind could consent to the Scriptural teaching on the existence of hell. We shall never forget his reply as he told the questioner that if by the "modern mind" he meant the "carnal" mind, then it would hardly comprehend any spiritual teaching. Then he summoned all his voice and declared — "If there isn't a hell, there should be one!" True! The Judge of all the earth does only what is right in eternally punishing those who have transgressed His law and done despite to His grace.

Even those in hell must concur with Abraham's estimate and concede that they have reaped this eternal harvest. In these the Judge of all the earth displays His impartial justice. Reader, as you ponder these words, let this thought be impressed upon your soul. Perhaps the Lord may speak to you in this contemplation and by His Spirit He may cause you to look in faith to Christ so that your confirmation of His sovereignty may be realized here below as you consider Calvary rather than in the hereafter when you have no prospect ahead but that of a Christless eternity.

TO WHOM DO YOU PRAY?

C. H. Spurgeon on Romish Priestcraft

"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."—Isaiah 53:5.

DOES IT not make a man feel, when you see pictures of "his holiness" and the cardinals, and so, scattering their benedictions at the Vatican, or at St. Peter's, while admiring crowds fall down and worship them, that it were infinitely better to bow to the devil himself? We give glory unto God, but not a particle of glory to anything in the shape of a man, or an angel either. Have I not stood and seen the crowds by hundreds fall down and worship images and dressed-up dolls? I have seen them worship bones and old teeth; I have seen them worship a skeleton, dressed out in modern costume, said to be the skeleton of a saint; and I have marvelled how we could, in this nineteenth century, find people so infatuated as to think that such idolatry was pleasing to the most high God. We, brethren, the people of God, who know Christ, can give no glory to this rubbish, but turn away from it with horror. Our glory must be given to Christ, and to Christ alone.

Now, here is the touchstone to try your religion by. When you pray, to whom do you pray? Through whom do you pray? When you sing, for whom is the song meant? When you preach, to whose honour do you preach? To whom do you intend to do service? When you go out among the poor, when you distribute alms, when you scatter your tracts, when you talk about the gospel, for whom do you do this? For, as the Lord liveth, if you do it for yourselves, or for any beside the Lord Jesus, you do not know what the vitality of godliness is, for Christ, and Christ only, must be the grand object of the Christian; the promotion of His glory must be that for which he is willing to live, and for which, if needs be, he would be prepared to die. Oh, down, down, down with everything else, but up, up, up with the cross of Christ! Down

with your baptism, and your masses, and your sacraments! Down with your priestcraft, and your rituals and your liturgies! Down with your fine music, and your pomp, and your robes, and your garments, and all your ceremonials. But up, up, up with the doctrine of the naked cross, and the expiring Saviour. Let the voice ring throughout the whole world, "Look unto Me and live!" There is life in a look at the crucified One. There is life in simple confidence in Him, but there is life nowhere else. God send to His church an undying passion to promote the Saviour's glory, an invincible, unconquerable pang of desire, and longing that by any means King Jesus may have His own, and may reign throughout these realms! In this sense, then, Jesus is and must be the glory of His people

I see now in a vision a company of men gather herbs along the slopes of the Seven Hills of Rome; with mystic rites they cull those ancient plants, whose noxious influence once drugged our fathers into deadly slumbers. They are compounding again the cup of Rome's ancient sorcery, and saying: "Here is the universal medicine! the great Catholic remedy." I see them pouring their Belladonna, Monkshood, and deadly Henbane, into the great pot for ever simmering on the Papal hearth. Think you the nations are to be healed by this accursed amalgam? Will not the end be as in the days of the prophets, when one gathered wild gourds, and they cried out, "There is death in the pot?" Ay, indeed, so it will be, even though Oxford and Canterbury set their seal upon the patent medicine.

Come, ye brave sons of protesting fathers! Come and overturn this witches' caldron, and spill it back into the hell for which alone it is fit. Pity that even old Tiber's tawny flood should be poisoned with it, or bear its deadly mixture to that sea across which once sailed the apostolic barque. The wine of Rome's abominations is now imported into this island, and distributed in a thousand towns and villages by your own national clergy, and all classes and conditions of men are being made drunk therewith. Ye lovers of your race, and of your God, stop the traffic, and proclaim around the Popish caldron, "There is no healing there." No healing plants ever grew upon the Seven Hills of Rome, nor are the roots improved in virtue if transplanted to Canterbury, or the city on the Isis.

There is one divine remedy, and only one. It is no mixture. Receive ye it and live—"With His stripes we are healed." No sprinkling can wash out sin; no confirmation can confer grace, no masses can propitiate God. Your hope must be in Jesus, Jesus smitten, Jesus bruised, Jesus slain, Jesus the Substitute for sinners. Whosoever believes in Him is healed, but all other hopes are a lie from top to bottom.

Of sacramentarianism, I will say that its Alpha is a lie, and its Omega is a lie; it is false as the devil who devised it; but Christ, and only Christ, is the true Physician of souls and His stripes the only remedy. Oh, for a trumpet to sound this through every town of England! through every city of Europe! Oh, to preach this in the Colosseum! or better still, from the pulpit of St. Peter's!—"With His stripes we are healed." Away, away ye deceivers, with your mixtures and compounds: away ye proud sons of men with your boastings of what ye feel, and think, and do, and what ye intend and vow: "With His stripes we are healed." A crucified Saviour is the sole and only hope of a sinful world.

—Reprinted from *The Reformer*, London, England

WE KNOW FUNDAMENTALISM

WHAT IS A CONSTRUCTIONALIST?

DURING the past fifty years with the rise of unbelief in so many religious quarters, Bible-believers have been given some designations other than the familiar one "Christian". They have been called "fundamentalists" or "evangelicals". Those who attacked the historic Christian faith have been labelled as "modernists" or "liberals". Obviously believers would prefer to be known only by the Bible name of Christian but the loose meaning given to that term today makes it imperative that these other terms be quietly accepted.

In the 1920's the lines became fairly clearly drawn between the two opposing camps. Even now historians refer to that as the era of the "fundamentalist-modernist" controversy. Every denomination was rocked by the struggle as believers sought to stand against those who were endeavouring to gain control of the denominations and colleges. The fundamentalist camp was distinguished by many illustrious figures who were determined at all costs to be loyal to the Lord Jesus Christ and His Word. We can thank God for them because they were used to save hundreds of churches and individuals from the whirlpool of modernism. No one need be ashamed of their magnificent contribution nor their militant stand for the truth against the hosts of error. Further we wonder why any Bible-believer should be ashamed to be known as a fundamentalist or an evangelical.

In saying that we are fundamentalists or evangelicals, we do not mean that we identify ourselves with any strange and grotesque excesses of some few zealots who have taken the name to themselves, for no earthly society is absolutely free of such vagaries. In bearing the name, we declare to all and sundry that we hold the great fundamentals of the faith in common with all other believers. Especially in dealing with the press and public, bold affirmation of faith and identification with those who stand for the faith could serve to remove all doubt as to where a man stood. In this hour of denial it is very necessary that the flag be definitely and openly nailed to the pole that no one be left in doubt.

In Scotland, the newspapermen asked Dr. Billy Graham if he was a fundamentalist. We are told that in reply

he stated — "I am neither a fundamentalist or a liberal, I am a constructionalist". When we first read this report, we wondered about its accuracy; in the May issue of *The Evangelical Christian*, our great contemporary in Toronto, the editor, Dr. J. H. Hunter, confirms the report in his story from Glasgow.

Most have assumed that Dr. Graham was a fundamentalist, a Bible-believer or an evangelical. But no! he is a "constructionalist"! Dear reader, please do not ask us to define the word for we know of only one person in the theological world who so designates himself. In this matter we frankly confess ignorance. The twelve volume Oxford English Dictionary does not help us for it does not contain such a word. All must therefore wait with bated breath for its definition by the one who coined it.

If this is simply another synonym for "fundamentalist", it is strange that the evangelist should confuse the members of the press who are not acquainted with minor and technical differences of theological expression. Dr. Graham's answer, however, would indicate that he desires to represent some new school of thought — "I am neither a fundamentalist or a liberal". Then in contrast to these two old, clearly-defined positions, he seems to put his own school — "I am a constructionalist".

As we stated before, we shall wait with interest for the definition of this word and a statement of the peculiar tenets of the school. We cannot condemn the system for we have not yet heard its case. We can observe, however, that for a man in Dr. Graham's position to deny that he is a fundamentalist is a serious matter. If for some reason he has simply coined a new word to describe the old position, there can be little objection except that we can wonder why he felt this was necessary. What is seriously wrong with the term "fundamentalist"? Need a Bible-believer be ashamed of it?

Let others run for new names but we are not ashamed of the old. Call us Christians, fundamentalists, evangelicals, separatists, Bible-believers or whatever other name is honoured by the testimony of the faithful in times past. We hope that those who are so ashamed of these old designations are not also ashamed of the preaching of the cross which has characterized fundamentalism.

IS "IKE" REALLY SERIOUS?

Sometimes politicians are required to make some very strange statements and one wonders if they are really serious. Such is the case with a recent statement of President Eisenhower of the United States. Surely he had his tongue in his cheek when he made this statement reported by Associated Press.

ADMIRE PONTIFF

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Eisenhower offered congratulations to Pope Pius XII, Wednesday, on the Pope's 79th birthday. Eisenhower opened his press conference with a brief statement that he greatly admires the pontiff, particularly for what he called the Pope's unbroken record of opposition to all forms of fascism and communism. ("Regina Leader Post," March 8, 1955).

Can anyone seriously regard the Pope as a foe of fascists? Surely not. He was the abettor of Mussolini and we notice that he is not too loud in his protests against Mussolini's protegee — Franco in Spain. Foe of fascism indeed! Nor is he the foe of communism for it is obvious that communism takes root in those very countries where Rome flourishes and in Italy itself, in the Pope's own backyard, is the largest Communist Party outside of the Iron or Bamboo Curtains. If this is the result of his opposition to communism, perhaps the cause of freedom would be better served if he remained silent!

For Younger Readers

MR. BLITHE

It was a lovely day in early summer. The sky was blue and so was the sea. Great waves pounded against the rocks, making white foam and spray. The seagulls were having a wonderful time, and none was enjoying life more than a big bird whom we shall call Mr. Blithe. Was any gull so handsome as Mr. Blithe as he wheeled and glided and dived, his feathers shining like silver in the sun! How gracefully his strong wings carried him, now in search of food, and now in a lively game with the other young gulls. As they called to each other his voice could be heard above the rest.

Mr. Blithe flew down and smoothly came to rest on the water. Not that he was tired, but he did love a game with the waves. Each new wave coming in seemed to say, "Come along with me," as it tried to carry him onto the rocks, but, of course, with no effort at all Mr. Blithe stayed at a safe distance, while the waves dashed against the great black rocks.

And then it happened! A wave rolled in, as so many others had done, but with it came disaster. Mr. Blithe found himself covered with something black and horrible. When he tried to get away he found he could not fly, but he managed to reach the shore. What a sad sight he was! Dirty oil covered his beautiful feathers and his wings seemed useless. His frightened cries as he fluttered about helplessly alarmed the other birds, but they could do nothing to help.

Mr. Blithe became more frightened than ever when he saw a man making his way over the rocks towards him, and tried very hard to fly away. His strong beak went into action against the hand stretched out to him. "I'll help if you will only let me," said a kind voice, but Mr. Blithe was much too scared to understand.

The chase and struggle continued for some time, but before long the man had the gull securely in his grasp, and carried him to his cottage close by. The troublesome oil was not easy to remove, but at last his feathers were clean, and when his kind friend released him Mr. Blithe soared happily into the air again.

We, too, have been made helpless and unclean. Sin has spoiled our lives. Instead of being strong and free, we are weak and helpless—and full of fear. The Lord Jesus saw our need and He is the Friend Who came to save us. His strong hand can lift us, and He can wash away every stain of sin in His precious blood. He wants to set us free, and He is saddened if we refuse to have Him. If YOU have not invited Him to come into your heart and life, will you not do so today? —A.G. in *The Irish Evangelical*.

Bible School Lesson Outline

Vol. 19 Second Quarter Lesson 8 May 22, 1955

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

HEZEKIAH'S RECOVERY

Lesson Text: 2 Kings 20:1-11.

Golden Text: "O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come."—Psalm 65:2.

Parallel Passage: Isaiah 38:1-22.

I. The King's Prayer: verses 1-3.

"In those days was Hezekiah sick unto death" (2 Chron.

32:24). This illness occurred the very year of the Assyrian invasion, the 14th year of Hezekiah's reign (2 Kings 18:13). God lengthened his life by 15 years (Isa. 38:5), and we know that he reigned altogether 29 years (2 Kings 18:2), so that the two dates coincide. The illness took place probably just before the actual invasion described in 2 Kings 18, since God through the prophet gave him promise of deliverance (2 Kings 20:6).

Goodness is not always a guarantee against calamity. Obedience to the Lord is rewarded by spiritual prosperity, but not necessarily by material prosperity. It may be the will of God that His servants should glorify Him through sickness, sorrow or suffering (John 11:4; 1 Pet. 3:17). Hezekiah the Good was stricken with an illness which would have proved fatal, had not God intervened.

The king turned to the wall, not to give way to childish pouting like Ahab, King of Israel (1 Kings 21:4), but in order to pray in secret (Matt. 6:5, 6). His prayer was prompted not merely by a natural love of life (Prov. 10:27), but also by the desire to witness for the Lord in His house (verse 5), and before His people, as we see from his song of thanksgiving (Isa. 38:9-20). Every Christian should be able to say with the Apostle Paul: "For me to live is Christ" (Phil. 1:21-24); our lives should be a continual testimony for Him.

Hezekiah had Scriptural grounds for his prayer. He pleaded with God to fulfil His promise, made to David and his successors, that God would maintain them on the throne, so long as they lived uprightly before Him (1 Kings 8:25; 2 Kings 18:3).

II. The Lord's Answer: verses 4-11.

God heard and answered the prayer of King Hezekiah (Psa. 39:12; 56:8, 9; 65:2). The Lord rejoices to hear the cry of His children when they request that He fulfil His own word to them (1 Kings 8:26; Isa. 45:11).

Hezekiah was a man of prayer and faith (2 Kings 19:20), but he did not neglect to use means (verse 20; Neh. 2:4, 5; Isa. 38:2). We are to trust God and use whatever instruments He places at our disposal; faith and works both have their place in the economy of God.

The doctrine of bodily healing is taught in the Scriptures. The Lord is the Creator and Sustainer of the universe of men and things (Col. 1:17), and as such He has power to heal the bodies of men, as well as their souls (Psa. 103:3). In the scheme of salvation He has made provision for the redemption of the body (Matt. 8:17; Rom. 8:11, 23). Moreover, in our day the Lord frequently heals the bodies of His children, with or without means, instantly or gradually. But He is Sovereign, and it is not always His will to bring health and healing (1 Tim. 5:23; 2 Tim. 4:20).

Hezekiah requested that a sign be given to him (Isa. 38:7, 8, 22). This would seem to have been a legitimate request on his part, in view of the fact that the Lord Himself offered to give a sign on other occasions (2 Kings 19:29; Isa. 7:11). Signs were given to strengthen faith, but not to satisfy curiosity (Gen. 15:8-18; Judg. 6:36-40). The turning of the sun's rays backward on the dial was a miracle which Hezekiah could see, and he was encouraged to believe that God could heal him. Both miracles were performed by the sovereign power of God.

Hezekiah's restoration to health affords an excellent illustration of salvation through faith by the power and grace of God. The king testified in these words: "Thou hast loved my soul from the pit, for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back" (Isa. 38:17).

Daily Bible Readings

May 16—The Recovery of Naaman 2 Kings 5:1-14

May 17—The Recovery of the Centurion's Son Matthew 8:5-13

May 18—The Recovery of the Woman with an Issue of Blood Mark 5:25-34

May 19—The Recovery of the Dumb Man Mark 9:14-29

May 20—The Recovery of the Lepers Luke 17:11-19

May 21—The Recovery of the Impotent Man John 5:1-16

May 22—The Recovery of the Blind Man John 9:1-7

Suggested Hymns

She only touched the hem of His garment.
What means this eager, anxious throng?
At even, ere the sun was set,
The Great Physician now is near.
Thine arm, O Lord, in days of old,
Oh, the precious love of Jesus!