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A STRONG CHURCH

By W. O. H. GARMAN
in *The Associated Gospel Reporter, U.S.A.*

A STRONG church in the New Testament sense of that term is one in which the activities and loyalties of the people are centered in the local church and not as is so often true today, centered in organizations outside the local church and over which the local church has no authority or control.

Every good Independent with Baptist and congregational convictions should give a hearty and emphatic "Amen" to this for it is good doctrine in the estimation of those who believe in the sovereignty of the local church and resent outside intrusions.

The local church we believe should enjoy complete autonomy. It should be self governing with all authority vested in the local church. The local church should be free from outside domination from any source whether it be an ecclesiastical machine, a Convention, a Council of Churches, Youth Organization, or any other agency or group that might be mentioned. Therefore no one has any right to dictate to the local church and tell it what its plans, policies, and connections must be nor to interfere in any manner with operation of the local church.

Today no end of outside, and often antagonistic, organizations and attractions are interfering with the functions of the local church competing for its loyalty and support and thereby gradually depriving the local church of the freedom it should have. Convention churches are rapidly losing their autonomy and the control of their properties as recent court decisions attest.

Other churches are experiencing a loss of authority and domain because outside, and often unsympathetic, broadcasters, youth organizations, missions and schools, make serious inroads in the finances by diverting from the local church funds which should be used by its members to support the local church and its program.

Outside youth organizations have in some instances practically taken over the youth work of some local churches and the same thing could be said about unrelated mission organizations, schools and radio work which have usurped authority and control in their particular field.

Such things weaken the local church particularly independent churches which have taken a stand on separation from apostasy and all comprising connections. Often the children's organizations, youth groups, missions, radio broadcasts and schools the members of local separated churches support are over in the other camp and very antagonistic to the separated position.

In some cases today, if a local separated church is not led to unreservedly put the stamp of its approval upon such organizations, union campaigns and the like, and even though it may refrain from open opposition, it is in for criticism to say the least and in other instances it becomes the object of vicious attack.

Some of our separated brethren rather than face this criticism and attack have cooperated in projects which were diametrically opposed to the separated stand their churches were supposed to occupy. When this happens the entire separationist movement is not only undermined but made a laughing stock. The local separated church which is involved is also weakened and its position nullified. Its separated testimony becomes meaningless.

Brethren in Christ, these things ought not to be and as long as such conditions exist we will not have strong flourishing separated testimonies. It is time, high time, that the members of local separated churches realize that their first allegiance as far as earthly organizations are concerned is to the local church and in all consistency that they refrain from supporting outside organizations which are antagonistic and unsympathetic to the local church of which they are members.

Pastors and church boards ought to be equally as loyal and consistent in all affiliations into which they may guide the local church or themselves participate.

When all this happens our separated testimony will really count for something and our churches will be much stronger. Further, the loss of support will cause some of these organizations referred to to stop straddling on basic issues and to really take a stand against apostasy and all compromising connections themselves.

HAVE YOU BEEN RAISED FROM THE DEAD?

THE Christian looks with confidence to the future and to eternity. On the basis of the Word of God, he has a sure hope of a resurrection when his body shall be raised from the dust and shall be reunited with the soul. Believers may have different interpretations as to the specific order of events at that last day but of its certainty there is not a shadow of doubt.

While we do rejoice in this future prospect, we are aware of the fact that in another sense all believers in the Lord Jesus Christ have experienced already another real resurrection from the dead. Indeed the prospect of a future resurrection depends entirely upon this other first resurrection in this present life.

In the sight of a holy God, we are all by nature "dead in sins". (Eph. 2:1). So great is the sin of man that the Holy Spirit chooses to use this descriptive word to describe that woeful state — "dead in sins." — In that same verse the Apostle Paul declares that those who are believers have been "quickened" or made alive by the power of God. In short, Christians have been resurrected from a state of spiritual death.

If this teaching were dependent upon one isolated verse we would not be dogmatic in asserting the necessity of a present spiritual resurrection. The obvious fact is that the whole of the Word of God is more specific and insistent upon this need for a radical change here and now than it is concerned with the minute details of a future resurrection.

The apostle John in the fifth chapter of his gospel records the words of the Lord Jesus Christ who declares — "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live." Once more we are told that in this present life and during this present dispensation the dead shall live. That this resurrection is a *spiritual* one is obvious for it is dependent upon hearing the Word of God and believing upon the Lord Jesus Christ. That it is a *present* and not a future change is obvious from the declaration that such a soul is *passed* from death unto life. The hour of which this resurrection speaks is *now*.

This raises the question — Reader, have you been raised from the dead? Have you been saved? Do not bother yourself with questions as to a *future* resurrection, a *future* kingdom or other related questions until you have determined whether you have here and now passed from death unto life. If you have not experienced this change, rest assured that you shall never rejoice in a future resurrection which can be only a source of torment to you.

Do not rest until you have the assurance of the present possession of eternal life. How simple is that declaration of the Saviour of men — "He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life." Look away to Christ; take Him at His Word and acknowledge that He died for your sins and you may take Him at His Word when He says that you have been raised from the dead!

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The Editor's Corner

Sale of *Doctrines of Grace*

The newest member of THE GOSPEL WITNESS family of publications is *The Doctrines of Grace*, by Dr. T. T. Shields. This lovely 208-page book is enjoying a good sale. Every subscriber to THE GOSPEL WITNESS should order his or her copy now. On your Christmas shopping list there are perhaps the names of some for whom you find it difficult to shop because they seem to have no need. We suggest that you send these persons a copy of *The Doctrines of Grace*. Order the copy early!

Rising Costs

The pulp and paper companies have announced a rise in the price of newsprint. This means that the cost of printing THE GOSPEL WITNESS will be raised. We trust that our friends will keep this in mind and that some will see fit to use their gifts to help this valuable ministry. We do not intend to raise the cost of the paper to our subscribers although we know of no other 16 page weekly magazine carrying no advertising that that sells for such a low sum.

We cannot be saved *by* or *for* our good works, neither can we be saved *without* good works. Christ never will save any of His people *in* their sins; He saves His people *from* their sins.

—CHARLES H. SPURGEON

The Jarvis Street Pulpit

The Lord in the Midst of His People

By Dr. T. T. Shields

(NINTH IN A SERIES ON REVIVALS OF THE BIBLE)

Delivered in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Thursday Evening, January 2nd, 1930

(Stenographically Reported)

Mark 9:14-29

THESE verses present a very interesting picture. I shall try to break it up into its constituents so that you may have the picture clearly in your mind. First of all, there is a group of greatly distressed disciples. They have been asked to do something, and they discover they are powerless to grant the request. Beside them, were the scribes. They came asking questions; they represented a critical attitude. They had come for no good purpose — but they were there. Then there were the multitude, a great company of curious people who had no special interest in the disciples, or in the man whose son was distressed; they were the sort of people who go anywhere where a crowd congregates. And then there was one who stands out prominently from all the rest: he was a father, and he had a child who was possessed of a demon. Most important of all was the Lord Jesus, Who had just returned from the Mount of Transfiguration with the glory still about Him, so that when the people saw Him they were amazed.

Try to hold the five elements of this picture in your mind. First, the group of distressed disciples; secondly, the group of critical scribes; thirdly, the multitude of the curious; the fourth was the father of the demon-possessed child; and last, and most important of all, the Master Himself.

This story of the healing of the child who was possessed of a devil is full of instruction, and yet that aspect of the story is but incidental to my purpose this evening. I desire you to look at the whole picture, and hold all these elements in your mind.

I.

I begin with this observation: ANY ASSOCIATION OF MEN WITH CHRIST IS SURE TO CHALLENGE ENQUIRY. "His name shall be called Wonderful." Ever since the wise men beheld His star in the east, the name of Jesus Christ has been full of wonder for the children of men. Men may tire asking questions about other matters. I bought a paper late last night; I opened it and glanced inside, and saw certain predictions that had been made but a few hours before. On the outside of the same paper was a record the very opposite of all that was predicted within. Only twenty-four hours ago, or a little more, people were tremendously interested in our civic affairs — and one might suppose, if you read either side of the question — that we were destined to be ruined within twenty-four hours. But when it is past, everyone settles down to make the best of it; whether men have their way or not the City goes on; and we shall still live, I suppose, in spite of it all. And I venture to say it would be very

difficult to get up any excitement about that matter to-day, yet it was only yesterday people were talking excitedly. How soon interest in matters of that sort dies down!

But for nearly two thousand years people have been asking questions about Jesus, and He is still the most interesting Subject that can engage the thought of men. People never tire of asking about Him.

And when any one man, or any company of men, associates himself, or associate themselves, with Christ immediately they become associated with the wonderful; they lose their private character. They, too, are subjects of enquiry; people want to know all about them. Before they came into contact with Christ, certain people outside their immediate circle had very little interest in them; but the moment they became identified with Him Whose name is called Wonderful people began to ask questions about them. When Jesus came down from the Mount He found His disciples the centre of an enquiring group. Those standing by were pouring their questions upon them, demanding an answer.

Well, my friend, if you are a Christian you are rather an interesting subject. I remember when I was a boy there was one man in my father's church who used to interest me very much. He was about so high — measuring from the floor. He could see over the top of the pew — but not very much more. He was very short. He had rather a peculiar voice, and he gave one testimony — it was scriptural to be sure — but I never heard him give but one testimony. He used to rise in every testimony meeting and say, "I am as a wonder unto many"; and then he would sit down. Occasionally when my mother could not go to church, and I went to a prayer meeting, or some meeting of that sort, when I came home she would ask me who were there. I used to say, "Oh, the 'wonder unto many' was there." That was the name by which I knew him.

His testimony was not inappropriate. We could all of us take it to ourselves, for as surely as our Master is called "Wonderful", we shall be called "wonderful" too. If we are associated with Him we shall become wonders unto many, and we shall find ourselves again and again the centre of enquiry, just as were those distressed disciples on this occasion.

The same is true of organized Christianity. Of course, the all-important thing is that we shall be personally related to Christ; that lies at the foundation of all Christian life and Christian service. But when companies of men and women called Christians come into association

with each other, they cannot disregard their corporate responsibilities. We had to have the Seminary incorporated. We are a corporate body by law, and I noticed in the Letters Patent granted to us, that, being incorporated, we were privileged to "sue or be sued". It simply meant that we had a corporate existence. We were more than an aggregation of individuals; we were a corporate body, having joint privileges. Similarly, when a company of believers come together and form a church, they become, as did the disciples on this occasion, the subject of study and enquiry.

One of the large departments in the historical realm is that of church history, the history of the church — that is to say, of organized Christianity — the corporate body of the professed disciples of the Lord Jesus. Hundreds and hundreds of volumes have been written answering the questions which men ask concerning the church. I have a volume on my shelves, presented to me by the author, a man who, for a certain degree, wrote a history of Church Union in Canada. It is a very interesting volume.

With those matters I am not concerned this evening, but to remind you that in our corporate capacity as a church we are a subject of interest and enquiry. People study us; they ask questions about us. Some of them are not quite sure whether Jarvis Street is a jail, or a hospital, or an asylum! But they are at least sufficiently interested to ask questions about us. Wherever you go you find people asking questions about this association of believers called Jarvis Street Church. I do not believe it is possible for any body of believers to have Jesus Christ in the midst without attracting attention, and without moving a great many people to ask questions about it.

II.

LOOK AT SOME OF THE QUESTIONERS FOR A MOMENT, because, if that be so, it ought to interest us to know who are the people who are studying us as individuals, and as a church.

First of all, there are *the scribes*. They represent more than a particular class. They were a class, but they represent also an attitude. They were there merely to ask questions. They were more interested in asking questions than in finding an answer. There are a great many people who seem to be "ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth". They are like Pilate: they ask a question, but go away before the answer is given. They are like a certain class of people of whom Spurgeon once said, "They like fishing better than the fish." There are a good many people who have no appetite for fish, but they do love fishing. Some people are not particularly anxious to know the truth; but they like to ask questions, and are ready for an argument any time, whenever you meet them.

I have noticed our personal workers going around when the invitation is being given, and occasionally they stumble upon one of the scribes. You can always tell him by his questioning attitude, he is full of cavilling. He does not want the truth. He asks questions in which there is an implication of criticism and fault-finding. "Why don't you Christians do this?" or "Why don't you Christians do the other thing?" "Why does the church take a stand." A man came to see me to-day who was very much interested in one thing. He said, "I quite agree with your stand on prohibition, but I should not agree

with you so heartily in your view of the prophet Jonah."

There are people who have their fads, and they want to air them, and ask all sorts of questions. We need not trouble much, my dear friends, what the scribes have to say about us. No church about its Master's business will ever be able to conduct its affairs as to satisfy the cavilling scribes. It is no use trying to do it. One might just as well stop at the beginning as at the end, for he will never find an answer that will satisfy them.

Then there is another class: *the curious crowd*. You can see them down Yonge Street, if there is a vacant store and a man who can talk. He may be selling shoe polish, or diamond rings — no matter what he is selling. He talks like a steam-engine, and is ready to promise you a hundred dollars for five cents. You will always find some people who will stop to listen to what he has to say. If there is a motor accident on the street — no one is hurt at all, but you hear two cars come together, and some people, no matter how busy they are, must stop and look at it. They are full of curiosity.

People like that are interested in religion. They will come here for a while just to see what we have to say, and then will go all around the churches. They will be down with our friends on the corner of Bond Street, and then yonder with the Alliance Tabernacle. If someone should start a healing campaign in Massey Hall they will be sure to be there next Sunday. It does not make much difference what it is — they are religiously curious, and they are flitting about like a housefly from place to place, never settling anywhere. They are not really interested in the matter of the soul's personal responsibility to God. They do not want to hear about repentance, and faith, and the cleansing of the blood, about getting right with God, and setting a new course in life. They are not interested in things of that sort: they are just curious, that is all. What they want is a kind of religious midway, and the more abnormal a thing is the better pleased they are. They run hither and thither after the latest religious excitement.

Well, my friends, I am not very much interested in that. I have had hundreds of letters in the last few years from the scribes and the curious. Some of the curious have come, and they have written me a letter telling me I was the only preacher in Toronto! That is a fact. There was no one else preaching the gospel but myself, and if Toronto only had a few more like me the millennium would soon come. Then I happened to say something one day that did not quite please them, and they wrote me another letter — they were quite sure that I was not even going to heaven this time! How foolish it would be for the disciples of Jesus Christ to shape their course to fit the whims of the scribes or the curious!

But there was one person in that crowd who was not critical, and who was not curious. He was desperately in earnest, because he had a broken heart; he had a boy who needed more than human help, and he cast about to see where he should find help. He had heard of one called Jesus, and he said, "If there is anyone in the world who can help me it will be the followers of Jesus of Nazareth. I will take my boy to them, and I will see what they can do for me." He came, not ready to find fault, but with a great hope in his heart that he would return home a happy man. He came to them, and they disappointed him; they had not power to help him.

I do not wonder they were concerned about that. I do not care what the scribes or the curious say, but I

do care for the opinion of the man who has a son in need of saving. God forbid that it should ever be said of those who have friends — a wife who has prayed long, and laboured hard to bring her husband to Christ, and at last she has persuaded him to go to church, and she says, "Where shall I take him?" Somebody says, "Go down to Jarvis Street, and he will hear the gospel there" — what if she should come in with her husband at her side, and then by and by go away again and say, "There was no message for me. There was no power to help my husband. I am disappointed, and he is disappointed. We are just as badly off as we ever were." If parents should have children who give them anxiety, and they long to see some moral miracle wrought in those young lives, and they say, "We will take them to Jarvis Street Sunday School. I believe they will get help there." And what if they should come and fail to find it? That is the one thing I am anxious about, my dear friends. What the scribes may say, I do not care. What the curious may say does not disturb me in the least. But I am concerned about what the needy may say about Jarvis Street Church. It would not trouble me if people were to say, "There is no learning in the pulpit, and there is no — shall I say it? — there is no particular culture in the pew. They are a common sort of people in Jarvis Street Church, but you cannot go in there without having God touch you. You cannot take an unsaved soul there, and bring him out just as he went in. You cannot send your children to that Sunday School, and have them come home exactly as they went there. There is something there, though I do not know what it is."

Would it not be fine if people should say that? That is the kind of reputation we ought to covet, dear friends, to be known as a people among whom God dwells. There is a great deal in atmosphere. The doctor sometimes sends a patient away into the arid wastes of Arizona. The atmosphere is so dry, and the air so pure, that he says it will cure his asthma or tuberculosis. It may help, though sometimes it does not. Someone else sends a patient away down to the southland, saying, "You must get away from this northern zone. Go down where the sun is shining." In heaven there is to be the tree of life that will yield its fruit every month, and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. Do you not think it is possible for a church to have such an atmosphere, to have at its centre such a power that nobody can cross the threshold without getting a little bit of heaven, without being touched by the power of God? That is the thing we ought to desire, that is the thing we ought to pray for.

Will you keep in mind, then, that the individual Christian, and Christians collectively, must expect people to ask questions about them. They must expect the scribes to do it, and to pass their criticisms. They must expect the idly curious people to ask questions. But the only thing that really matters is the reaction of a needy soul to the life of the individual Christian or of the church.

As an individual Christian, what if they call you a fanatic? What if they say you are a little bit beside yourself, or just a little bit queer? I have had that said. I think I will tell you a story. A lady who is not a member of this church told me once that she was calling on another woman who was not a member of this church, and someone from out of town, a Methodist — just about a year before the Union — was visiting there. They began to talk about Jarvis Street Church, and this Methodist

visitor said, "Well, what is the matter with that man down there? I am informed that he is quite insane." This lady said, "I saw at once it was no use to argue with her at all, so I said, "Are you going to be in town over Sunday?" She said, "Yes." "Well, would you go down to Jarvis Street Church if I were to call for you on Sunday?" "Yes, I should be delighted." She was here Sunday morning, I do not know what service it was, but the Lord met her. She got such a blessing as she said she had never known in all her Christian experience. She went home and said to her pastor, "Pastor, for the first time in my life I have learned what a New Testament Church ought to be like", and she told him of the blessing she had received. That pastor was not jealous. He secured someone to supply for him, and he got into his car and drove to Toronto; he was in the Bible Class in the morning, in the service in the morning, and at the service again in the evening. He never introduced himself to me, or to anyone else that I know of; but he went home and called his church together, and told them he had had such a blessing as he had never known in all his ministerial experience, and he said, "I have learned that we are on the wrong track. We are going to have done with all bazaars, sales of work, rummage sales, and all the rest of it; and while I am pastor of this church we shall do just three things: pray, and teach, and preach the Word of God."

That man would never have come here if someone had not told that member of his that the pastor here was insane, and I should be willing to be called insane a dozen times a week if by that means some people could be restored to spiritual sanity. So I say, if they call you a bit queer, and say all kinds of things about you, if your testimony to them is so blessed that somebody is saved, or someone is brought nearer to God, you can afford to endure whatever people say of you.

And so of us as a church, it makes no difference what people say of us if only we can have power from God.

III.

THEN, WILL YOU NOTE THAT WHEN OUR LORD CAME HE IDENTIFIED HIMSELF WITH HIS DISCIPLES. He had been up in the mount, and the disciples had been without Him while He was absent. When He came back He found this crowd of people around His disciples, the scribes and the multitudes, and the disciples at their wits' end to know what to do. And so Jesus Himself drew near, and He said, "What question ye with them? What questions are you asking them? Come on now, ask them of Me; I will answer your questions." How fully He identifies Himself with us! He is the answer to any and every question that men may ask, I care not what it is. There is no question, concerning anything on the earth below or in heaven above, that does not find its sufficient answer in Jesus Christ Himself. Whenever you are troubled at the questioners, pray that the Lord may come and answer your questions for you.

And here is a curious thing — mark carefully — the scribes asked questions, the curious multitude asked questions, and the Holy Ghost moved somebody to write down the record of that occasion; but there was not any one of the questions of the scribes that was worth writing down. There was not one question asked by the curious multitude that was worth preserving in the record. Our Lord said, "What are your questions?" And the only

question that is written down here is the question of the distressed father, who came telling the sad story about his boy.

That is a good way to meet people. If they want to know what to do to be saved, tell them you can answer that. I have heard of a boy, a little chap on the streets of Edinburgh, who was asked by somebody, "Laddie, do you know the way to so and so?" "No sir, I don't." "Well, do you know how I could get to so and so?" "No," he said, "I do not know that." The stranger asked him ever so many questions, but could get no satisfactory answer. "Well," he said at last, "You are a dull boy. You do not know anything, do you?" "Yes, sir, I know something; I can answer you one question." "Well, what question can you answer?" "I can tell you what to do to be saved." That is worth while, is it not? Put that question to many of the cavillers, and you will shut them up in a short time. Say to them, "Look here, if you want to know what to do to be saved, if you want to know how to deal with sin, and have it removed, I can tell you that." They will very often say, "We will discuss this some other time."

Jesus bade the man bring his boy to Him. What a blessing it is that the grace of our God can cover our disgrace! You and I ought to be able to do a great many things that we do not do. We have failed many times. You remember it is written in the scripture, "If a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." Did you ever deal with a backslider? Did you ever have to deal with a backslider when you did not want to? I think you will have to say, "Yes." Why did you not deal with the backslider when you ought to have done so? "I had not the power". "Ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness." It requires the mighty power of the Holy Ghost to minister to people in dire spiritual need. The disciples, on this occasion, were without that power; as we have often been. But how wonderful it is that when we have failed, the Lord draws near and says, "Well, they may have failed, but bring him to Me." After all, that is the end of everything. We are to bring people, not to church, nor even to the disciples, but to Jesus Himself. If we fail He never does.

The great matter for all of us, whether we consider our responsibilities as individuals, or collectively as a church, the great desideratum is that we should have Jesus Christ in the midst, in our own hearts, in the midst of His church, so that whoever may come, whatever their need, however deep it may be, there will be power to meet that need, and to expel the evil spirit.

Take the modern church to-day — and I do not want to be censorious. Let us apply it to ourselves, and not to other people; but is it not true that while the modern church may have magnificent buildings, great organizations, and large wealth in some cases, it may represent in its membership positions of importance in the community, it may be altogether an aggregation of very important people, but though it may sing and lecture and preach after a fashion, it has no power to effect the transformation of a life, no power to cast the devil out of anybody who has been bound by Satan. If a church has not that power, it has no good reason to exist. When a church loses that power, the sooner it is dissolved and passes out of existence the better it will be for every one — unless, indeed, it comes to repentance, and regains that power.

There are some things harder to do than others. "This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting." There are some people who seem to be possessed, not of one devil, but of a legion. And if we would regain this power — if we are without it, let me say — let us follow the example of the disciples. They asked Him privately and said, "Lord, we are ashamed, for we stood in the presence of that great human need helpless to do anything. Will you not tell us where our failure was? Why could we not cast him out?" And He said, "This kind can come forth by nothing but by prayer and fasting." Surely He meant to say, "You might have had the power to cast him out if you had been willing to pay the price, and meet the conditions."

So let us seek to live in supreme indifference to the criticisms of those who find delight only in criticism, and let us be supremely concerned that we should live in such relationship to the great Head of the church, that no man or woman, or boy or girl, coming within these walls, and needing the touch of God, shall ever go away disappointed.

May the Lord bless our meditation.

EUROPE — A CHALLENGING FIELD

In France, Belgium and Switzerland, a faithful band of gospel workers hold forth the word of life in eighteen churches and twelve mission halls. These pastors and workers of the French Bible Mission carry on their labours in a difficult field where Romanism and rationalism have made deep inroads. Despite many difficulties, the work is growing and under the blessing of the Lord the brethren are reaching out to new centres of population with the gospel. The French Bible Mission rests upon a solid foundation — the Word of God — and seeks to build for eternity as strong local churches are established.

The people of Jarvis Street Baptist Church and the churches of The Conservative Regular Baptist Association of Canada count it a privilege to be able to help in the work of extension and evangelization carried on by the French Bible Mission. All gifts which we send are used exclusively for the establishing of new works. Next Sunday is French Bible Mission Sunday in Jarvis Street. A special offering is taken for this work. If any of our readers desire to contribute to one of the finest missionary agencies in the world, we should be happy to pass your gifts on to these brethren in Europe. Send your offering to THE GOSPEL WITNESS, 130 Gerrard St. East, Toronto 2.

THE CASE FOR SEPARATION AS SEEN, BELIEVED AND PRACTISED BY CHARLES HADDON SPURGEON

"I have taken a deep interest in the struggles of the orthodox brethren, but I have never advised those struggles, nor entertained the slightest hope of their success. My course has been of another kind.

"As soon as I saw, or thought I saw, that error had become firmly established, I did not deliberate, but quit the body at once. Since then my counsel has been 'come out from among them.' I have felt that no protest could be equal to that of distinct separation."

—From the writings of Chas. H. Spurgeon

ISRAEL AND EGYPT

THE recent skirmishes between the armies of Israel and Egypt have claimed newspaper attention and have given professed students of prophecy more material for speculation. We do marvel at the agility displayed by some of these prophetic-minded teachers who leap hither and yon to find some event of present day history upon which to hang their interpretations of the deep places of Scripture. More amazing still is the nerve of some who make bold predictions for which they claim absolute Scriptural warrant. They seem not one whit moved when the passage of time proves their predictions to have been ridiculous. Included in this category are those who have predicted the end of the world and lived to see that date pass by, those who saw Mussolini as the Anti-Christ but who lived to see him hang by his heels, those who saw the Korean War as the beginning of the end but who now view a stale-mate. One would expect that after making such rash, unfounded predictions and after being proved wrong, these persons would apologize to the public they have deluded and that they would exercise restraint in the future. Such seems to be far from their thoughts as they blaze on mistaking rashness for sound exegesis.

How the Middle East situation is ripe for their exploitation. The prophetic telescope (or perhaps we should say, *microscope*) is now turned to that part of the world. From the platform, over the radio and in religious magazines we are urged to turn our eyes to the Middle East. Some even declare with an oracular tone that Armageddon is near. Their tone is so convincing that we might be stirred if we knew less about the outcome of their previous speculation.

Surely Christians are getting tired of these teachers of novel theories and these watchers of newspaper headlines who have made the blessed hope of the second coming of Jesus Christ to be the occasion for dangerous, unfounded and carnal speculations. The command of the Lord is, "Occupy till I come." Apparently some have understood this to mean — "Speculate till I come." Spurgeon saw this same trend in his day and declared — "The fact that Jesus Christ is to come again is not reason for star-gazing but for working in the power of the Holy Ghost."

Instead of harangues on the present skirmishes between Egypt and Israel why do these prophetic teachers not tell saints and sinners of the spiritual Israel of whom the Scripture declares — "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise?" Why do we not hear more of the bondage of Egypt which speaks of the carnal state of believers? Truly there is a never-ending struggle between the true Israel of God and this Egyptian enemy of men's souls. The outcome of this perpetual struggle has more eternal repercussions than any exchange of gunfire on a Middle Eastern desert.

SUNDAY IN JARVIS STREET

The Bible School was well attended on the past Lord's Day and a large number of the scholars remained for the morning service.

Dr. Slade preached at both services. In the morning his subject was, "The Lost Sheep". In the evening he spoke on, "Christ's Power To Give Eternal Life".

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A Devotional Study in Revelation

by Dr. R. D. Barry

Chapter 22

DEFEAT OF THE LAST ENEMIES OF THE BRIDE

Revelation 19

AS WE come to the closing chapters of the book of Revelation, the particular visions concerning the Bride become more and more abundant, even to the extent of gradually occupying the whole foreground of the divine stage.

As we examine the Holy Scriptures as a whole, the following divisions force themselves upon our minds:

(1) The Old Testament, whose primary purpose is to reveal to us the Person and the action of God the Father.

(2) The gospels, which reveal to us the Person and the works of God the Son.

(3) The Acts of the Apostles, which witnesses to the action of God the Spirit.

(4) The epistles, which give us directions and instructions as to the earthly preparation and the high calling of the local bodies, in view of their final glorified state, when the believers of all times will then constitute the Church.

(5) The book of Revelation, which, crowning the whole, depicts the final union of the Bride and the divine Trinity.

Thus, the whole of history and the whole of the divine revelation reach their climax in the glorification of the Bride. That fact is of tremendous importance and leaves in the background many other essential things.

All the above considerations were familiar to the first recipients of the book, since the assembly at Ephesus over which John was an overseer had already been clearly instructed in that matter by the apostle Paul in a well known passage: "Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish . . . The Lord nourisheth and cherisheth the church: For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones . . . This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church." (Eph. 5:25-32).

The apostle's words cannot refer to a local gathering, whose role, however important it may be, is limited to this earth. Nor to any religious collectivity — historical, national, or denominational. Nor to some sort of universal society to come. Nor to some world-wide association gathering all true Christians. In fact, there is no place in Scripture dealing with our present relationship with a great religious family which would include at once all

the saints now with God, all the known and unknown saints now living on earth, and all the saints to come. Besides, the following questions can be asked: Is such a unity necessary? Can it be realized? If so, what form will it take, and what part will it play? The eye of God alone is able to perceive what is called the Church Universal, and we can certainly meditate upon it for our edification. But during the whole course of our present economy, the Lord, in the last analysis, only deals with individuals: even when, for practical reasons, He speaks to a number of them at a time, through the medium of local gatherings.

The Bride-Church, as described above by the apostle Paul, is an absolutely unique collectivity. Its first elements are as old as mankind, and it is still in the process of formation. It will therefore have no true existence and will play no true part until all its elements will be gathered together, until it will be brought to completion — that is, when the returning Lord will have put an end to the earthly experience of each individual saint.

It is however extremely necessary and edifying to behold, by faith, the Bride-Church. And for this purpose were certain parts of the book of Revelation-written.

Our *calling* will appear infinitely nobler if we do not merely consider ourselves as being "saved" and vaguely destined "to heaven". For we shall not enjoy the bliss of heaven merely as individuals, but we shall be incorporated in a human body miraculously qualified to commune perfectly and for ever with the divine Trinity.

Our *spiritual preparation* will then appear more urgent and more thorough if we have a true conception of that future state. For we must conceive of our earthly life as a period of preparation; therefore the elect must now strive for a blending as perfect as their human imperfections permit of their most intimate beings, and that, within the local church itself. But let us remember that unity does not eliminate individuality.

Our *courage* will be stimulated by the assurance that we belong to a divine community whose elements will triumph over the most formidable evil powers in history.

Finally, our *watchfulness* will be sharpened if we realize that the true heavenly Church has earthly counterfeits whose attraction lies in the fact that they offer a cheap and premature ideal of unity.

We can therefore conclude that our conception of the Bride and our affinities with it will exactly reveal the quality of our Christian attitude.

The chapter to which we have thought necessary to give a lengthy introduction deals with the disappearance

of the last instruments of Satan which yet prevent the final and victorious manifestation of the Bride. It reveals the destiny of the second beast and of the false prophet, and of all their human associates. It successively depicts the celestial anticipation and the earthly realization of the total disappearance of the adversaries of the elect people.

I. CELESTIAL ANTICIPATIONS (19:1-16)

Three pictures are here drawn: (1) The rejoicing attending the end of the prostitute. (2) The joy of the Bride. (3) The vision of the Bridegroom-Judge.

(1) *The end of the prostitute* (v. 1-5) is the object of a threefold praise: that of the heavenly creation; that of the representatives of the earthly creation; that of the voice coming out of the throne.

(a) All the various creatures of heaven instinctively break forth with one accord into Alleluias — the only Alleluias in the New Testament. The meaning of this word: "Praise the Lord" is forceful and beautiful in its simplicity. Its special use in those circumstances should prevent all abuse of this sacred expression on our part. The reason for this joyful testimony is that "salvation, and glory, and honour, and power" are now ascribed to "the Lord our God". Those prerogatives are ascribed to Him, not because of His works, His wisdom, His holiness and His love, but because "true and righteous are His judgments". Justice, the most austere of God's attributes, is now as it were rehabilitated after its earthly unpopularity. And that, because the Lord dared avenge His people, whose weaker elements had suffered the corrupting influence of the false religion, and whose stronger ones fell victims to the cruelties of the anti-religion.

To the "Alleluia" dictated by the past there corresponds a second one (v. 3), inspired by a vision of the future: the "smoke" of the heinous seductive power of the false church must rise as a testimony "for ever and ever", that is, the remembrance of the dangers and of the deliverance of the elect people must continually be present in their thoughts.

(b) The "four and twenty elders" and the "four beasts", celestial representatives respectively of the people of God and of His other creatures, now join their voices to those first praises: their testimony is so solemn that the two words which express it with impressive soberness: "Amen, Alleluia", are attended with prostration and adoration.

(c) The voice coming out of the throne, saying, "Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great", is attributed by commentators either to the elders, or to the beasts, or to the Holy Spirit, or to Jesus Christ Himself. The last hypothesis seems to be the right one, because the most suggestive.

(2) *The joy of the Bride* (v. 6-9) is expressed by the multitude of those who constitute her body. First, she gives utterance to that happiness by an "Alleluia", unceasing as the "voice of many waters", and resounding as the "voice of mighty thunders". The reason for such a happiness is the Father's satisfaction: "For the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." Secondly, it is the joy of being united to the Son: "The marriage of the Lamb is come." Finally, that joy is expressed in humble words of thanksgiving: "His wife has made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints." The Bride is therefore entitled to

all those privileges, not because of her personal worthiness, but because of her garments: and the works of righteousness which constitute her garments have been "granted" to her. The thought is further emphasized by the mention of the "Lamb", which name has been here chosen to recall the purifying action of the blood and the reason for the gift of the clothes of righteousness. The striking contrast between the white attire of the Bride and the purple and scarlet array of the prostitute brings our thoughts back to the latter. A symbolical woman had been the cause of much grief to the Bridegroom; another symbolical woman will give Him great joy. "And the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more in Babylon." But, on the wedding day, and then forever, will be heard in heaven the holy and joyful accents of the Bride and of the Lamb.

The first two sections of chapter nineteen are followed by the conclusion: "And the angel saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb!" An anticipated pleasure is already immediately offered to anyone who is "called" to the feast. Through repentance and faith, that privilege can now be enjoyed for the angel adds: "These are the true sayings of God." Such a revelation impresses John so deeply that he falls at the feet of God's messenger to worship him. But the angel explains to John that he is only his "fellow-servant", being morally nearer to him than to the only true God who alone deserves to be worshipped. For it is only through the divine Spirit that the angel has been able to reveal Jesus prophetically.

(3) *The revelation of the Bridegroom-Judge* (v. 11-16) takes us back to the vision of the white horse in chapter six verse four, and, for some of its details, to a number of other passages of the book and of the rest of Scripture. Most of the features of the ineffable Person here described need no explanations. We shall therefore only mention a few of them. He bears many names, as is fitting to the superhuman variety of His roles and virtues. One of these names, "the Word of God", will be found later under the pen of John in a significant passage (John 1:1). It may be that the remark "he had a name written, that no man knew but he himself" applies to the extraordinary significance of the title "Word of God", which no man is able to fully understand. On the other hand, as we behold the adorable head adorned with many crowns, we think of the stirring circumstances in which it is presented to us in Scripture, and especially under the shameful crown of thorns. The "vesture dipped in blood" not only reminds us of the expiatory sacrifice, but speaks of the many who will fall victims of the divine wrath, and whose blood will smear the Avenger's clothes. The armies of heaven which follow after Him must also be particularly mentioned here, for the active fellowship of the angelic beings with the Son of God knew no other interruption than that of Calvary, when our Saviour trod the winepress alone. (Is. 64:3). The sharp sword issuing out of His mouth and threatening the nations makes us think of the written Word which is "a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." (Heb. 4:12). Therefore by handling the truth the Bridegroom will put His Bride's adversaries to confusion. And the action of the "rod of iron" will perfect His victory.

Let us then keep in mind what could be the title of the vision: "In righteousness he doth judge and make war."

II. EARTHLY REALIZATIONS (19:17-21)

In sharp contrast with the detailed description of Jesus Christ's appearance in heaven given in the preceding vision, a very short section depicts the final defeat of His enemies. That contrast emphasizes the supreme importance of the Master Himself, everything else being only incidental. The "angel standing in the sun" is evidently placed in the brilliant rays of the sun for the sole purpose of calling the Seer's attention to the heavenly vision. This is confirmed by the "loud voice" by which the celestial messenger invites all the birds of prey to the supper of the great God. Once more the revelations are presented to us in pairs, this supper being the counterpart of the marriage supper of the Lamb.

In the fearful pictures given here we have an echo of Ezekiel 39:17-20. They must be given a spiritual meaning for they are a prophecy of the final victory of God. After this, no more judgment will be meted out until the day of doom.

Following the angel's threatening cry all the hostile forces spontaneously join together again with warlike intent. This conflict is evidently spiritual since one of the adversaries wields the sword of truth and since the false prophet is "taken" together with the beast for having deceived by his miracles "them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image".

As will be the case with the similar attempt of Gog and Magog (20:8-9); the "war" that the enemies of God's people were preparing to wage is now very quickly forestalled by an act of judgment. Thus, suddenly bereft of their power, the beast and the false prophet are "taken" like criminals, caught in the act at the very beginning of their bold endeavour. They offer no resistance to the hand which irresistibly seizes them and casts them into "a lake of fire burning with brimstone", where, in the company of their master Satan, they "shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever". (20:10). The two beasts as we see them are not merely symbolical personifications: rather do we see in the power they exercise the hand of two real beings, probably two demons of a very high order, and therefore infinitely formidable.

Only two things in few words are told us to depict symbolically the end of the two beasts' human allies:

(1) "And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse." In some way, the word of the Lord which in the last day shall judge him that did not receive his words (John 12:48) strikes here a deadly blow. That blow may be direct and miraculous; but on the other hand the disappearance of the beast and the false prophet may create conditions which will render life impossible for their followers.

(2) "And all the fowls were filled with their flesh." This dreadful picture shows that the end of God's enemies will strikingly prove the foolishness and the perils of those who will have followed the broad way.

In conclusion then, let us again repeat this reassuring declaration — a pressing appeal to those yet outside of God:

"BLESSED ARE THEY WHICH ARE CALLED UNTO THE MARRIAGE SUPPER OF THE LAMB!"

QUEBEC REBUKED AGAIN!

ON SEPTEMBER 4, 1949, a group of "Jehovah Witnesses" met in the home of a Mr. Chaput in the province of Quebec. This orderly meeting was disrupted by the invasion of three provincial policemen who arbitrarily dismissed the gathering, and escorted the visiting speaker to the ferry, and there ordered him to leave. These same policemen, who acted in such a high-handed fashion, laid no charge against Mr. Chaput. Unbelievable! This happened in Canada six years ago! We have absolutely no sympathy with the false teaching of the "Jehovah Witnesses"; but we do admire their persistence in taking this matter through the Canadian courts, for no government has the right to forbid the religious observance of any faith.

Mr. Chaput decided to take this matter to Court. After losing decisions in the "loaded" provincial Courts, he proceeded to the Supreme Court of Canada. To-day that highest tribunal in our land handed down what could be a historic decision. All lovers of liberty everywhere will rejoice in it.

It was ruled that the provincial policemen had acted in a reprehensible manner in invading the meeting, and further declared that it was the unquestioned right of the plaintiff to hold such a meeting. Mr. Chaput was awarded \$2,000.00 damages.

Especially were we interested in the reasons which Mr. Justice Robert Taschereau gave for his judgment. This Justice of the Supreme Court, who is a Roman Catholic, declared in part:

"I have no doubt that the three respondents' (policemen's) conduct was highly reprehensible, and of such a nature as to offend the plaintiff - appellant (Mr. Chaput). He clearly had the right to convene the meeting in his home . . .

"In our country there is no state religion. All religions are on an equal footing, and Roman Catholics, as well as Protestants, Jews, and other adherents to various religious denominations, enjoy the most complete liberty of thought. The conscience of each is a personal matter, and the concern of nobody else.

"It would be distressing to think that a majority might impose its religious views upon a minority, and it would also be a shocking error to believe that one serves his country or his religion by denying in one province, to a minority, the same rights which one rightly claims in another."

Two of the Justices (Mr. Justice Fauteux — a Roman Catholic, and Mr. Justice Locke) further declared that in their judgment the actions of the policemen were not only reprehensible, but criminal and illegal. Mr. Justice Locke added:

"They were liable to prosecution and imprisonment."

We rejoice to see the tyranny of the Quebec Government repudiated by the Supreme Court. It is to be hoped that these victories will be preserved, and that freedom-loving people will not lose the peace by indifference. Much remains to be done in Quebec before the way is open for the free preaching of the gospel. Truly that province presents one of the neediest mission fields in the world. Let us work and pray that evangelicals may win the day for "Jehovah Witnesses" present no more truth than does apostate Rome.

IS ROME CHANGING?

THE present *living* idol of Roman Catholicism is Bishop Fulton J. Sheen. This priest, who has a large following, has become widely known as a television and radio speaker and as a writer of popular Roman Catholic books. Television listener polls have indicated that his program has a top rating and has more listeners than some of the comedians and quiz shows.

Last week for the first time we heard the radio program on which this popular champion of Rome speaks. His topic was to this effect — "Is Communism Changing?" After hearing his discussion of the question, we were forced to ask ourselves another question, "Is Rome Changing?" We found the answer to be identical to Bishop Sheen's own answer to the question of Communism.

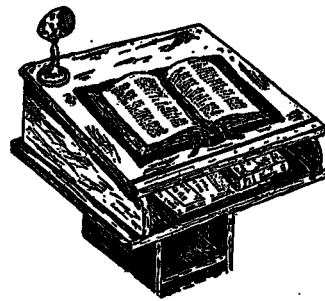
The Bishop declared that the *message* of Communism was unchanging. He showed that the Soviet masters have the same intentions as did the founders of the Soviet state. World domination and a proletariat dictatorship were still uppermost in the Communist blueprint. Therefore the Communist message was unchanging.

It must be noted, however, he declared, that the Communist *method* is changing. The "Geneva" spirit (which incidentally suffered a relapse last week) is not the old uncompromising spirit of the Red pioneers. Communism found it necessary to change its tactics in order to gain its unchanging ends.

We felt that Bishop Sheen presented a keen analysis of the situation but were persuaded that he could have applied the same conclusions to his own Church. The aims of Rome are unchanging. Still that Church seeks the enslavement of the souls of men. The Rome of the Middle Ages and the Rome of the twentieth century are agreed as to their ultimate aims.

Like Communism, Rome has changed its methods *in some countries*. In Spain where the Church rules supreme and in Colombia where she acts the part of the tyrant, she resembles very much the papal, medieval Church. In America, on the other hand, she is as meek as a lamb. Do not be misled by this change. It is external and not internal!

Indeed the smooth, likeable manner of Bishop Sheen is evidence of this change of *method*. In an easy, off-hand, sometimes jocular manner, he discusses his subject. Behind this pleasant mask, however, is the iron face of Rome which longs for the day of supremacy when she can tear off the mask and assert herself. In her aims, Rome has not changed!



English Bible Course

SEVENTH LECTURE
in the
ENGLISH BIBLE COURSE
TORONTO BAPTIST SEMINARY
By Dr. C. D. Cole
November 10th, 1955
SINAI OR ZION
Hebrews 12:18-29

IN THE passage we have before us tonight we reach the climax but not the end of the Hebrew epistle. Here we have the final contrast between the two religions of Judaism and Christianity. It is here that doctrine and exhortation culminate. We have here a sort of summary in a new dress of what has gone before in the epistle. The passage before us must be interpreted in harmony with the design of the epistle which is to show the superiority of Christianity to Judaism. The passage is historical and not prophetic. The author does not make an excursion into the field of eschatology. He is not describing some future millennium but is showing the present privileges and blessings we have in Christ. Dr. B. H. Carroll, whom I quote quite often, calls this the prophetic present and makes it refer to the outcome of the Christian's life and to the blessings he receives at death. He makes it parallel John 14 verses two and three. "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." But in my judgment we should retain the present tense as telling us of the present blessings of Christianity and of the New Covenant already made culminating in eternal glory.

I.

The Mosaic and Christian Dispensations (18-24)

Verses eighteen to twenty-four give us an impressive contrast between the Mosaic and Christian dispensations under the symbolism of two mountains, Sinai and Sion. Sinai stands for the Old Covenant while Sion stands for the New Covenant. We have a parallel to this in Galatians 4 where the two Covenants are represented by two women, Hagar and Sarah. Hagar was said to be mount Sinai or the Law Covenant, which gendereth to bondage, and stood for the present Jerusalem of unbelievers which are in bondage. Sarah stood for the Jerusalem which is above, the mother of us all, that is, all believers. Christians are children of the Covenant represented by Sion. Historically, Sinai was a mountain in Arabia where God gave the law to Israel. It was there He spoke the ten words or ten commandments. It was there the children of Israel were taken into covenant relationship with the Lord as His chosen people. It was there they were constituted a national church spoken of by Stephen in Acts

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7 thirty-eight. Historical Sion was a hill in the city of Jerusalem; originally it was a stronghold of the Jebusites. But David captured it after he had reigned in Hebron seven and a half years. And on this hill David built his palace and made it his capital city. Josephus never speaks of Sion except as the city of David. The name Sion occurs six times in the historical books, and one hundred and forty-eight times in the poetical and prophetic books in the Old Testament and seven times in the New Testament. In many places in the poetical and prophetic books it is used symbolically as the dwelling-place of the Lord. And in our text Sion is called the city of God, the heavenly Jerusalem. It is the spiritual Sion and not the natural Sion. It is a spiritual mount on which the Son of God is enthroned according to the second Psalm. In Revelation 14 one we have the same spiritual Sion on which John saw a Lamb standing, and with him the hundred and forty-four thousand, having His Father's name written in their foreheads. Sion of our text is the counterpart of earthly Sinai and the antitype of earthly Sion.

The Two Covenants

Now in our lesson passage both Sinai and Sion are used symbolically of the two Covenants. The Christian has not come to mount Sinai, that is, to the Old Covenant ministered by angels and mediated by Moses, with its terrifying voice, earthquake, tempest, fire, darkness, and a trumpet so awful that even Moses feared exceedingly and trembled. Believers in Christ have come to mount Sion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem. Here God has fixed His throne on which the spiritual David, David's greater son, reigns now in grace and ultimately in glory. "For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." The character of the revelation given at Sinai indicates the nature of the Law Covenant. Sinai was a mount that might be touched, that is, it was tangible and palpable to the physical senses and so the ceremonialism of the Mosaic dispensation was a religion of externals. In contrast, the gospel dispensation is spiritual and internal. "For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." At Sinai God made blackness and darkness His pavilion. This is an emblem of the types and shadows of the Old Covenant. The way into the presence of God was not made manifest. But now the New Covenant opens a way into the real presence of God. The gospel brings the sinner to God through Jesus Christ. Sion means sunny, and so the gospel revelation is as clear as sunlight. Sinai was a terrifying experience. Lightnings flashed, and thunder rolled, the trumpet gave a weird blast, and the voice of God was terrifying as He spoke the ten words. The people cowered in terror and begged that God might not speak to them any more directly. This suggests the terrifying aspect of the Law Covenant. It is a ministration of death.

"When God of old came down from heaven,
In power and wrath He came.
Before His feet the clouds were riven,
Half darkness and half flame.

"Around the trembling mountain's base,
The prostrate people lay.
A day of wrath and not of grace,
A dim and dreadful day."

The Law and the Gospel

Now the Law Covenant gives a knowledge of sin but does not provide for its removal. But the gospel is a ministration of life and of righteousness. The gospel is good news of a Saviour. At Sinai the people were kept at a distance and so under the Law Covenant everyone is at a guilty distance from God. But in Christ, the mediator of the New Covenant, we are brought nigh to God. At Sinai there was danger. It was death to even touch the mount. This indicates the danger there is under the law. "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." The only source of real danger is the violated law of God. But those who have come to Sion have come to Christ who redeems from the curse of the law. Sin cannot damn the believer because he is not under law but under grace. At Sinai Moses the mediator trembled but on Sion Christ reigns. At Sinai Israel's stay was temporary. They encamped there not longer than a year. And so the Mosaic dispensation was temporary and typical. The types and shadows find their fulfilment in Christ and His kingdom. Sion, the New Covenant, is permanent; it is the "city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." Sinai was in a lonely and silent desert and the Jewish church was cut off from all intercourse with the rest of the world. But Sion's citizens are cosmopolitan and take in the myriads of angels; the church of the firstborn ones, the church militant on earth, with names enrolled in heaven; God the Judge of all; the saints in heaven; and Jesus the mediator of the New Covenant. At Sinai there was no sprinkling of blood when God spoke the ten words but in the gospel of the New Covenant there is the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than the blood of Abel. Abel's blood cried for vengeance against his murderer, but the blood of Christ cries for forgiveness in behalf of His enemies. And even while that Covenant was being ratified in His own blood He cried, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

Christianity the Final Thing

Let us again look at the contrasted statements, "Ye are not come," and "But ye are come". Translating the perfect tense literally, we have, "Ye have not come," and "But ye have come". We have here what might be called the history of the Abrahamic Covenant. The writer is saying to the readers, You have not come to the Sinaitic Covenant to remain there as the final thing. But ye have come to the actual fulfilment of the promise made to Abraham when he was promised a seed in whom all the nations of the earth should be blessed. You have come to mount Sion as a final thing. You have come to mount Sion to remain. Christianity and not Judaism is the fulfilment of the promise made to Abraham. Sinai was only a way-station and not the destination of the Abrahamic Covenant. The law made nothing perfect or complete. It was added because of transgressions until Christ should come. Christianity is the permanent and final order of things in the history of grace. Judaism was typical and all types are of necessity temporary. Judaism was superseded by Christianity. Christianity is sometimes represented as a sort of sandwich between two Jewish dispensations. But I rather think that Judaism was a sandwich between the two aspects of the

covenant of grace. The covenant of promise made by God to Abraham was confirmed before of God in Christ. And the Law Covenant came in four hundred and thirty years later. It came in as a temporary arrangement until Christ the seed of promise should come. The Law Covenant neither cancelled nor fulfilled the promise God made to Abraham. It was only a parenthesis until the introduction of Christianity the permanent and final order of things. The covenant of promise was ratified in the blood of Christ. Believers in Christ are the children of the promise be they Jews or Gentiles. God's chosen people are those redeemed by the blood of Christ and born again by the Holy Spirit. The true circumcision worship God in spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. It is heart circumcision and not circumcision of the flesh that marks one and makes one a child and a real Jew. Believers in Christ are the only children of Abraham in the world today. Children of the flesh are not the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. (Rom. 9:8).

II.

The Final Appeal (25-27)

Now in verses twenty-five to twenty-seven we have the final appeal. "See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven." In olden times God spake on earth by Moses and the prophets. In the Christian dispensation He is speaking from heaven in Christ. This reminds us of what we had in the beginning of the epistle when we read that, "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son." God spake on earth through Moses. He now speaks from heaven through Christ. Moses gave the law; Christ gives us the gospel. If it were dangerous to break the law, it is even more dangerous to spurn the gospel of Jesus Christ. If violators of the law could not escape punishment, much more shall not the spurners of the gospel escape. The greatest of all sins is to despise the blood of the Son of God. The only saving gospel is the gospel of Christ. It is called by several names. It is sometimes called the gospel of God, but that is because it is the gospel of His Son. It is sometimes referred to as the gospel of heaven, but it is the gospel of the heavenly kingdom of Christ. It is called the gospel of peace, but it is the peace that Christ made through the blood of His Cross. There is but one gospel. Paul wrote to the Galatians, "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed."

The Dissolution of Judaism

Now in verse twenty-six we are told that the voice that shook the earth also shook both earth and heaven. The purpose of the shaking is the removal of those things that are shaken so that the things that cannot be shaken may remain. This is a loose and partial quotation from the prophecy of Haggai. To get the meaning of this verse in our text and the quotation from Haggai we must see the design of the apostle in making the quotation. He is enforcing the exhortation in the previous verse not to turn away from Him that speaketh from heaven. And he is still emphasizing the superiority of Christian-

ity over Judaism. He is speaking of the voice of God spoken on two occasions — His voice that shook the earth, and His voice that shook both earth and heaven. His voice that shook the earth was when Judaism was established at Sinai. "But now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven." The promise to shake the earth and heaven was made in Haggai chapter 2 verses six and twenty-one. The promise made through Haggai was fulfilled when the gospel dispensation was established. Many of the commentators make this refer to the dissolution of the material universe in the day of judgment at the second coming of Jesus Christ when the heavens and earth shall pass away according to II Peter chapter 3 verses ten to twelve. But this breaks the continuity of thought and dissociates it from the context. Matthew Henry says, and I quote him, "It is by the gospel from heaven that God shook to pieces the civil and the ecclesiastical state of the Jewish nation and introduced the new state of the church that cannot be removed and shall never be changed for any other on earth but shall remain till it be perfect in heaven." Mr. Pink reminds us that a promise always refers to something good and never to a calamity. And whatever this shaking is it is called a promise. In the dissolution of Judaism and the establishment of Christianity a promise of God according to Haggai was fulfilled. The shaking of the earth had clear reference to the shaking of Sinai. The shaking of both heaven and earth has clear reference to the dissolution of Judaism and the establishment of Christianity on mount Sion. But let us examine a little more closely these words of Haggai. Haggai and Zechariah were the prophets who urged the building of the temple by the Jewish remnant under Ezra and Zerubbabel. The work had begun but they had been hindered by their enemies and the work had stopped and it had been some time since the foundation of the house of God had been laid. And they were excusing themselves by saying that, The time is not come to build the house of the Lord. And so Haggai rebukes them by saying or by asking, "Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your cieled houses, and this house lie waste?" This aroused them to resume the work on the temple. In Haggai the second chapter he comforts the children of Israel. As the work advanced on the house of God it became evident that it was going to be nothing in comparison with the former temple of Solomon and the people were seized with fear that God had deserted them. Then God speaks through Haggai assuring them that His Spirit remained among them. "For thus saith the LORD of hosts; Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the LORD of hosts. The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the LORD of hosts: and in this place will I give peace, saith the LORD of hosts." And then in the twenty-first verse, "I will shake the heavens and the earth; And I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms, and I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the heathen." So with these words Haggai assures the children of Israel that God has not deserted them. The glory of the latter house was to be greater than the former, not in material grandeur but because Christ the desire of all nations would come to that house. It is true that the temple was enlarged and beautified by Herod some three hundred years later

but the original structure was never destroyed. This temple was the visible representation of Judaism and to this temple the Lord Jesus Christ actually came. Now the moveables of Judaism such as the priesthood and the ritual and the sacrifices and the festivals were shaken and removed when Christ came and established Christianity. God promised through Haggai that He would shake the heavens and the earth and shake all nations and overthrow the thrones of kingdoms and this He has done through Jesus Christ. By His death on Calvary Christ has done away with all types and shadows and by the power of His Spirit He has overthrown thrones and kingdoms. Think of the victories of Christianity over the Roman Empire in the early centuries. The kingdom of Christ is the final thing God has for this earth. The blood of Christ has solved the sin question in relation to men and there is to be no other gospel unto the end of time.

III.

The Kingdom of Christ (28-29)

Now at verse twenty-eight we reach the conclusion of the whole matter. "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear." Believers in Christ have received a kingdom. We received this kingdom when we received Jesus Christ as our Saviour and Lord. Christ is a king and a king must have a kingdom. But His kingdom is not of this world (John 18:36). His kingdom is a spiritual kingdom. The Jews rejected Him because He would not be a political king and deliver them from Roman bondage. At one time He perceived that they would try to take Him by force and make a king of Him and He departed into a mountain alone. Christ's kingdom is the heavenly nation of 1 Peter 2 nine, a purchased people called out of darkness into His marvellous light. Christianity is not a type but the antitype. Christianity is the kingdom of Christ. Sometimes it is called the kingdom of God and sometimes it is referred to as the kingdom of heaven but these terms are used interchangeably. Zechariah 9 nine predicts the coming of a king bringing salvation. "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass . . . and he shall speak peace unto the heathen: and his dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth." And in Matthew 21 five, in Luke 19 thirty-eight and John 12 fifteen we are told that our Lord's riding into Jerusalem on an ass was the fulfilment of this prophecy of Zechariah. How different was His entry as a king from that of earthly kings! What a contrast was His ass from the prancing horses and magnificent chariots of earthly kings! The Lord of Glory disdained such things as are highly esteemed among men. There are two kingdoms in this world, the kingdom of Satan and the kingdom of God. Prior to the coming of Jesus Christ, the kingdom of God on earth was represented by Judaism. But in Matthew 21 forty-three Christ tells the Jews that the kingdom of God will be taken from them and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. That nation is Christianity, the New Covenant community, which in 1 Peter 2 nine is called "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people." In Colossians 1 thirteen we read of the Father who hath delivered us from darkness and translated us into the kingdom of

His dear Son. According to Revelation 1 six Christ who loveth us and loosed us from our sins in His own blood hath also made us a kingdom of priests unto God His Father. In Revelation 1 nine the kingdom of Christ existed in the days of John and he was in it. The moral portraits of those in the kingdom of heaven are found in the beatitudes. In the first one we read, "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven." And in the eighth we read, "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for their's is the kingdom of heaven." The reign of Christ has a twofold application. He reigns graciously over His chosen people and He also reigns as a moral governor over the whole world. Mr. Pink has a very helpful word here. He says, and I quote, "The kingdom of Christ as it is spiritual and inward is peculiar to the elect but His kingdom as it is judicial and outward is universal. The two things are distinguished in the second Psalm. "Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion." (v. 6). And, "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." (v. 8). Then in verse nine, "Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." Christ is the king of saints and He is also king of nations. So in coming to Christ we also come to Zion and receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken. That is, we come to the New Covenant community of cosmopolitans, a redeemed humanity from all nations and tongues and people. Those who reject Christ remain at Sinai the mount of fear and destruction.

No Hope in Keeping the Law

"For our God is a consuming fire." There is no hope for anybody in keeping the law for the law requires perfect and continual obedience to all that is written in the book of the law. The law says it is not the hearers of the law but the doers of it that shall be justified. The law commands but gives nothing. Sinai is a dangerous place but the voice from Zion speaks in the sweet accents of the gospel of grace. The gospel tells us that Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law by being made a curse for us. The law demands everything and gives nothing while the gospel gives everything for nothing. What a contrast between Sinai and Zion! "Therefore, let us have grace, or as some render it, let us be grateful, that we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: For our God is a consuming fire." And those who reject the gospel of Jesus Christ will face worse punishment than those who broke the law of Moses for the most terrible sin of all is to despise the blood of Jesus Christ.

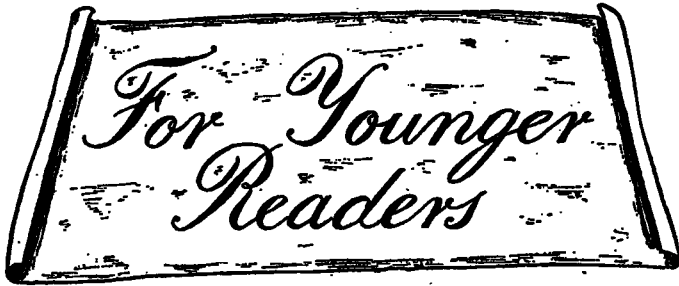
"Zion's King shall reign victorious,
All the earth shall own His sway;
He will make His kingdom glorious,
He will reign through endless day.
Mighty King, Thine arm revealing,
Now Thy glorious cause maintain.

MY COVENANT DOLLAR-A-MONTH CLUB

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UBALDO — A SOUTH AMERICAN BOY

Ubaldo was a little fellow about five years old when his father called me aside one sunny morning at the beginning of the school term. He was a policeman and having just helped some of the "chicos" of the Escuela Evangelica (evangelical school) to get safely across the street, turning to me he remarked, "I want my little boy, Ubaldo, to go to your school." This was quite a surprise because he had never shown any interest in the Gospel. Also our little mission school is mainly for the children of the believers who find it difficult to attend the public schools since those who fail to attend Mass on Sunday are beaten regularly on Monday. Thinking that perhaps he didn't understand, I explained that his son was young, school had already started, classes were full, and above all the Bible was taught daily. He still insisted, saying he had watched the children as they passed him on the street, and being pleased with their actions wanted Ubaldo to "go to our school".

After much persistence, room was made for Ubaldo. We wondered if he would soon drop out. But he fooled us. He went to the top of his group, and above all, in a few short weeks came to know the Lord Jesus Christ as his personal Saviour, making a definite public confession of his faith. Naturally his little life was changed, to the extent that his father called me aside again. "I don't know how to explain it," he said, "but Ubaldo is different. Formerly we had to punish him to make him do things around the house, but now he does them without even being told."

His mother, on the other hand, became perturbed and demanded of her husband that Ubaldo be taken out of school. Little Ubaldo realized that he would have to do as he was told, but made a last try, telling his mother that he liked the school, the teachers, his studies and all of his school mates. "Mother, come with me just once to Sunday School and meet some of them before you make me stop." His mother met the bargain — she'd attend the Sunday School, but then he'd have to leave the school. Ubaldo was fairly confident, and smilingly led his mother to the service. She found that she liked it, and a few days later sent her husband to buy a hymn book, and in a short time bought herself a Bible. In the course of a few more weeks she, too, came to know the joys of redemption in accepting Christ as her all sufficient Saviour.

The father stopped me more often from then on to tell me not only of the improvements in his son, but how happy his wife was as well. She wanted him to attend the services, but he confided, "I'm scared I'll lose my job on the traffic force if I'm seen at the Mission." After a few months of persuasion, he finally agreed to attend a meeting if he were met at the corner and accompanied. At the appointed time he was there, but he had left his

badge and cap and anything else that would identify him in the corner store. We slipped down the dark side of the street, and then sat behind a post. He was miserable but satisfied, and promised to come back. The next week the operation was repeated. The third week he came alone. Shortly he was standing at the door to welcome others. Since he found rest and peace through his faith in the shed blood of our Saviour Jesus Christ, he didn't care who saw him.

Just before leaving for our furlough, we snapped their picture. "Why," he asked, "do you want it?" I was glad to explain it was to show to friends at home who had been praying for them and other new believers in Christ — to show them the fruits of their labor, so they might pray more intelligently. He responded I would need to take another picture because two of his sisters-in-law had also accepted Christ as their Saviour. Since being home, we have received two notes concerning them. One stated that the grandmother and another sister had also received their Saviour. The other tells of a brother of the policeman who came to visit and was so taken by the testimony of Ubaldo and the whole family that he requested someone to go back to his town to tell them the Good News of Salvation.

—G.J.H. of the Latin American Mission

NUN APPEALS TO POPE — COURT REJECTS CLAIM

London, Nov. 15 — (UP) — A penniless nun planned today to appeal to the Pope against a British court's rejection of her claim for damages from her Mother Superior and a nursing home on the ground they falsely imprisoned her. Sister Priscilla, 57, whose real name is Margaret McCann, said she had twice written Pope Pius XII, but "I don't know if my letters ever got there."

"This time I shall try to arrange for the appeal to be taken to him personally by a priest," she said. "I will go on fighting."

The suit is believed to be the first case in which a nun has brought an action in an English court.

Sister Priscilla charged that she had been assaulted and imprisoned by Mother Plauscidus, local superior of the Order of the Poor Sisters of Nazareth at Hammersmith. She further charged she was imprisoned and assaulted at St. Joseph's Nursing Home, whose trustees include Bernard Cardinal Griffin, Catholic primate of England.

The jury rejected all the charges.

—Toronto Star, November 15, 1955.

VAGUE AND FALTERING PREACHING

A Christianity which does not begin with the proclamation of forgiveness is impotent. Again, a Christianity which does not base forgiveness on Christ's sacrifice is impotent, also. The history of the Church shows that preachers and teachers and churches that do not know what to say when a poor soul comes to them and asks, "What must I do to be saved?" are of no use, or next to none. The man, in whom the devils are, says to such maimed representations of the Gospel, "Jesus I know, and Paul I know, but who are ye?" and leaps upon them, and overcomes them. The whole experience of the past demonstrates that. And so one laments the vagueness and the faltering in proclaiming this truth so common in this day. Brethren, I, for my part, believe that the only type of Christianity which will win men's hearts is that modelled on the pattern of the New Testament teaching which begins with the fact of sin, and, having dealt with that, then goes on to bestow all other blessings.

—ALEXANDER MACLAREN

Bible School Lesson Outline

Vol. 19 Fourth Quarter Lesson 9 November 27, 1955

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

THE BELIEVER'S EXAMPLE

Lesson Text: Philippians 2:1-16.

Golden Text: "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."—Philippians 2:5.

Introduction to the Epistle:

The Epistle of Paul to the Philippians, along with Ephesians and Colossians, belongs to the group called Prison Epistles, which were written from Rome about 64 A.D. during his first imprisonment. The Apostle looked upon the believers in Philippi with great affection, for the Lord had used him mightily in their midst, and on their part, they had entered with him into many experiences of joy and sorrow, as together they had laboured in the Gospel.

The ancient city of Philippi, situated in Macedonia on the Thracian border, was founded about 350 B.C. and named by Philip of Macedon, the father of Alexander the Great. It was a strong military centre when Macedon was captured by the Romans, who established it as a Roman Colony. Philippi was the first place in Europe to receive the Gospel message through the Apostle Paul, and the blessing which accompanied his ministry there must have encouraged him to continued obedience to the Holy Spirit (Acts 16). The present site still bears the name of Philippi, although the ancient city lies in ruins.

This Epistle is called the Epistle of Joy. In spite of the adverse circumstances of the Apostle's captivity, the letter is pervaded by a spirit of faith, courage and triumph. It is also an Epistle of Love. It was not written to correct any errors in doctrine or conduct, but rather to exhort the believers to live in a manner befitting their Christian profession and experience, as they had already been doing. Read the Epistle carefully and prayerfully.

Analysis of the Epistle:

- I. Life in Christ: chapter 1.
- II. Perfection in Christ: chapter 2.
- III. Hope in Christ: chapter 3.
- IV. Peace in Christ: chapter 4.

I. The Example of Humility Given: verses 1-11.

True unity of soul among believers is possible only where there is love, understanding and sympathy; where there is heavenly consolation in Christ (2 Cor. 1:3-5), comfort in earthly love (2 Cor. 7:6, 7), fellowship in the Spirit (2 Cor. 13:14), compassion and tenderness. Complete uniformity is not possible or desirable, since the Lord has made each individual to differ from his fellows, but harmony of mind and spirit is gloriously possible for those who are one in Christ Jesus (1 Cor. 12:1, 2; Eph. 4:1-6).

Where such loving unity abounds there will be no bitter hatred, rivalry or selfish contention, but all things will be done in the spirit of humility and self-sacrifice, with due regard to the good of others (Rom. 12:10-16; 15:2).

Such humility finds its only perfect exemplification in the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, especially in His incarnation and His vicarious death. Although existing from all eternity as God (John 1:1, 2; 17:5; Col. 1:15; Heb. 1:3), He did not think that the high associations of His Deity were to be tightly grasped (John 5:18; 10:33), but He was willing to come to earth as Man (John 10:15-18; Heb. 9:14, 26-28; 10:7), emptying Himself of the habiliments of glory and Deity, although there never was a time when He ceased to be God. He stooped to become the suffering Servant of Jehovah, taking upon Himself the likeness of human flesh, being born of a woman (Rom. 8:3; Gal. 4:4; Heb. 2:16-18). Christ was born to die (Heb. 2:14), and although sinless in Himself, bore our sins in His own body on the tree (2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 9:28; 1 Pet. 2:21-24), becoming the obedient, silent and suffering Lamb of God (Isa. 53). On the cross He died, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God (1 Pet. 3:18). Unbelievers may consent to count Christ as their Example, and His life is held to be such (1 Cor. 11:1; Eph. 5:1; 1 Pet. 2:21), but He is much more than our Example; He is our Saviour and our God!

For Christ and for His followers the path of suffering leads to the throne of glory; after the cross comes the crown (Luke 24:26; Heb. 2:9). God, who first laid upon Christ the iniquity of us all, afterward honoured His beloved Son (Acts 5:30, 31). The name of Christ Jesus is exalted high above that of angels or men (Eph. 1:21; Heb. 1:4); at the mention of His name all the inhabitants of earth and heaven must ultimately bow (Isa. 45:23), voluntarily as to their Redeemer and Saviour (Rev. 5:11-14), or involuntarily as to their Lord and Judge (Rev. 20:11-15).

II. The Example of Humility Followed: verses 12-16.

The humility of the Saviour and His exaltation offer encouragement to those who would follow in His steps. Having this in mind, the Philippians will more likely continue steadfastly in the Christian life, walking in obedience to the will of the Lord, as revealed in the life of Christ and His Word. The Apostle will be absent from them, but the Saviour will always be present.

With earnest and trembling anxiety lest they should in any way bring reproach upon the sacred name they bear, let the Christians cultivate their own spiritual lives, not in their own strength, but energized by the power of the Holy Spirit, the same Holy Spirit who imparted to them that regenerated nature (2 Pet. 1:1-12). Let Him have His way and He will inspire them to desire the will of God, and will empower them to do it (Rom. 7:18; 1 Cor. 15:10; Phil. 4:13; Heb. 13:20, 21). This verse (verse 12) is sometimes mistakenly interpreted as teaching that a man can be saved by his own efforts, which would be contrary to the plain teaching of Scripture (Eph. 2:4-10; Jas. 1:18).

If the Philippians follow the example of their Lord, they, too, will be humble before God and will not complain, murmur or rebel against His dealings with them (1 Cor. 10:10), but will be submissive and trustful. This is more important in view of the sin and corruption of the world. As Christ is the light of the world (John 1:4, 9; 8:12; 9:5), so does He desire that His followers should shine as luminaries in a dark world (Matt. 5:14-16; 1 Pet. 2:12), to be just in the midst of all its crookedness (Acts 2:40), and to be obedient in the midst of all its perverseness (2 Tim. 3:1-13; 4:3, 4). The Lord will supply the light, but He asks His disciples to be as lampstands to hold the light aloft (Rev. 2:5). The Word of God is both light and life (Psa. 119:105; John 6:63).

If the Philippians should continue steadfast in the faith, they would be a crown of rejoicing to the Apostle in that day when He would present them to the Lord as trophies of His grace (Col. 1:28; 1 Thess. 2:19, 20). Their lives would witness to the fact that his testimony among them had not been in vain.

Daily Bible Readings

Nov. 21—Example in Meekness	Matt. 11:25-30
Nov. 22—Example in Humility	John 13:1-20
Nov. 23—Example in Love	Eph. 4:25-32; 5:1, 2
Nov. 24—Example in Obedience	1 Pet. 3:15-22
Nov. 25—Example in Suffering	1 Pet. 2:21-25
Nov. 26—Example for the Believer-Priest	Heb. 5:1-10
Nov. 27—Example for the Believer's Faith	Heb. 11:32-40; 12:1-3

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