

NEW FILE

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A FATAL SEPARATION

MUCH of the Christian life consists in preserving the balance of truth. It is very easy for the believer to go to one extreme or another and to emphasize some aspect of Christian belief or behaviour to the exclusion or near exclusion of another equally important part of the divine revelation. How important it is for our own spiritual welfare that we submit to the whole counsel of God and not merely to those parts that attract our fancies.

This principle is well illustrated by reference to the small book of Jude. In the opening verses, we are told that Christians "*should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.*" A balancing truth is presented near the conclusion of the same epistle as the writer exhorts — "But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, *keep yourselves in the love of God*, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life." Within the compass of one short Biblical book we note these two truths of equal importance. He who seeks, by God's grace, to obey both will find a balance in his spiritual life but he who thinks he follows one and at the same time despises the other will find a whole area of experience which is barren and unfruitful.

"Contend For the Faith!"

Let us note this first declaration. As Jude searched his vocabulary to discover a word to describe this aspect of the believer's life, he turns to the athletic contests of the day and in the strenuous efforts of the competitors he discovers a figure to describe our devotion to the gospel. All of our energies, talents and gifts are to be employed unreservedly in a holy warfare for the great truths of the gospel of grace.

Early in the history of the faith certain teachers had surreptitiously come into the midst of the churches and had endeavoured to sabotage the faith. Jude sternly and lovingly warns against these fifth columnists and exhorts believers to be on guard against such invaders. He advocates no "kid glove" methods or temporizing! The warning and exhortation which were sent to the Christians of apostolic times are applicable today and have been preserved by the Holy Spirit in the Word of God

in order that we may be instructed and guided thereby. Against error even though it masquerade in Christian garb, the believer wages an unrelenting warfare. Pacifism in this regard is a sure indication of cowardice.

How carefully we must walk and contend! It is so easy to acquire a contentious spirit and to be devoid of love toward God and love for the souls of men. It is just for this reason that the Word cautions Christian soldiers to "keep yourselves in the love of God". If we stand up for the gospel merely that we might have another occasion to exhibit a carnal, culpable and nasty disposition, then we become as a "sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal." Our spiritual thinking has become unbalanced and we may find that we are disqualified for real service.

"Keep Yourselves in the Love of God!"

At the conclusion of his epistle Jude presents this balancing truth to the exhortation to contend for the faith. Christians are told to "keep themselves in the love of God". This refers to our obligation to walk, speak and act within the sphere of the love of God. Our very behaviour then will indicate that we are the privileged recipients of a divine love which manifests itself in our whole being.

This note is often sounded in the New Testament and needs to be sounded today. One indication that we are in the love of God is in our love for the brethren. The Lord Jesus declared — "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." Again, the apostle Paul declares that the love of Christ is our great motive in service — "the love of Christ constraineth us." Whenever a Christian finds himself in a position where he acts apart from this love of God and an accompanying love for the souls of men, he is apt to be disqualified for service.

Once more, however, there is a balance to this truth. That balance, of course, is found in the first exhortation that we noted — "contend for the faith". Some brethren are so much intrigued by what they conceive as "love" or "charity" that they refuse to heed the exhortation to contend for the gospel. With lofty piety, they would see all who follow the Lord in this regard as "heresy

hunters" or "trouble-makers". This assumed spirituality which would prompt them to obey one command and disobey another is certainly no indication of an excessive degree of sanctification. Again it reflects a lack of balance.

In one phrase, the apostle Paul presents the balance of truth in this regard — "speaking the truth in love" (Eph. 4:15). Interpreted in their full sense, these words caution believers to seek for a balance in the Christian walk. "What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder!"

Dr. Slade to Visit Australia

AUSTRALIA will be the scene of what could prove to be a decisive meeting between the forces of organized modernism and evangelicalism. Some top representatives of the modernist-controlled World Council of Churches are scheduled to speak on behalf of the ecumenical movement. To take up the challenge to the faith, the International Council of Christian Churches and its affiliate, the Bible Union of Australia, will sponsor a series of great rallies in order to acquaint Christians with the real issues of the hour.

Included in the modernist delegation are Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam, an outspoken unbeliever in the historic Christian faith; Prof. Josef L. Hromadka, who has received various awards from his Czech Communist government; and Dr. O. Fredrick Nolde who presided at the recent Festival of Faith in San Francisco when prayers were offered by representatives of the Confucian, Hindu, Buddhist and "Christian" faiths!

The evangelical party, sponsored by the I.C.C.C., includes Dr. Carl McIntire, the president of the Council; Dr. Kenneth R. Kinney, first vice-president; Burgomaster A. Warnaar of Amsterdam, the general secretary; Rev. Antonio Ormeo of the Philippines who is president of the Far Eastern Council of Christian Churches, and Rev. Timothy Tow of Singapore who is the vice-president of the Far Eastern Council. Representing Canada, as the vice-president of the I.C.C.C., will be Dr. H. C. Slade of Jarvis Street Baptist Church. Dr. Slade will send regular cable reports to THE GOSPEL WITNESS in order that our readers may be acquainted with the progress of the work there. The party will leave New York on January 23.

It was in 1949 that Dr. Shields, who was Dr. Slade's predecessor as pastor of Jarvis Street Church visited Australia on behalf of the I.C.C.C. Within seven years two opportunities have thus been presented to the evangelical forces to present the issues that Christians may be alerted. We would urge our readers and friends in Australia to watch their newspapers for notices of these meetings. If Dr. Slade should speak in your area, he would be happy to meet GOSPEL WITNESS family members. Let all join in prayer for the safety of the party and for the blessing of the Lord upon its labours.

Is it not the most subtle temptation that comes to the preacher that he allow himself to be played upon by some other spirit than the Paraclete?—the popular desire for eloquence, for humor, for entertainment, for wit, and originality, moving him before he is aware, to speak for the applause of men rather than for the approval of Christ.

—A. J. GORDON

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and

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GOD — AN INTERNATIONAL "COMMON DENOMINATOR"!

A Toronto church, which last year instituted Sunday evening forums in order to boost a dwindling attendance, has come up with a new attendance gimmick. A "question and answer" program has been initiated as another desperate attempt to lure men back to the church. The local papers have given this endeavour more space than the attendances would warrant for on two successive Mondays now we have read of attendances of 50 and 75 in a church that seats 1,100! The intrepid preacher seeks to answer questions on such diverse subjects as the marriage of movie stars, juvenile delinquency, the recent Brinks robbery and the effect of television.

The Globe and Mail reports one startling answer to a current question:

Q: Do you think any good will come of the visit to Canada of the Russian churchmen?

A: A lot of good may come from it since all nations have a common denominator in God and His teachings which overshadow all national boundaries.

We do not wonder that this church goes begging for a Sunday evening congregation if such unadulterated nonsense is being dished out in the name of religion. Surely this is a low concept of the Christian gospel. We have a question that we might submit to this church quiz show: "Why do the people even bother to attend the morning service if such unscriptural teaching is the diet?"

The Jarvis Street Pulpit

The Biblical Blueprint of the Church

A Sermon by Dr. T. T. Shields

Preached in Jarvis Street Church, Toronto, Sunday Morning, June 30, 1929

(Stenographically Reported)

"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

—Revelation 2:7.

Prayer Before the Sermon

With thanksgiving and rejoicing of heart, O Lord, we have come into Thy house this morning. We are deeply aware that we have no sacrifice of our own to bring, no gifts to present to Thee which Thou canst accept; yet we delight to remember that there is One Who stands in our place before the throne; Who makes intercession for us; and Who, because He ever liveth so to do, is able to save forevermore all who come unto God by Him. We come this morning desiring to worship Thee, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and we present to Thee our worship, the adoration of our hearts, the love and devotion of renewed spirits in the name of Him Who is our Representative in Thy presence.

We thank Thee, O Lord, though our sins and iniquities have separated between us and our God, that the terrible separation has been ended, and we who sometime were afar off have been made nigh by the blood of Christ. Help us to rejoice in this more than we have ever done before. In spite of our sinfulness, in spite of our inherent weaknesses, in spite of all our waywardness, we rejoice in Him Who is able to have compassion upon the ignorant, and upon those who are out of the way. We thank Thee this morning hour that it is the privilege of every blood-bought soul, of every one who has been begotten by the Holy Ghost and made a new creature in Christ, to come with boldness to the throne of grace, to find grace to help in time of need.

Look upon us this morning; grant, we beseech Thee, that every one in Thy presence may be enriched out of Thy treasure-houses. There is not a boy or girl here who does not need Thee, there is not a man or woman who is not in urgent need of the ministry of Thy Spirit. We beseech Thee, therefore, to make us aware of Thy presence, to fit us for the duties of the days to come, to strengthen us as we go back into the battle; as we meet with those who have no knowledge of Christ, who have no interest in spiritual things; as we must needs associate with those whose influence would drag us down. Though Thou dost not take us out of the world, Thou hast prayed that we may be kept from the evil one. We pray therefore that every child of Thine in Thy presence may be preserved unspotted from the world, and enabled daily to walk in fellowship with Thee.

Look upon this church family, we pray Thee, and out of Thy fulness do Thou supply us all. Some are away on a journey; be with them, we beseech Thee. Some of them have gone to find rest and refreshment in vacation; we pray that they may not be forgetful of the Lord. We pray Thee to preserve from accident those who may be exposed to danger. Especially would we commend to Thee those whose duty will keep them from the sanctuary to-day, whether in the sick room, or in some lawful and necessary occupation. Be gracious to every one.

And now as we come to the study of Thy Word, open it to our understanding. Grant that we may be edified by Thy truth, and that we may be enabled by Thy grace to yield ourselves to its sanctifying power. We desire to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We desire it shall not be said of us that when we ought to be teachers we have need that some should teach us again the first principles of the oracles of God. Help us

that we may go on with God, and follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth, growing up into Christ in all things, ceasing to be babes, becoming men and women in Christ, strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might. Lord, grant it to us; and do Thou speak to us, we beseech Thee, and glorify Thyself in this service for Jesus Christ's sake, Amen.

WE SHALL turn this morning to the book of Revelation. I select a text not with a view to an exact exposition of the text and its context, but for the sake of the principle therein contained. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

There is no truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ which the enemy of our souls does not endeavour to pervert, and to turn to His own evil uses. There is no doctrine of grace that has not been used of the devil to accomplish his purposes. This morning I should like to speak for a little while about the Scriptural doctrine of the church, a very simple and practical word for believers in the Lord Jesus Christ.

There is a conception abroad that the church of the New Testament is a great body highly organized and centrally controlled. We have heard a great deal of late years about Union, and "union" seems to be in the air. I attended in years past several meetings of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, and some meetings of various conferences of the Methodist Church as it then was; and I heard speaker after speaker quote from the seventeenth chapter of John and insist that this movement toward organic union of all denominations was to be the answer to the high priestly prayer — they did not call it the high priestly prayer — but to the prayer of Christ in the seventeenth chapter of John, "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us." And yet that whole conception of the church surely is far removed from the exalted spiritual ideal represented in the seventeenth chapter of John. Our Lord was not praying for an external organic union, effected by act of Parliament; He was praying surely that all true believers should be so vitally related to Himself that they should be as one body, deriving its life from Him Who is the exalted head.

The idea embodied, for example — and I do not say it in any offensive way — the idea embodied and worked out in the United Church of Canada certainly has absolutely no warrant at all in the Word of God. The idea of a great organization with many officers ruling from the top, a central hierarchy dominating the whole people of God, is not the New Testament conception of the

church. That is essentially, in principle, the same as the Roman Catholic view. How different is the simple New Testament conception!

But from that view of a centrally-governed body there is a reaction to another extreme, and you find certain people decrying the church. All the churches are wrong! Many of them are, and they are certainly all far from being perfect; but those who thus belittle the church do violence to the Scripture. I desire to try to show you this morning that *the church, the local body of redeemed people, is a divine institution; and that it is God's chosen instrument for the doing of His work in the world.*

We talk a great deal about Modernism in our day, and when we refer to that we, very often, and perhaps generally, refer to the theological aspect of it; that is to say: its view of God, and of the Word, and of man's relation to God, the doctrine about God. Surely it is wrong enough, but Modernism, in its theological aspect could not exist in any denomination on the American Continent for six months if there were not side by side with it an ecclesiological error, I mean a false view of the church. Baptists formerly believed in the autonomy, the absolute independence, of the local church. They believed that it was a body of regenerated people under the direction of the Holy Ghost, doing God's work in the world. But we have seen in our own provinces of Ontario and Québec, these supposedly independent bodies fused and brought together, and made subject to a little official group, in order that they might use the whole body for the support of error in the University. I think it is just as important that we should have clear scriptural views of the church, in other words, that we should be right in our ecclesiology, the doctrine of the church — it is just as important that we should be right in that respect as that we should found our convictions of truth respecting God and redemption upon the teachings of the Word of God.

I.

Let us consider this subject for a few minutes, and I begin by saying that it is manifest from the Scripture that **THE LOCAL CHURCH IS A DIVINE INSTITUTION**, that it is the plan and purpose of God that believers should be gathered together in a local assembly like, for example, Jarvis Street Baptist Church. They did so at Jerusalem. There were but one hundred and twenty of them first of all; but when at Pentecost three thousand were saved, they were baptized, and they were added to the number of the disciples. They were not baptized to run at large, to go here and there and everywhere, without relation to each other; but all who were baptized, by that very fact, by that outward confession of faith, were added to the number of the disciples, and were reckoned as part of that body of redeemed people in Jerusalem; and thereafter you find that company spoken of as "the church which was at Jerusalem". There was formed on the day of Pentecost, beyond any doubt, the First Baptist Church of Jerusalem.

I have no doubt that it was a Baptist church, because, first of all, no one was admitted who did not believe in the Lord Jesus Christ; and when they believed they were baptized, and then were admitted to membership. No one came into the membership of that church until he was baptized, and after such believers were baptized "they continued in the apostles' doctrine" or teaching. They came together to hear the Word of God: They met frequently, not once a week, but somewhere they met daily,

and they continued learning more and more about the things of God from the apostles who were their fathers in the faith. And they continued in the fellowship one of the other, and in breaking of bread, the observance of the ordinance.

Will you mark this, please, that there is nowhere in the Scripture a single suggestion, by explicit teaching or by implication, that anyone did ever come to the Table of the Lord who had not first of all been baptized. Never! Baptism preceded the Lord's Supper. Set on the threshold of the Christian life, it was the first command to those who believed. When they trusted Christ they were baptized, making confession of their faith; and there is nothing more unscriptural than to put the Lord's Supper before baptism. You cannot possibly do it unless you turn aside from the teaching of Scripture. Believers in that early day were gathered into the church at Jerusalem, and everyone who believes to-day, after faith and upon confession of faith, ought to be baptized; and ought thereby to be added to some local company of believers; and ought thereafter to continue in the teaching and in the fellowship and in the regular observance of the ordinance which commemorates the death of our Lord. That is the programme so far as the church itself is concerned.

—When the book of Revelation was written certain messages were addressed, not to the Christian Church at large, but to the church at Ephesus, to the church at Thyatira, at Pergamos, at Philadelphia, and so on; and in each epistle it is said, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith" — not to the church but "unto the churches". The church is a local body. There was one church at Ephesus, another at Thyatira, another at Pergamos, another at Laodicea, and so on; but they were separate and distinct churches. You will find, if you read the story of the apostolic ministry, that wherever the apostles evangelized when they preached the gospel and people were converted, they established in that place, a church. You have the church at Corinth, and the church at Philippi, and the church at Antioch. The epistle to the Galatians is written to the churches, not to the church, not to one big body, but to "the churches at Galatia". Each body of believers was a separate, self-governing body.

I want you young people clearly to understand that here in Jarvis Street church, while we associate with other churches and co-operate with other churches, this church under God is a law unto itself. It governs its own affairs. When this church comes together as a church to do business, and reaches a decision, that is final; there is no assembly over us to tell us what we shall do. There is no conference to come in and dictate to us. If there had been, in respect to this church, those of us who are here now would not have been here at all.

I met a Presbyterian minister out at the coast. He believed in the Book. I think he was wrong in some things, but in the main he was sound. He believed the Book, and he preached salvation through the blood. He asked me to preach for him, and I did. And he said to me, "I have got this congregation with me. These people stand where I stand in respect to this matter. But we are not independent; the Presbytery can come in and upset everything; and the difficulty is that the Presbytery does not stand where we stand." "Well," I said, "I am sorry for you, but if you were a Baptist, a real

Baptist, you would not be bothered with a Presbytery or anyone else over you; and when your own congregation, as believers in Christ, had settled their affairs you could say to all the rest of the world, 'Mind your own business!' " We recognize but one Head, Jesus Christ, the Head of the church. We seek to do His will under the administration of the Holy Ghost, in accord with the principles of the Book, and we are not governed by anyone outside of ourselves. And I insist that there is nothing more important in our day than that groups of believers, whether they be small or large, should keep themselves absolutely free from any extra-church government, so that they can govern themselves.

In the new Union, while we co-operate one with the other, we must ever be careful to see to it that no official, or company of officials, or any Board, will ever come into any church and dare to say to that church what they ought to do. That church must attend to its own affairs, under God. That was the New Testament practice beyond any doubt.

I want to point out, too, that that principle is designed to meet the requirements of a body of spiritual people. If you have a company, whether it be twenty or twenty hundred people, who love the Lord, who obey His Word, and who are subject to the authority of that Word, you will have no difficulty whatever in managing a church. But if there be no spiritual life, then an individual congregation is likely to crumble at last, and go to pieces — and it deserves to do so. I have no wires in my body. My arms are pretty firmly attached, and they do the work they are intended to do. As long as there is life, as long as my body is an organism, I do not need to be wired together, do I? But when life departs the body crumbles, and you have but a heap of ashes.

Now a church, a local church, is not an organization at all, it is intended to be a living organism, possessed by the Spirit of God; and as long as it is possessed by the Spirit of God, the arm will have its proper place in the body, so will the eye, and so will the ear. Read the twelfth chapter of first Corinthians, and you will see the figure the apostle there employs. All these members are put in the church by the Spirit of God, and they have their separate and complementary functions to perform.

II.

I shall give you SEVERAL OBVIOUS REASONS FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CHURCH. Why did the Lord establish local churches? Why did He ordain that when an individual man or woman, boy or girl, is converted, that that person should be related to other persons? Why did He not let that one go at large saying, "I have been baptized, but I am not going to join the church. I will not belong anywhere, I will be in no church." Why did He not do that? The most helpless creature of all creatures at birth is a human infant. A new-born babe is utterly helpless. It must have parental ministry or the ministry of a mature person, or it dies. In the animal creation most of the young are able to help themselves almost from birth; but the human infant is absolutely dependent upon someone's care, or it dies. That is why God established the family. That is what the family is for, in order that children may be cared for, nourished, trained.

The church is a divine institution, and is instituted for exactly the same reason: that spiritual babes should have the profit of the experience and help of other Christians.

"They continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine." Conversion is the beginning of the Christian life, but it is only the beginning. It is the new birth, it is the coming into the family. But after that, the young believer needs to be taught, instructed in the things of God; and that is what a church is for. The church was not established to teach young people to play baseball or basketball or tennis. I am not saying that there is necessarily any evil in these things, but that it is not the church's business to teach them: the church's business is to provide instruction for new-born babes. A preacher ought not to be the writer of essays: his business, in season and out of season, is openly to declare the great principles of the gospel so that the people who wait upon his ministry may receive the truth line upon line, precept upon precept, and be firmly grounded in the gospel.

Sometimes the preacher may feel that he is not getting much done. I have often felt that after I have tried to explain to you some great truth of the gospel. Supposing after I give an invitation and a few come forward, is that the measure of the church's usefulness, or the real result of that service?

I got a letter the other day from an ordination council, that filled me with gladness. They had heard one of our own young men give an account of himself at his ordination. A great many of these men had been at other ordination councils, and they had come into touch with a number of young men from Jarvis Street Church; and they said, "Wherever we meet them they know the Book; they are grounded and established in the great truths of the gospel." Well, that is what I should like to be sure of. Long after I have ceased to preach, I should like to believe that there would be a great army of young people here in this land, and in the uttermost parts of the earth, sounding out the word of life, who will be able to say, "I remember I heard that from Jarvis Street pulpit. The man who taught me has been gone these many years, but his ministry abides in my life." I can scarcely open my Bible without hearing the one who was my pastor, the only pastor I ever had, my own father, the greatest theologian I ever knew; if I know anything at all I learned it from him — but as I turn these pages I remember the things he said. I remember what he taught me when I was a little boy.

Ah, it is something to have a church where people can receive the doctrine of the gospel. "They continued in the apostles' doctrine." And I want to lay that upon your hearts, particularly you young people. We come together here from time to time, not merely to be entertained, but to learn the Word of God, to receive something that will abide with us for the rest of time and through all eternity. That is why the church was established.

We ought to have fellowship with the saints. I remember a man's writing to me years ago, a member of this church, saying something to this effect: "My family have no future in Jarvis Street Church. All their associations and friendships are formed outside of Jarvis Street Church." The whole tone of the letter was to the effect that the people of this church, in the main were not well enough off and did not occupy a position sufficiently exalted to afford proper companionships for the members of that important family!

Personally, I have had the sweetest fellowship in the world with men and women who knew only the Lord Jesus. I do not care what a man's social position is, the

church is a place of fellowship, and within these walls there must be no social difference. You tell me you are a University graduate? No, you are not; you are just a poor, wretched, sinner saved by grace. Or some other man may think that he has attained to some position in life, he has prospered in business; and is therefore entitled to some recognition. I want to tell you, my friends, that within these walls we do not care what your business is, so long as it is legitimate. Here you are just a sinner who has been washed in the blood of Christ, and made a child of God; and we must continue in fellowship with one another.

You young people should form your friendships among the people of God. Young men and young women who get away from God and go astray almost invariably are led astray by ungodly companions. I sometimes am asked to perform marriage ceremonies in which I have no delight whatever. Young men ought to find their wives in the church. Young women ought to find their husbands among God's people; and whenever a young man keeps company with a young girl who is not a Christian, or a young girl with a young man who is not a Christian, they are laying up trouble for themselves. It is contrary to Scripture: "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers." We ought to find all our fellowships in the Christian church, among those who believe as we believe, and who love the same things.

Then it is our privilege to come to the Table of the Lord. Let me talk particularly to you Jarvis Street members for a minute. There is not a single member of this church who has not been baptized. You could not be a member of this church without baptism. Why? Because it is plainly enjoined in the Word of God, and we abide by the Word. Baptism always preceded church membership in the New Testament, and by that they were added to the company of believers. The ordinance of the Lord's Supper is just as much a command of Jesus Christ as the ordinance of baptism. We are to be baptized once; we are to remember the Lord's death as frequently as opportunity may present itself. If you are walking in fellowship with God you will want to remember the Lord's death. As I view it, the ordinance of the Supper was observed by the local church, it was a church ordinance properly; and every church member ought regularly to come to the Table of the Lord. If they do not come, it is an indication of spiritual decline always.

Then I believe the church is necessary for mutual discipline too. There was a terrible case in the papers the other day. My heart was moved, and yet I should be the last to criticize the severity of the penalty. But that poor boy, of which we read, never had the care of a father and mother; he had no one to tell him how to live. He was knocked about from pillar to post, with no home discipline, no family life. What a pity! He got into trouble time after time, and then at last was sent to the penitentiary for four or six years. What a tragedy! Why? Mainly because he lacked the discipline of home.

Why is it that some people who are called Christians live so irregularly, drifting about from place to place? Why is it? It is because they have not had a church home. It is because they have not the profit of mutual discipline. People will go to the lakeside, and because they are away from the observation of other people day after day they are rather careless. The man who would not think of going downtown without shaving, does not

shave for a week! Women are so very, very, particular about how they appear that even on the street-car they take out their mirrors! Why? Lest anyone should see them not at their best. I read the other day of an orator who, while addressing a women's meeting, spoke of the inspiration it afforded him to look into their thousand shining faces. The report said that immediately a thousand powder-puffs were produced! They did not want them to shine! How particular people are when under observation! But when they get away where no one cares, and no one sees, how careless anyone becomes!

It is divinely intended that every child of God should be a member of the family, of the household of faith, so that every other child of God will know how he lives; and they can come together for mutual edification and discipline. That is why we ought to belong to a church. We ought to be careful of our walk. I am not so particular about these little mirrors the ladies carry around in their handbags; but I do like to see a young man take another kind of mirror out of his pocket, even the Word of God, when he is travelling on the street-car, and look into the perfect law of liberty and behold himself as in a glass. When he does that he says, "I have got something to do to-day to get myself straightened up." We ought to be mutually helpful one to the other in these things.

Had I time I would tell you about the necessity of co-operative ministry. There is co-operation in the body: there is the right hand and the left, the eye and ear and tongue; and the whole body, without friction, co-operates to do the will of the mind. And the hand cannot say to the foot, "I have no need of you." Some young man struts around and says, "I am independent"! No, you are not. No one of us is independent. Where did you get your coat? You could not make one. At least if you did, you would want to get out of the country! You had to get someone else to make it for you. Who cooked your breakfast for you this morning? I suppose you could manage that for a day or so, but it would soon tell on you if you had to do it long. We are mutually dependent, in all the relationships of life, and so we are in our church affiliations. To one is given the word of wisdom, and to another the word of knowledge. He has "set some in the church teachers." Not all are teachers, but the man to whom spiritual insight is given, who is made a teacher by the Holy Ghost, ought to exercise that talent and teach others. Different gifts are put into the church, and they are not given to any one man; they are distributed. "The manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal", so that in the exercise of these spiritual gifts the whole body will be edified, and every man, woman, boy, and girl, have something to do in the church. Let us see to it that we find our place and exercise our functions.

Thus in the larger work, when there is a collective testimony, you will recall the Spirit addressed the church as a church, not as individual members. He wrote to "the church at Ephesus", "the church at Pergamos", and so on. It is something to be a member of our own local church because we have a collective testimony to give. We stand as individuals, as saved sinners; but together we stand as a church for the great verities of the Word of God, and we are here to carry the message of the gospel to the uttermost parts of the earth.

III.

I have finally THIS WORD OF CAUTION. There are certain movements to-day that make light of the church —

and sometimes they are very orthodox. There are some brethren for whom I have a good deal of respect, but they belittle the church. I know a man who has no church, who has no organization at all; he cannot get along with an organization for more than a month, and because he cannot get along with one he thinks he ought not to have one. So he cries down the church. That is unscriptural. I grant you that the churches are full of defects, and I think we ought to recognize that; but I think — and say it humbly — I think we ought all to do as we have been trying to do in Jarvis Street: if the church is not right, try to make it right. If it is not what it ought to be, then try to make it better. Some people go around with a religious clinical thermometer in their pocket, and if they go into a church they sit back with a superior air, and with their arms folded, and say, "I will see what the temperature is here."

We have a thermostatic system of heating this building. The temperature is regulated, so that when it gets too hot the heat automatically shuts off. We used to have a dear old man here who sat in the congregation. You would see him shrug his shoulders, and then get up and consult the thermometer. I have seen him walk up that aisle many a time, take out his glasses, and if that thermometer told him the temperature was right, he would put his glasses away — and go back to his pew and feel quite warm! But until he had seen it he was not quite sure the temperature was up to the mark.

Some people go to church with a thermometer in their pocket and say, "Well, the preacher was not quite up to the mark this morning"! I wonder if such a one had to preach morning and evening for fifty-two Sundays in the year, and then do a thousand other things in between, would he never have an "off day"? And then someone did not shake hands with him at the door! The poor man who overlooked him may have had a sick wife at home, but that did not matter at all. When he goes to church it is the business of everyone else to see that that particular person is looked after. The preacher was not quite up to the mark, and no one else was. He goes away saying, "Well, the temperature was a little bit down in Jarvis Street this morning."

That is poor business, my friends. Break your thermometer, throw it away; and get a bundle of sticks. If it is not warm enough, then light a fire. If things are not quite up to the mark, open your hymn-book and say, "If no one else sings in this meeting this morning I am going to sing. Here is a poor fellow not singing. There must be something wrong with him, and I am going to sing twice as loudly." Before you have got through the second verse he will be singing too! If you go to church prayerfully, asking that God will send down fire from heaven, invariably you will discover that the church is a warm place — for you have helped to warm it.

Nothing is easier than to stand off and find fault with the church. My dear friends, there are some homes that are not what they ought to be, but God save us from the folly of assuming that the home is not a divine institution! Make the home what it ought to be, that is your business. Make the church what it ought to be, and beware of those who would cry down God's institution. That habit is unscriptural.

There are some people who are supremely concerned about missions. Well, so am I; and the more I know of

things the more convinced I am that money ought to be put into the hands of people who are responsible. I am not going to commit good money to people who are everlastingly starting some new thing. There are some people who are always beginning a new thing. Spurgeon once said that some people he knew ought to be good at beginnings — for they had been at it ever since he had known them. The man who has always some new cause to plead, and never stays long at anything, cannot have my money even for the Lord's work. I want to find some movement that is established in the truth, and that has the approval of God upon it; and I will trust my money to organizations of that sort.

But there are movements that decry the church, cry down the church; and yet for every dollar they get they are dependent upon the churches they denounce. If everyone were to do as they do, there would be no churches, and there would be no one to give to their support. I once went into a big apartment house on the coast. The owner had an apartment in the place, and he told me that when the architect built the apartment, unknown to the owner, he laid a pipe underground, a steam pipe, from the boilers that heat the apartment to his own house a block and a half away. For three years he stole heat to his own home. He never put a ton of coal into the furnace, he did nothing at all to keep the furnace going; but his house was heated by that apartment a block and a half away. "Why," you say, "that was not honest". No, it was not honest. And what right have I to go to a city and denounce the churches, and then take a great offering for missions, not in cash but in pledges. So Mr. This, That, and the Other, sign up to pay within twelve months. But who is going to keep them warm spiritually so that they will keep their pledges? Who is going to minister to these people so as to keep them mindful of their obligation, so that by and by they will pay what they have promised? Who? The very churches that have been denounced. They have got to put the coal into the furnace; they have got to do the heating.

These movements that denounce the churches are really parasitical. Let us go back to the simple principles of the New Testament: stand by the word of God; evangelize; and, having done so, establish churches; and when we have established churches, teach the people to give; then let them go out and preach the gospel and establish more churches, and so carry the good news to the ends of the earth.

SUNDAY IN JARVIS STREET

The past Lord's Day was a time of great blessing in Jarvis Street. After a remarkable Saturday night prayer meeting, the people came with a sense of expectancy to the Sunday services. Dr. Slade preached with evident power at both services.

In the morning his subject was, "Confessing Christ by Baptism." Seven responded to the invitation — three for baptism and four for salvation.

Again in the evening service the presence of the Lord was a reality. The pastor's topic was "Have Fundamentalists Completed Their Task?" This stirring sermon will be printed in a coming issue of THE GOSPEL WITNESS.

Startling News From U.S.A.

MOSLEMS ARE SENDING MISSIONARIES HERE TO CARRY ON "PROPAGATION OF ISLAM"

By George W. Cornell
AP Religious Writer

Even if you call yourself a Christian, you also may qualify as a good Moslem.

"Millions of Christians in this country are true Moslems," said Sheikh Daoud Ahmed Faisel, spiritual leader of the Islamic Mission of America. "They just don't know it."

That may sound incongruous to some people, steeped in grade-school notions of the bloody Middle Ages Crusades against so-called "infidels" of Mohammed, but it is the brotherly attitude of Mohammed's followers today. Basically, it always has been.

* * * *

"The average American simply knows nothing about Islam," Sheikh Faisel said. "It is the religion of Christians and Jews and all who believe in one true God and who have surrendered to his will and guidance of his laws."

But in the United States, he said, there has been little recognition of the Jewish-Christian roots of Islam, or that Abraham, Jesus and Mohammed are all seen equally as prophets of the faith.

"Prejudice, egotism and ignorance have robbed many of the truth about Islam," the Moroccan-born imam said. "Some sneer and joke and mock, because of greed for power, fear of exposure, or the evil idea they are better than everyone else."

In North and South America, the only two major continents to which Islam has not spread in vast numbers and influence, Sheikh Faisel's mission as the representative organ for Moslems has set these objectives:

"The propagation of Islam, the true faith . . . the defense of the faithful . . . the re-establishment of peace, love, good will and human brotherhood through belief in the oneness of the one true God as revealed in Islam."

Practicing Moslems constitute only a small minority in this country — about 100,000 by Sheikh Faisel's estimate — but he believes the spirit of Islam is moving rapidly toward wider acceptance.

* * * *

"Within the next few years, I see it coming," he said. "This is the best educated nation on earth, and people are willing to see the truth. Eventually Islam will be the governing basis of America."

There are fairly large Moslem communities in Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Chicago, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Sacramento, Phoenix, Washington D.C., New York City, Detroit and Dearborn, Mich.

Moslem societies, clubs and academies are scattered throughout this region. The finest mosques are in Sacramento, Dearborn — and a new one in Washington.

* * * *

Islam, in Arabic, simply means "submission" to God. Moslem merely means "believer". The religion is the newest and most rapidly expanded of all the world's great faiths.

Its teachings embrace ancient Hebrew laws, including the Ten Commandments, and bans against usury and pork eating. *It also incorporates tenets of Jesus, all as expounded by Mohammed.*

Although Islam permits a man to marry more than one woman, it also teaches obedience to state laws which bar polygamy in this country.

Sheikh Faisel, 63, who became an American citizen because he thinks the U.S. Constitution is Islamic in principle, has one wife, an attractive poised woman who served coffee and cakes throughout the four-hour interview.

The sheikh said there have been more than 10,000 converts to Islam in this country in the last ten years.

The main advance, he said, has been through colleges, universities and theological schools many of which have begun to include courses on Islam.

"Recognition is coming about through knowledge," he said. In most Southern states, he said, Islam has been unable to get a foothold.

Sheikh Faisel said the "great hope of our mission is the unification of worship of all people of this country in Islam."

"The United States would then be the greatest nation that has ever been on the face of the earth."

—From the Rochester, N.Y., Democrat and Chronicle of December 4, 1955.

(Copied from Christian Beacon.)

TRAMP, TRAMP, TO ROME!

The United Church of South India is the paragon of the promoters of church unity. A revealing flash from within confirms past hesitations. The Rt. Rev. Bishop Cheloppa of that church, has delivered himself of the following reflections (South India Mail, Feb. 12, 1955):

"Protestants should think sincerely of possible union with the Roman Catholic Church. After achieving complete unity among Protestants, they should even think of union with Catholics. We should begin to understand each other and sympathize with each other's point of view. Protestants should take the trouble of reading R.C. books and papers to find out their problems."

This brings satisfaction to an Indian Romanist publication *Janapremi*. It "hopes for a responsive echo in every Protestant heart. Our separated brethren are realizing more and more the absurdity of their position. For them the prayer of Newman, 'The night is dark, and I am far from home; lead Thou me on.'"

—The Sunday School Times

A Letter from French Canada

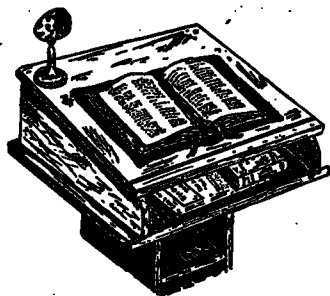
It is a pleasure to me to let you know that I am always interested in your paper "The Gospel Witness" and it is why I give my subscription for another year to "The Gospel Witness". You will find a cheque of \$3.15 for my subscription.

I am a French Canadian and I gave my heart to the Lord eight years ago and I am ministering the Word of God to my friends who are living in about 100 miles from my home. Each Sunday it is a pleasure for me to feed them in the Lord. You will understand why your paper "The Gospel Witness" is so precious for me. My objective for 1956 is to take 10 new subscribers to "The Gospel Witness".

Excuse my poor English and accept my sincere thanks for your faithful ministry toward me.

Please pray for the French work in the province of Quebec.

Affectionately yours in the Lord,



English Bible Course

THIRTEENTH LECTURE
in the
ENGLISH BIBLE COURSE
TORONTO BAPTIST SEMINARY

By Dr. C. D. Cole

January 12th, 1956

WORK OUT YOUR OWN SALVATION

Philippians 2:12-18

The scripture for the lecture tonight is Paul's third admonition and harks back to the first admonition in which he urges the Philippians to live worthy of the gospel that, whether he comes to see them or is absent, he may hear that they are standing fast in one spirit, striving together for the faith of the gospel. In the second admonition he warns against strife and vainglory and exhorts to humility, enforcing his exhortation with the supreme example of Jesus Christ in His self humiliation and divine exaltation. And this third admonition is much to the same effect as the other two with an advance in thought, and with an emphasis on individual responsibility. All three admonitions are appeals to unity and peace in the body of Christ. Here he admonishes each one of the Philippians to work out his own salvation in a spirit of humility, without murmurings and disputings.

We have here a fusion of two apparent antagonisms, and what God has joined together, man must not put asunder. Paul did not see any conflict between the two statements, "You work out . . . For God works in you." I think the truth of the passage before us has been obscured by the smoke of battle between two contending theologies.

Arminianism is at best a poor business in trying to make this passage teach salvation by works. And I feel that many Calvinists have at least quoted one statement in trumpet tones while they have quoted the other, if at all, in a whisper. They reach a conclusion different to Paul's when they read, "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to work." Arminianism is basically wrong in making salvation depend upon human works. It confounds merit and mercy, mixes law and grace, and invalidates both the law and the gospel. Calvinism may need improving at certain points but truth will not overcome the system for it is basically right.

This scripture is very plain if we will allow it to mean just what it says. It does not say, "It is God which worketh in you: therefore, take your seat and wait for Him to work." Here is a command to work, not to idleness. This is a command to work with fear and trembling, not with ease and self complacency. It is a command with an encouragement: "Work out your own salvation. For it is God which worketh in you to will and to do."

I.

The Command to Work Out Salvation (12, 13)

We shall first consider the command as we have it in verses twelve and thirteen: "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."

The Command Is to Saints

Notice, first, who is commanded. This command is not given to the lost but to those who are called saints, to those in whom God had begun a good work, to those who had always obeyed. The true meaning of the passage depends upon the subjects of address. It will have one meaning if addressed to the lost and quite another meaning when addressed to the saints. If a man is not a believer in Jesus Christ, born of His Spirit, washed in His blood, the passage before us has nothing to say to him.

This is a command to work out one's own salvation. Here is personal responsibility. Every saved man has his own salvation to work out. No one else can work it out for him. Here is a command to practical godliness. This command has to do with our daily work. Salvation is not merely a bed to lie upon; it is a field to work in. Salvation is not only something for enjoyment. And the person who has no other use for it is not apt to enjoy it very much. Salvation is not a feeling of complacency against the day of judgment; it is an industry to be worked at. Working out salvation is not like drifting with the tide, but like swimming against the current. All Christians are labouring men and God is the capitalist. We are all buck privates, comrades-in-arms, and Jesus Christ is our commander-in-chief. Salvation is not to be worked for, but to be worked out. Salvation must be in us before it can be worked by us. Salvation is not something which God begins and we complete. God does not plant the germ of life and leave us to develop it.

God Does All and We Do All

There is a sense in which God does all. He carries on the good work which He begins in us. It is He that perfects that which concerns us. Salvation is not a co-operative work between God and us. It is not that God does His part and we do our part. There is a sense in which God does all, and another sense in which we do all. God works all of salvation in us from beginning to end. And we work all of the salvation out from beginning to end. A quotation from Jamieson, Fausset and Brown is to the point here: "Man is in different senses entirely active and entirely passive, God producing all, and we acting all. He produces our own acts. It is not that God does some and we do the rest. God does all, and we do all. God is the only proper Author, we the only proper actors." There are many natural illustrations of this principle. In the physical realm, God gives us life and we do the breathing. He gives us sight and we do the seeing. So in the spiritual realm, God gives life and we do the living. He gives repentance and we do the turning from sin. He gives the faith and we do the turning to Christ or the believing. He gives the strength and we do the working. He works in us secretly; we work openly. He dispels the darkness and we are seen as lights in the world. The principle is further illustrated in the parable of the vine and the branches. The vine produces all the fruit; the branches bear all the fruit. The power for fruit-bearing is all in the vine, but all the fruit is on the branches. The

fruit on the branches is visible; the strength in the vine is invisible. It is not co-operation in the sense that the vine bears some of the fruit and the branches the rest of the fruit. Christ said, "I am the vine, ye are the branches . . . without me ye can do nothing." It is by abiding in Him that we get strength for fruit-bearing.

External and Internal Salvation Distinguished

We might distinguish between external salvation and internal salvation. External salvation was the work of Christ on the cross when He put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself; internal salvation is the work of Christ in us by the Holy Spirit. External salvation makes us safe; internal salvation makes us sound. External salvation is justification and is instantaneous and absolute; internal salvation begins in regeneration and is progressive and, throughout this life, is only relative. External salvation is deliverance from the guilt of sin; internal salvation is deliverance from the defilement of sin. External salvation delivers us from the penalty of sin; internal salvation delivers us from the presence of sin. External salvation is a present fact for the believer; internal salvation is a future hope to be realized when we awake in His likeness. In a general sense the Roman epistle treats of external salvation to be received and enjoyed by faith. And Philippians treats of internal salvation worked in us by God, to be worked out by us.

The Experience of Grace Analyzed

Now the salvation of our text is internal salvation or salvation in the subjective sense. It is salvation considered as an inward experience of grace. Only he who has experienced grace in his soul can work out this salvation. It will help us to understand the exhortation if we analyze the experience of grace. The salvation we are to work out is something in us. It is a God-wrought experience that we are to translate into deeds. This experience relates to three things: to sin, to self, and to Christ.

Conviction of Sin

First, it has to do with sin. In an experience of grace, sin is real and awful, and in my heart I mourn over it, turn from it and struggle against it. Now this experience is to be demonstrated. I am to show, by the way I live that I hate sin, that I grieve over it and that I shun it. A saint is not a sinner running into sin but a sinner running from sin and when overtaken in sin he mourns, and confesses it to God.

Abhorrence of Self

This experience of grace has to do with self. In an experience of grace, the sinner sees himself as God sees him. He takes sides with God against himself. He justifies God by accepting God's verdict about himself. Like Job, he abhors himself. And like Paul, he has no confidence in the flesh. Now we cannot hate sin without hating self, for sin is a part of ourselves. The only thing we can lay claim to as our own is our sin. We are stewards of everything we have but our sin. Now it may not be good psychology to hate one's self but it puts us in good company. Job abhorred himself; Isaiah confessed that he was unclean; Moses humbled himself before the Lord; Jeremiah felt most keenly his own unworthiness; Paul calls himself a wretched man, even the chief of sinners. The prodigal as a typical sinner came home talking about his sins and confessing his unworthiness. John said that if we deny sin we deceive ourselves. Our Lord pictured those in the kingdom of heaven as being

poor in spirit, as mourning over sin, and hungering after righteousness. Now we are to work this experience out. We are to show by speech and by deed that we are not proud of self. Using the words of Paul in the next chapter, "We are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh."

The Ground of True Hope

This experience has to do with Christ. Christ fills the believer's horizon of hope. Christ is our all and in all in salvation. We trust Him and have no other object of faith. We love Him and acknowledge no other Lord. His blood is precious to us and we trust nothing else. And this experience is to be worked out. We are to show by lip and by life that Christ is our Lord and our Saviour. We strive to be what He wants us to be, to do what He tells us to do, and to go where He tells us to go. We are to keep His commandments and seek His will for our lives. That is working out salvation.

The Source of Strength

Now we shall next notice with what spirit salvation is to be worked out. It is to be done "with fear and trembling". There is to be no self-confidence or self-sufficiency. If I feel that I am able to work out salvation without any mistakes or blunders or failures, then there will not be any fear and trembling. If I join the church boastfully, expecting to show others how to do the job, then there will not be much fear and trembling. We are to shun self-confidence on the one hand and lack of confidence in Christ on the other hand. We must be weak in ourselves but strong in the grace that is in the Lord Jesus Christ. Our pastor has given us a good motto for the New Year, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." But to work out salvation with fear and trembling is to be ever conscious that without Him we can do nothing. Salvation begins in the heart and is expressed by the hands and the feet and the tongue and to reverse this order is like painting the pump to purify the water. It is like colouring the apple to make the tree good. We should take care of the heart by living close to the Saviour. By keeping the heart with all diligence the outward conduct will take care of itself. If we live humbly and trustfully before God we shall be able to live boldly before men. If we live on our knees before God we shall be able to stand on our feet before men. If we fear God we shall fear none else.

II.

The Manner of Working Out Salvation (14)

Now the manner of working out our salvation is given us in verse fourteen. "Do all things without murmurings and disputings." It is not very easy to determine whether murmurings and disputings refer to an attitude toward God or toward men. The word is used in both ways. In first Corinthians 10:10 it is used of the murmurings of the children of Israel against God after their deliverance from Egypt. And in the Septuagint translation of the Old Testament, it is repeatedly used of Israel's complaint against God. In Acts 6:1 the same word is used of the murmurings of the Hellenists against the Hebrews, complaining that their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution of food. If this refers to murmurings against God it means to be discontented and unhappy with God's care of us. It means to be dissatisfied with His, providential dealings with us. This is a grievous

and a dangerous sin, and brought sore judgments upon Israel in the long ago. The Christian should be contented and happy in all conditions and under all circumstances of life. He is assured that God will never leave him nor forsake him. He is told that God makes all things work together for his good. Now this does not mean that the Christian should be insensible to pain and pleasure. The Christian is not a stoic. There will be occasions of sorrow but with sorrow there will be means of comfort and in every case of sorrow there will be cause for rejoicing. The Christian may cry but he must never grumble. The Christian should not be stoical or unmoved on the one hand, nor despairing on the other hand. He should be sensitive to pain or pleasure without being despondent in pain or intoxicated in pleasure. Paul expresses this paradox perfectly when he says, "As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing."

Now if the reference is to their attitude and conduct towards one another it means that they should do all things without murmurings and wranglings among themselves. This seems to fit the general theme and context of the epistle in its appeal for unity and peace. There is no hint up to now, in the epistle, of any murmurings against God while there are several hints that the Philippians are not altogether free of strife and factions. Dr. Robertson thinks that the reference is to murmurings against God and disputings or wranglings among themselves. The Christian should always be satisfied with God's providence in his life and also free from the spirit of quarrelsomeness. The Christian should delight in his Heavenly Father's care and also be slow to take offence at his brother. The Christian should enjoy the peace he has with God through Christ and, as much as lieth in him, live peaceably with all men. If our Heavenly Father sends afflictions let us bow in adoring worship and humble ourselves under His mighty hand. If He sends that which is pleasant and agreeable, let us be truly thankful, but in any event let us always be full of praise, trusting His judgment in all things.

Paul covered more ground than we may think when he exhorted us to do all things without murmurings and disputings. This spirit of murmuring and wrangling is the incubator in which most other evils are hatched. If we will watch these things there will not be so much danger from other evils. He who works out his salvation, doing everything delightfully before God and peaceably before men, will be a happy and a useful Christian. Love to God and to men is the fulfilling of the law.

III.

The Results of Working Out Salvation (15, 16)

Now in verses fifteen and sixteen we have the end or the purpose of such a life: "That ye may be blameless, and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain." Let us ponder some of these words.

To be blameless is to be free from just censure by others. The Christian should so live that malice and criticism are dumb, with nothing to say against him. The world has a very high standard for Christians and we should seek to reach it. The lost man does not expect much of himself in the way of goodness but he expects

perfection from us. And this is a compliment that we should seek to justify. Alexander MacLaren says that it would not be a bad rule for us to do what irreligious men expect us to do. They expect us to be perfect; let us make that our aim as we work out our salvation.

Now the word harmless refers to intrinsic character while blameless refers to the judgment of others. Harmless has to do with our character, blameless with our reputation. The word harmless literally means unmixed or unadulterated. It means to be a genuine Christian through and through. This is a day of veneer in furniture, of plating in metal, of camouflage in war, and all these are attempts to disguise or deceive and to make something appear what it is not. To add a metaphor, we can say that there is much beauty that is only skin deep in the spiritual as well as in the physical. Oh! my brethren, there is nothing more vitally important than to be sincere and genuine Christians before God and men. We cannot deceive God at any time, and we shall not always be able to deceive men. "For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known." The day is coming when what has been spoken in closets will be proclaimed from housetops. It is a terrible thing to parade religion while the heart is rotten with insincerity and pretence. I recall the testimony of a prominent church member in a large church in Kentucky. In his dying words he confessed that all his Christian life he had been insincere and a pretender.

Lights in the World

Another result of doing all things without murmurings and disputings is that we will be "lights in the world; Holding forth the word of life." We must be lights if we are to hold forth the word of life to others. We cannot be darkness ourselves and hold the light before others. Many a mother never speaks to her daughter about salvation because she does not live the right kind of life before that daughter. Many a father never speaks to his son about Christ because he realizes that his son knows that Christ means little, if anything, to him.

Christians are in a crooked and perverse generation whatever the generation may be. Crooked means that which is curved, in opposition to that which is straight. Perverse is more intensive and means to be distorted and twisted. Lost humanity has swerved away from the right paths of the Lord and lies all warped and twisted. I have seen patients with arthritis whose bodies were so warped and twisted that they hardly resembled a human body. And these patients are apt illustrations of lost, fallen humanity which little resembles the man of God's making. What terrible havoc sin has wrought in the human race so that man made in the image of God is away from God, crooked, warped, twisted — but the wreck of the man God made.

Furthermore, to work out their salvation as Paul urges will enable him to rejoice in the day of Christ, that he has not run in vain, neither laboured in vain. Their faithfulness would be Paul's glory in the day of judgment.

IV.

Paul Anticipates Martyrdom (17, 18)

Now in verses seventeen and eighteen, Paul anticipates his death. He expects to die sooner or later as a martyr. We have observed how his feelings fluctuate concerning the outcome of his trial and his present imprisonment.

But he expects some day to die as a martyr and he wants the Philippians to rejoice with him in the prospect of such a death. Death had no terrors to this man who loved Christ better than he loved his own life and whose faith was beautiful in its simplicity. Paul thinks of his anticipated martyrdom as a decapitation. He expects to be beheaded and he speaks of his blood gushing from his headless body as a libation or drink offering. The allusion is to the Old Testament drink offering which was poured

at the bottom of the altar on which the sacrifice was laid. Roman execution was to the aesthetic and sensuous a repulsive and horrible thing, but to Paul it was a special blessing in which he was adding the drinking offering to the sacrifice of his body in death. Paul believed what he preached — that suffering for Christ was a divine gift. And so he calls upon the Philippians to rejoice with him in anticipated martyrdom. It is blessed to die in the Lord, but far more blessed to die for the Lord.

Some Observations on Prophetic Teaching

By Dr. R. DUBARRY, Nîmes, France

EDITOR'S NOTE: The following article, translated from the French, forms the preface to Dr. Dubarry's *Devotional Study in Revelation*. In it he discusses his own personal experience and contact with prophetic teachings and prophetic teachers. Written in a charitable spirit, the article does not question the sincerity of those with whom the author disagrees. We trust that our readers will read it in the spirit in which it was written for the present tendency to make the matter of eschatology a basis of fellowship is indeed lamentable.

TO UNDERSTAND Scripture, we must find a sense in which all the seemingly contradictory passages agree. Whoever wants to present the meaning of Scripture and does not take that meaning out of Scripture, is an enemy of Scripture. The true sense is not that of the Jews; but in Jesus Christ, all apparent contradictions harmonize."

The above quotation from Blaise Pascal will introduce our study. We feel bound to raise our humble voice in a time characterized by a vast conflict of ideas on prophecy, a time when the traditional evangelical schools are opposed by a school whose widely-accepted teaching is related to the rabbinical conceptions. We shall present our convictions against the background of our own experience.

More than sixty years ago, it was a great joy for us to discover and eagerly read, at a Parisian second-hand bookseller's, the first work ever written by the great French evangelist Ruben Saillens. It was an adaptation in French of a chapter taken from "The Approaching End of Our Era", in which Grattan Guinness, Ruben Saillens' first master, expounded in a masterly manner the views of the historical school of interpretation. Shortly after, we were able to buy the complete work of Guinness, thus laying the first stone of our English library.

Approximately one hundred years ago, a catalogue was published giving, in fifty-two columns, a list of the then-known works on the book of Revelation. Today, that list would be considerably longer. And so, we must confess with a certain feeling of despair the inevitable gaps of our own documentation on the final things.

In the French-speaking countries, the book of Revelation and matters connected with its study have suffered a most superficial treatment. During the first centuries of our era, the mysteries and the problems of this book caused it to be wrongly looked upon as uncanonical. In more recent times, for the same reasons, the most qualified commentators have shown great prudence in its interpretation. The greatest of them, John Calvin, deliber-

ately avoided its study in his immortal "Commentaries", which yet stand as models of thought and balance. On the other hand, most of the French works dealing with the book of Revelation are only compilations, popularizations or plagiarisms of foreign writings whose teachings are often disputed in their own countries and whose intrinsic value is sometimes singularly poor.

When, in our youth, we were privileged to attend Spurgeon's College, we remarked how, in matters of prophecy, the circumspection of this prince among exegetes was reflected in his lectures and those of his associates.

I.

In those distant days, the ideas of John Nelson Darby on prophecy were already overflowing his sphere of influence and were on their way to gaining an assured and surprising success. No one other than the famous Lord Nelson had been his godfather and to him he owed one of his "Christian" names. This strange religious genius, who has well deserved his reputation as the Goliath of strict dissent, benefitted from the solid culture of the Irish aristocracy to which he belonged. He was at first a lawyer with a most brilliant future. He very soon left this profession and with touching earnestness he embarked upon a self-denying pastorate in the established church. A great innovator, he became extremely anxious to see his church united with Rome. However his resolute and fervent disposition suddenly brought him into a movement set on spiritual reformation. In Ireland, and later in Great Britain, this movement had begun to bring together, towards 1825, numerous elements among the devout upper class who were in the Establishment.

It was not long before Darby was enjoying a considerable influence in those circles, and almost at once he made use of it in bringing about, for purely logical reasons, a schism with Anglicanism. For reasons of a much more complex nature, he became instrumental in causing historical splits from several of the outstanding leading lights in the new movement. Although he had not brought it into being, he ended by assuming sole control, thus being able to fashion it into a religious system of his own creating. Right from its inception this system was profusely refuted, unprecedented as it was in evangelical history. But Darby's high intelligence, unbending will and genuine piety assured him much support from Protestants, and facilitated a dictatorship which led him to have individuals, assemblies and groups of assemblies excommunicated by vigorous "purges" which extended even as far as the Antipodes. Among the important men who shared this fate are the godly philanthropist George

Muller, and Benjamin Wills Newton whose knowledge and Christian fervency made him equal to Darby himself; he was also highly esteemed by Spurgeon for those qualities.

B. W. Newton's brother-in-law was S. P. Tregelles, well known on account of the new impulse he gave to research on the Greek New Testament. The latter must be credited with having re-established the original text of the book of Revelation, which the authors of the Received Text of the sixteenth century had hastily and arbitrarily determined, thus unconsciously yielding to an evil design of Satan. Sharing all the views expressed by Newton in his famous, "Thoughts on the Book of Revelation", and the two volumes of his "Prophetical Researches", Tregelles rightly declared at the close of his life that the extenuating life-long controversies which separated Darby and Newton were only due to their original differences concerning the doctrine of final things. Although Darby's temperament and convictions led him to be unduly severe with his adversaries, he later insisted, at a friend's table, that Newton was yet "the most pious man he had ever known."

Our purpose in recalling those forgotten episodes is to bring out in clearer light the uncommon fate of John Nelson Darby's views. Those views were so new and so different, and they were so vehemently defended by their supporters, that it was only natural that they should have received an adequate and handy name — the "Darbyist views". Although that epithet was never accepted by the interested party or by his disciples, we shall legitimately use it here, for a purpose of simplification and clarity.

Now, whereas Darby's ecclesiastical conceptions were met with an almost general and vigorous opposition, his prophetic views triumphantly spread all around the world. And yet, the best historian of the Darbyist movement concludes that "it was the child of the expectation of an *immediate* return of Christ. If someone had said to the first Brethren that over a century later the church would still be on earth, a smile of pity would have been the only answer. And yet the facts speak for themselves: obviously Darbyism owes its rise and development to erroneous ideas, and those ideas exercised a decisive influence on all the principles which characterize the history of the movement."

Thus is explained why, after having originally deprived English, German, Swiss and French Protestantism of most of its best elements, Darbyism later divided into more than thirty branches and finally met a soil impervious to all penetration, in spite of its variegated features and the frequent excellence of its followers and of its works. In the United States for instance, where the Reformed Church members some two and a half million members, the Lutherans nearly five million, the Methodists around nine million and the Baptists over seventeen million, all the branches of Darbyism only numbered, according to pre-war — perhaps incomplete — statistics, a few tens of thousand adherents, who, it must be added, were noted for their high standard of spirituality.

And yet, in the prophetic realm, Darby practically won over all the "pietist" circles of the United States and Canada. We must however lay stress on the fact that those circles have become more and more unaware of the true origin of their convictions. Darby and his disciples were literally stolen by hosts of popularizers who then copied one another and thus became less and less explicit as to the sources of their knowledge. In most cases, those

sources seem to have been honestly lost sight of by these half-scholars who owe their fame to the attraction which the subject of prophecy exercises upon people rather than to their personal research.

In the United States, to which we refer because it is the largest and most influential evangelical field in the world, there are very few preachers who do not possess in their repertoire a series of sermons on prophecy. These are often sensational and enhanced by ingenious charts and diagrams concerning the order or even the time of final things. With some of them, these matters become a speciality. Such was the case of the most popular preacher in evangelical New York, the old fighter of Swiss stock Haldeman, whose teaching was strangely identical to that of Darby whom he practically never mentioned by name. In the same way, many renowned revivalists attract attention by putting these fascinating views to the forefront.

The great Bible Schools which, by means of ingeniously simplified and graded courses, train innumerable and often excellent servants of God are practically all won over to Darby's prophetic system. Devotedly clinging to the interpretations of their masters, a host of pastors, itinerant evangelists and faithful women conscientiously (and unconsciously) spread everywhere the tares of human fallible conceptions together with the wheat of their unadulterated evangelical faith. The public greatly relishes the enticing theories which are offered them, such as, for instance, the theory which assures them that they will escape the "Great Tribulation", provided that they possess certain spiritual dispositions. Thus the facile welcome which those preachers receive sometimes prompts them to dwell more on their prophetic curios than on the Cross of Jesus Christ—even though the latter remains an essential article of their creed. But where the treasure which engrosses the mind is, there will finally be the heart.

As, with silent emotion, we visited in Philadelphia the office of Dr. Scofield, the editor of the celebrated Bible which bears his name, we were not in the least surprised to discover on his shelves numerous works by Darby and his disciples. That Bible nowhere mentions Darby's name and only speaks of his school in an obscure way. And yet it is probably the most influential popularization of that school. It was printed by the renowned Oxford University Press, the head of which was Henry Frowde, a Darbyist Brethren who had gained a well-earned reputation. It soon outclassed all other similar works. Put into the hands of millions of readers, Sunday School teachers and scholars, and Christians full of genuine religious fervour, it brings everywhere John Nelson Darby's prophetic views subtly diluted with things which would otherwise be very good. Considered from a commercial viewpoint alone, the enterprise is operated on a big scale. And as the Bible is very widely advertised, the positions it holds constitute the foundations hitherto unshaken of what most of American evangelicals consider as the true prophetic orthodoxy. Moreover, in spite of the opposition of the modernistic leaders, the Scofield Bible even finds its way into their churches.

To Darby's school can also be linked the book, "Jesus Is Coming" which was advertised and circulated everywhere in great numbers by its author, W. E. Blackstone. Entrusted by pious oil-magnates with a fund amounting to more than a million dollars, he was thus able to spread hundreds of thousands of copies of this volume. As we

were having a friendly chat with him near Los Angeles, he explained to us that he had just made arrangement with a publishing house to have twenty thousand copies of his book printed in French. Those books were to be sold at low price or given away! What school of interpretation could possibly compete with him? And yet, in spite of his exquisite Christian qualities, Blackstone was badly mistaken. We can still hear him assure us, as we were sitting with him in his attractive home, that it was not the time for him to give attention to the missionary work, of which he had yet been one of the most devoted promoters. Nothing mattered but the imminent return of Christ, and it was necessary to make it known. He firmly believed that he was to be the privileged witness of that event, towards the month of September, or October at the latest. He thus spoke on April 21, 1927; this devoted servant of God was soon to be called home by his Master. And yet, his convictions were so deep-rooted that he had spent thousands of dollars in having numerous weather-proof cases made, in which Hebrew New Testaments were packed. Those cases were sent to Palestine and hidden there, in view of the Lord's coming which he thought was so close at hand. The New Testaments were to be used by the Jewish people at the time of their restoration to their national privileges.

II.

Only during the past thirty years did a marked reaction take place in America against Darby's prophetic school, whose ascendancy had hitherto remained undisputed. Among the most qualified pioneers of the reaction, the palm is generally assigned to a well known writer, Philip Mauro. Belonging to the fashionable class of Washington, he was at the head of one of the most important firms of solicitors in the United States, which specialized in the litigations between patentees. On several occasions he victoriously pleaded before the Supreme Court to which he was attached and won for the French Embassy a case involving several millions of dollars. He also won for Graham Bell, the inventor of telephone, a historical case against Edison who had filed his application for a patent the same day as Bell. Although on the losing side, Edison always greatly esteemed Mauro, whom he welcomed at his death bed for a talk on spiritual things. Since then, the Bell Telephone Company has become one of the most impressive corporations in the world.

Thus Scofield, who, before his conversion, had been an ordinary lawyer, was to be confronted with an opponent of the first importance, perfectly acquainted with all the subtleties of a close study of obscure or disputed matters. Saved at the age of forty or thereabout, Mauro immediately retired from business to devote himself to the sole study of the Bible. As he was sheltered from all material care, he gave, for more than a quarter of a century, the best part of his time, of his extensive culture and his fine Christian fervour to prophetic research. He did so with perfect intellectual freedom and with total independence toward all interest or all school of interpretation. He was thus led to abandon the views held in the Darbyist circles and others which he had attended at the threshold of his spiritual life, when he was insufficiently informed. As a result of his meditations and studies, several courageous works were written. Naturally the supporters of the historical school and those of the Darbyist futurism — which were already opposed to each other — strongly reacted and the controversy is

still on. However Mauro's conclusions were acknowledged to be well-founded by a number of qualified evangelical specialists. Several of them — and Campbell Morgan in particular, who is considered by many as the most competent of commentators — declared that Mauro's bulky work on the book of Revelation is the most plausible commentary he had ever examined.

Before knowing Mauro in the privacy of his home, we exchanged letters with him. We were thus able to find that, although having taken a different course, we had reached identical conclusions on numerous points. In various countries, others have had the same experience. It would therefore seem that this is a providential indication for the present days. A decisive elimination of all erroneous interpretations in the field of prophecy would appear most necessary; for, in difficult days, they will prove to be detrimental to the cause of Fundamentalism.

III.

For history in this regard teaches us several lessons: The upheavals which preceded and attended the year one thousand greatly harmed the cause of the gospel.

Towards 1660 there arose in Great Britain the fanatics of the "Fifth Monarchy". Persuaded that Daniel's prophecy was to be fulfilled in their day, they proclaimed "King Jesus" and attacked the armed force, with the assurance that they would not get hurt. As they refused to surrender, massacres and the gallows put an end to their sincere but mistaken heroism.

The scientific genius of Swedenborg, the famed Scandinavian seer, and the remarkable gifts of Edward Irving, the pious Scottish ancestor of Pentecostalism, were partly wasted on prophetic speculations and expectations which were never realized.

We were able to observe at Salt Lake City, the Mecca of the Mormons, to what degree of blind fanaticism and honest fervour, of immorality and virtues, millions of men can be brought through gross and naive views on prophecy.

The history of the Adventist movement shows its pioneers in 1843 giving up all work, distributing their goods and preparing no food for the day which they believed would witness the Lord's return. Nothing happened on that date. It was therefore announced that God, in His profound wisdom, had allowed an error of one year. Nothing happened in 1844. As a result, internal controversies rent the movement and seven branches which issued from it independently and successively fixed the Second Coming for the years 1847, 50, 52, 54, 55, 66, 67, 68, 77, and so on. . . For years, the Adventist children were taken out of school because the imminent return of Christ rendered their education superfluous.

The imposter Dowie, who momentarily bewitched Arthur Booth-Clibborn and his associates, as well as the illustrious Dr. Torrey, was a master in unfulfilled prophecy. In a lesser, but yet dangerous degree, we may mention Pearsall Smith whose fame knew, during the second Oxford movement which he inspired, a surprising rise and decline. Let us also mention Smith's occasional associate, Wood, who ended his life in a scandalous way in Brighton where he had undertaken to revive the Court of King Solomon.

The shirt-maker from Pittsburgh, Russell, who called himself "pastor" without having any right to the title, who was condemned in his shameful divorce, and who could not win the action he brought for libel against his courageous denouncers, also fell into prophetic impos-

tures. And so did his disciples and his plagiarists. And so did the noisy Rutherford, a gifted businessman whose alleged title of "judge" left no trace whatever in the year-books of the American magistracy which were consulted upon our request by a member of the New York bar. The latter could only conclude that, instead of having been judge of the Supreme Court of the United States — as the Europeans were made too often to believe — Rutherford may have temporarily occupied a judge's bench in some remote place, and played such an unimportant part that it was not thought necessary to mention his name in the specialized archives.

After the French Revolution of 1848 and the coup d'état of 1852, some Baptists from Northern France believed, from a study of prophecy, that catastrophes and obstacles to the gospel were to paralyze their remarkable pioneer work. With their pastors at their head, several important groups within their churches left for America. Superhuman hardships decimated many, as they attempted to clear the land of the Far West. The others settled there and showed great Christian faithfulness; but the fruits of their testimony were infinitely fewer than those they could have borne if they had persevered in their own country. Thus, because of an error in prophetic interpretation, the rise of their Baptist movement in France was probably delayed by a century. Their correspondence of that time witnesses to the fact that they deeply regretted their course of action. With great emotion did we visit the small graveyard in Southern Illinois which preserves the names of many of them.

We also keep vivid memories of the impressive pictures which, in 1895, covered the walls of one of the rooms of a London town-hall, on the occasion of a series of lectures on prophecy delivered by the fiery and original Baxter who had fixed the Lord's return for 1897, then successively for the years 1901, 1905, 1931. At the same time he was distributing in the streets of Paris enormous quantities of gospels together with strangely illustrated leaflets on prophecy. In those leaflets, the author wanted to do better than those who had seen in the 666 of Revelation a symbolical representation of the name of Napoleon III, then of his nephew Prince Jerome: Baxter candidly believed that General Boulanger was the one mentioned in the book of Revelation . . .

In 1923, at the bedside of the indefatigable pioneer Julien Sainton, then in hospital, we once more talked to him about his favourite subject, evangelization. We were dumbfounded as he answered: "I do not feel called to evangelize any more, for the important thing is to prepare the imminent return of Christ, which I expect to witness." A few weeks later this good and faithful servant of God entered, but in a different way, into the joy of his Lord. With great sincerity he had been led astray throughout his pamphlet dedicated "To the Church of God" to warn the Christians of the impending coming of Christ. He wrote for instance: "1914 marks the beginning of the pouring of the seventh vial. 1935 must be looked upon as the close of the upheavals which must precede the glorious return of Christ with His saints and the inauguration of His Kingdom. It is therefore towards 1933-35 that the era of the blessed millennium will be opened . . ." Elsewhere we could read: "It was God's purpose that the Arabs should adopt the Crescent as a symbol for their conquests. After being at the full, the moon must decrease . . .; while the Ottoman empire was gradually falling to pieces, the Jews have come back in

great numbers to their former country. Today, it is by the million that they have made their way to the Promised Land . . . The death-blow has been given to the Ottoman power: The way is open . . ." Let us notice here that: first, since its last war, Turkey's recovery has thus far been most extraordinary; secondly, up to this day around one million Jews have, since 1914, returned to Palestine; this is a very small portion of the seventeen million which the Jews numbered before Hitler's slaughter. During the same period of time New York City alone has added a greater number of immigrants to its Israelitish population, which now numbers approximately three million. Let us also explain that, at the time when the Jewish immigration to Palestine was started, it was connected with the vast transfers of population which then shook the whole Middle East. Following the treaties concluded at that time, no less than two million and a half people returned to the respective countries of their ancestors, from Greece to Asia Minor and from Asia Minor to Greece. Let us also note that, on account of the stern opposition from a vast Arab majority, the settling of the Jews in Palestine was and remains extremely difficult. Let us finally remark that the recent sufferings of the Israelites in Europe have gone beyond anything that the world knew before 1914. Here again, the interpreter had been misled.

Finally there is a haunting memory we cannot pass by in silence. On the 6th day of March, 1932, two remarkable servants of God from abroad afforded us great pleasure when, unexpectedly, they came to spend one Sunday with us at our church. Our brother was full of his meeting with Benito Mussolini only the day before. During the course of their conversation with the Italian dictator, our visitor, a fervent disciple of the Darby-Scofield school, revealed to Mussolini his certainty that the Roman Empire would shortly be re-established and he very sincerely believed that this certainty was based on prophecy. For very obvious reasons, the Duce welcomed this unexpected disclosure with the greatest interest. When closely questioned, the visitor went into details, reading biblical texts which supported his conviction. Italy's ruler made careful note of it all. Well may we presume that he was thus encouraged to crystallize his plans which, starting with Ethiopia and then continuing with France, were to bring mounting sorrows to the world. This is a new and striking example of the incalculable influence that can be exerted by any venturesome interpretation of prophecy on the part of men however well-meaning. Other evangelicals in every country and particularly in France would like to see us forget the emphasis which not long ago they were laying so vociferously on the divine mission of the Duce and Hitler — the former having shown himself cynically criminal and the latter immensely proud, cruel and dissolute.

IV.

We took no pleasure in dwelling on those lamentable facts which show an elite of pious people unconsciously working to spread, together with the worst imposters, misleading and poisonous views issuing from the father of lies. But we feel bound to warn our readers: for what are the results? Unjust prejudices are inflicted on the gospel, held responsible for the false prophets' hazardous guesses. Those prophets fall into disrepute, to the detriment of their influence for good. The deceived Christians are encouraged to welcome these sensational systems of prophecy or get discouraged at their contact.

The natural man himself is greatly wronged, when the emphasis laid on prophecy muffles "the Voice of the Blood of Christ". True servants of God are led astray. The flesh and Satan are given the opportunity to oppose brethren who could have otherwise enjoyed perfect fellowship.

Bible School Lesson Outline

Vol. 20 First Quarter Lesson 5 January 29, 1956

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

JESUS FACES APOSTATE RELIGIOUS LEADERS

Lesson Text: Luke 6:1-11.

Golden Text: "And he said unto them, That the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath."—Luke 6:5.

I. Works of Necessity on the Sabbath: verses 1-5.

Parallel Passages: Matthew 12:1-9; Mark 2:23-28.

The Pharisees as a sect came into being before the New Testament era. Originally they stood for the purity of the law of God, as opposed to the idolatrous practices of the heathen. They believed in separation from evil and upheld the teachings of the law. As time went on, however, they became narrow, selfish and self-righteous in their outlook, considering that they alone enjoyed the favour of Jehovah, forgetting that they had been blessed in order that they might be a blessing to others, and that the light of the law of God, revealed to them, should be passed on to those in darkness. Spiritual pride characterized them (Luke 18:9-14).

From the very beginning they opposed the Saviour, viewing His deeds in the light of their own prejudices and being unwilling to accept His witness to the Father's love and mercy which would be extended to all mankind. Thinking to justify their hatred of the Christ, whose every attitude and act rebuked their false pride and hypocrisy, they watched for an opportunity to condemn Him.

On this occasion they thought that they had discovered Him failing to uphold the law regarding the sabbath. On "the second sabbath after the first", probably the first sabbath after the second day of unleavened bread, the disciples had plucked some grain as they walked through the field and had eaten the kernels.

The action of the disciples in gathering and eating the grain was permitted (Deut. 23:25), but the law commanded that no labour be performed on the sabbath (Exod. 35:2, 3; Numb. 15:32-36); it was a day of rest. The Lord's sanction shows that this was a case of necessity, for the disciples had evidently become hungry in their journeying. Only self-righteous Pharisees would have interpreted the action of picking and crushing the ripened grain as labour. The Pharisees had entirely misunderstood the spirit of the law; the Lord desires mercy, rather than sacrifice (Hos. 6:6; Mic. 6:6-8; Matt. 12:7).

Our Saviour answered them wisely; the Scriptures are our weapon of defense. He cited the example of King David, whom the Pharisees did not dare to criticize. The holy shewbread, ordinarily eaten by priests only, was put to sacred use when it provided food for the king and his followers in their time of extremity (1 Sam. 21:1-6).

Moreover, the priests also profaned the sabbath in the sense that the performance of their regular duties in the temple and the preparation of the sacrifices involved toil (Matt. 12:5). Mercy is to season justice. Since the sabbath was made for man, caring for the welfare of men is to be considered a higher duty than that of protecting institutions.

Christ Himself has supreme authority in all matters and He is Lord even of the sabbath; whatever He sanctions is right. The Pharisees disputed about trivial matters which would not have caused difficulty, if they had recognized and accepted the Lordship of Christ. He has the answer to all our problems, and since in Him all truth resides, His word is final.

II. Deeds of Mercy on the Sabbath: verses 6-11.

Parallel Passages: Matthew 12:10-13; Mark 3:1-6.

With this moral defeat ranking in their breasts, the Pharisees sought the more fiercely to ensnare the Christ, whose very goodness rebuked their wickedness. What a terrible attitude for any one to entertain when entering the house of God! Of what profit would the services of the synagogue be to such dissembling hypocrites? They rendered themselves unfit to receive the blessing of the Lord. We must enter the house of the Lord in humility.

On this another sabbath they again watched Christ with critical eyes to see whether or not He would heal the man with the withered hand. The Saviour, although He knew the bitter intent of their hearts, deliberately summoned the man into His presence. Matthew states that the Pharisees voiced their criticism in words: "Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath days?" (Matt. 12:10). Christ answered them by posing a question to them: "Is it lawful on the sabbath days to do good, or to do evil? to save life or destroy it?" According to their logic, if miracles of healing, which were for good and for the saving of life, were not legitimate on the sabbath days, then deeds of evil for the destruction of life must of necessity be sanctioned.

The Pharisees would not listen to His reasoning, and unable to gainsay the miracle performed in their midst (Luke 5:24), they were filled with rage because they had been put to confusion before the people. The truth of God is the touchstone which reveals the hidden sin of the heart (Heb. 4:12, 13). From henceforth they were determined to destroy Him, seeking only the best means to accomplish their evil purpose.

This incident teaches us that we are not to give up our convictions of truth when opposed by the forces of wickedness. It also shows the folly of attempting to resist the truth of God (2 Cor. 13:8). To harden oneself against the Lord and against His truth is to invite disaster (Mark 3:5; 2 Thess. 3:2).

Daily Bible Readings

Jan. 23—Apostate Leaders are Cruel	Matt. 23:1-5
Jan. 24—Apostate Leaders are Proud	Matt. 23:6-12
Jan. 25—Apostate Leaders are Blind	Matt. 23:16-22
Jan. 26—Apostate Leaders are Hypocrites	Matt. 23:23-28
Jan. 27—Apostate Leaders are Evil	Matt. 23:29-35
Jan. 28—Apostate Leaders are Reprobates	2 Tim. 3:1-8
Jan. 29—Apostate Leaders are Doomed	Jude 1-16

A MODERN PARABLE

"Now it came to pass on a day at noon that the Editor was a guest of a certain rich man. And the lunch was enjoyed at a popular restaurant. And the waiters were very efficient. And the food was good.

"Now when the end of the meal was at hand, the waiter brought unto the host the check. And the host examined it, frowned a bit, but made no comment.

"But as we arose to depart, I observed that he laid some coins under the edge of his plate. I know not what denominations the coins were; howbeit, the waiter who stood nearby smiled happily, which being interpreted, means the tip was satisfactory.

"Now this parable enteth not into merits or demerits of tipping. But as I meditate on the coins that become tips throughout our nation, I begin to think of tips and tithes. For the proverbial tip should be at least a tithe, lest the waiter turn against you.

"And as I continue to think on these things, it came unto me that few people who go to church treat their God as well as their waiter. For they give unto the waiter a tithe, but unto God they give whatever they think will get them by.

"Verily, doth man fear the waiter more than he feareth God? And doth he love God less than he love the waiter? Or doth the waiter do more for him than his God?"

—DR. HAROLD G. BASDEN

In Gaines Street Builder

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