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The Jarvis Street Pulpit HOPE FOR SECRET DISCIPLES

A Sermon by Dr. T. T. Shields

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Morning, Feb. 21st, 1932.

(Stenographically Reported)

"And after this Joseph of Arimathaea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave him leave. He came therefore, and took the body of Jesus.

"And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight."

—John 19:38, 39.

IN THESE verses we have condensed the story of the two secret disciples. They were both men of position, men of prominence in the circles to which they belonged; hence they were men who wielded a very considerable influence. They were certainly men of intelligence, and men who were spiritually enlightened. They "waited for the kingdom of God". And in their hearts they believed in Jesus; they were in heart His disciples. But it was not generally known: they were His disciples secretly "for fear of the Jews". And they represent, I think, a type with which we meet frequently to-day. Missionaries in foreign lands tell us of many who in their hearts have yielded to Christ, but do not openly confess Him. Among the Jews still there are to be found many who secretly believe that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah. But open avowal of their faith would involve them in such difficulty that they endeavour to nourish their faith secretly, and no one knows that they have received Jesus in their hearts. And among ordinary Gentiles, common folk like ourselves, there are many who have been brought up religiously, who from their youth have been instructed in the things of God, who have attended Sunday School and the public worship of God's house, have heard the gospel and have yielded an intellectual assent to it, and, indeed, may have permitted its truth to enter their hearts, and are at heart believers in the Lord Jesus, but they have never made confession of their faith: they are secret disciples.

I speak this morning in the hope of discovering some

of them, and of leading them to an open avowal, a courageous confession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

I.

LET US BEGIN WITH THE ENQUIRY, WHAT IS IT TO BE A DISCIPLE OF JESUS? In what respect did these two men differ from the Jews about them, and particularly from others who were instructed in the law, and were recognized as rulers of the people? They are described as men "who waited for the kingdom of God": They were, evidently, in the first place men who believed the word of God, and their belief in the ancient scriptures led them to expect that sometime the kingdom of God would appear, and the King would come. They were not cavilers; they had no sympathy whatever with those who in that day withheld their confidence from the inspired writings. There were some who were known as Sadducees, who were the ancient rationalists, who did not believe in the supernatural, who denied the possibility of resurrection, and the reality of the existence of angels. Their religion was a kind of ethical religion, a religion that consisted in endeavouring outwardly to do that which was right—a mere morality divorced from the supernatural power of God. Against such our Lord Himself warned His disciples, bidding them beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees. But Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus did not belong to that cult. They were believers, obviously, in the word of God to begin with. And that is a distinctive matter, when one has escaped the prevailing unbelief, when one has not entered into

partnership with those who deny and repudiate the supernaturalness of the Christian revelation, who in their hearts believe that the Bible is the very word of God. I meet a great number of people who, while not professing Christians, declare their belief in the Bible. I met one not long since, who gave us a reason for not attending church — that ministers no longer preach the Bible. This man said to me, "I would go to church if I could be sure I should hear the Bible expounded because I believe the Bible; I was brought up to believe it, and I still believe it is the word of God." I said, "Are you a Christian, sir?" "Oh, no, I am not a Christian. I do not pretend to be a Christian. I make no profession of religion at all; but I do believe the Bible is the Word of God." Well, so far, so good. That is a distinct advantage. There may be some here this morning who, by the providence of God, have been rendered immune to that terrible contagion which has corrupted so many minds, and made it difficult for them to believe the promises of God.

Well, in the next place, it is quite evident that these two men had recognized in Jesus "One in Whom the ancient scriptures were fulfilled. When Nicodemus came to Jesus he said, "We know that thou art a teacher come from God; we know that Thou art different from all the other teachers, and no man can do these miracles which Thou doest unless God were with him." Nicodemus recognized in Jesus at least One of the great prophets, in Whom the word of God was fulfilled. He recognized that early in the ministry of our Lord. And I am inclined to believe that his faith had been deepened, and his conception broadened, and that he had come later to apprehend more of the truth than he did when, on the one occasion recorded, he went to Jesus by night. Joseph of Arimathea, too, was a man who saw in Jesus something more than a mere prophet. He had yielded heart and intellect to Him as One Who had come from God. I do not suppose that at the beginning they were thus profoundly convinced that Jesus was the Messiah. They seem to have been men upon whom that great truth gradually dawned.

Now will you follow me a moment in my endeavour to analyze this mental state, for perhaps there are some here whose condition is analogous to that of Joseph and Nicodemus.

Truth always agrees with truth. Truth has an affinity for truth. We have a proverb to the effect that "birds of a feather flock together". Truth is like a homing pigeon that always comes home at last. Like Noah's dove, it returns to the source whence it went forth. "If any man will do his will, he shall know". Whenever the soul is brought, by divine grace, into an attitude of sincere enquiry, sincerely desirous of knowing the truth, when heart and mind are hospitably disposed toward the truth, the truth will be sure to find its way to that habitation.

It is of no use, dear friends, for people to object to the gospel on the ground that they found it intellectually incredible. Your difficulty is never an intellectual one, primarily. It may seem to be so. It may be that there are some here this morning who say, "I cannot go all the way and openly declare that I receive Jesus as the Messiah, as the Saviour, as the Redeemer, as the Son of God, but I am profoundly interested. I find that my heart is kindled at the mention of His name. I have discovered that if there was any native antagonism toward Him it

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has been removed, and I am now hospitably disposed toward any word that exalts Him, that magnifies Him; I rejoice in it. Intellectually I have not accepted the whole Christian programme as yet, but I am disposed to be hospitable to the truth. Where there is a heart to receive the truth, the truth will not be long in knocking at its door.

There is a very striking instance in John's gospel of a man who had been blind from his birth. He was what would be called educationally to-day I suppose an underprivileged man. Surely one avenue of correspondence with the outside world had been entirely closed to him and while other senses to him perhaps were rendered more acute, he must have been deprived of many opportunities of gaining knowledge which were open to other people. But there came a time when the Prophet of Nazareth came his way, and anointed his eyes, and told him to go and wash in the pool of Siloam, and he washed, and he came seeing. And then you remember the enquiry that was instituted, how the doctors of the law began to ask questions. First of all they denied the reality of the miracle, and they said, "It is somebody else; it is not true that this man was born blind and he has received his sight." And then they called the parents of the man, and they said, "What do you say about this man? Is he your son?" "Yes; he is our son." "Is it true that he was born blind?" "Yes; he was born blind." "Well then, by what means does he now see?" "Oh," they said, "he is of age; ask him. He is our son, and he was born blind. But by what means he now seeth we know not; or who hath opened his eyes, we know not: he is of

age; ask him he shall speak for himself" — this they said because they were afraid openly to confess Jesus, and perhaps somewhat indisposed at present, though grateful to the One Who had brought such blessing to the son whom they loved. Then they returned to the man himself, and said, "Now tell us about this." And he said, "But I have told you already. Will ye also be his disciples? Are you really earnest enquirers? Do you really want to know who He is?" They said, "We are Moses' disciples. As for this fellow, we know not from whence he is."

Now please observe that this man had never been to college; he had never sat at the feet of any of the doctors of the law; he had not had the advantages which many of his day had, and yet he made an answer which was profound in the extreme. He said, "I have heard the confession of your agnosticism, and all that you have to say is that you do not know where He comes from. Well, I do not know much myself, but I know more than that. And it is a marvellous thing that ye know not from whence He is, and yet He hath opened mine eyes. Now look! Here I am! I see as clearly as you can. Explain that, will you?" And they said, "Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us?" And they cast him out.

I have often followed that man in my thought, after he had been cast out. He must have said, "I wonder Who He is? for you will remember he had said to his interrogators, "Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind." And when they said, "We know that this man is a sinner," he said, "Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see. Can a man who is a sinner do these miracles? I do not know who He is. I have not been taught, but I am wonderfully interested in Him, and I am profoundly grateful to Him, and I have already received benefits from His hands. My eyes are opened." But they cast him out.

Later Jesus met him in the temple. He said, "I do not know where to go. I do not know how to express my gratitude, but I will go to the temple anyhow. I am grateful to whatever God there is, and I will go to the temple."

Talk about following the "gleam"! There was a man who followed the "gleam". And Jesus met him in the temple, and he said, "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" And he said, "Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him?"

Did you ever see a piece of ripe fruit just waiting to be plucked when nature had done its work, when the sun had kissed it, and it was mature and ripe, made so by heavenly powers? And you had only to touch it, and it just fell into your hand.

Now this man had come gradually to an understanding of the truth — not all at once. Some did come all at once, but not this man. And he said, "Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him? If you will only show Him to me I will believe on Him." And He said, "Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee." "Thou art He! Lord, I believe!" and down on his face he went, and worshipped Him.

I think I shall never be charged with underestimating the value of a clear apprehension of the great doctrines of the word of God. I hope I shall never be understood to undervalue correct opinions. On the other hand, per-

sonally, I feel the strongest objection to that attitude of mind which would shut people up to a realm of logic, and analyze everything, and assume that salvation, as I have heard it put, lies at the end of a syllogism; and as long as you can analyze the scripture, and correctly argue to a point, and say, "Christ died for sinners, and I am a sinner, and therefore He died for me, and I believe that, and therefore I am saved", and there is no repentance, and no heart surrender to God at all. Oh, there is a work, a subjective work of the Spirit of God in the hearts of men, illustrated in the man to whom I have referred, and illustrated equally in the case of Joseph and Nicodemus, men upon whom Jesus Christ dawned, just as the sun rising in the morning, for we are to remember that we are speaking of a period which belongs on the other side of the cross. The complete revelation of the cross was yet to be unfolded. And I shall show you presently what effect it had at last upon one man. I think, upon both. But on the other side of the cross they had observed His miracles, they had listened to His matchless teaching, and so far as they knew now to do it, they yielded mind and heart to the Prophet of Nazareth, and had become, in disposition and attitude of soul, disciples of Jesus, ready to follow Him, believing that He was a good Man, and very probably the Messiah Who was to come. But even though they accepted Him as the Messiah from the Old Testament revelation, apart from the full-orbed disclosure of God in Christ through the cross and the empty grave, it was impossible for any of them to understand all that was implied in the Messianic prophecy.

Now I believe there are many people like that to-day, whose minds have been exercised with these tremendous problems of the soul. They have read many books; they have been assailed on every side by all kinds of doubts and enquiries, and yet they want the truth, and are ready to receive the truth in the love of it, because they love the truth, because the Spirit of God, in His matchless mercy, has prepared their hearts for its reception. But they are not enrolled among the disciples of Jesus — they are disciples of Jesus secretly.

There are some of you here this morning whose regular attendance at this place is in itself an indication of an abiding interest in religious things. Talking to a young man who is to be baptized this evening I said, "How often have you come here?" "Well," he said, "I have been coming now for the last two or three Sundays in succession. Prior to that I came occasionally." I said, "Why did you come occasionally?" "Because," he said, "I always went out feeling that I was the meanest man in Toronto, and so uncomfortable that I felt I could not keep coming." But at last he came not to church only but back to Christ. And then he was happy.

Now I say there are many here this morning about whose position, religiously, I am not sure. You have given me no reason whatever to be sure. And I suppose those who know you even more intimately than I, may still be somewhat in doubt as to where you stand, because you have not openly declared yourself. There are people like Joseph and Nicodemus — people religiously disposed, interested in all good matters, and yet not openly, before the world, disciples of Jesus.

II.

LET US LOOK FOR A MOMENT TO SEE WHAT THIS SECRECY INVOLVED. What did it mean to the men themselves? *It must have ministered to an attitude of uncertainty.* I have frequently tried to explain to you that God works

in harmony with the nature of things, and sometimes does that which is beyond nature, but the laws of mind are known to Him because He made us. When He opened the heart of Lydia He came to the door of her heart, as a master comes to his own house, and puts the key into the lock, and opens it, and, without violence, makes entrance for himself and takes possession. It was because he was Lydia's Lord He could open the heart of Lydia just as you can open the door of the house where you live. And so, when the Lord comes to us, he deals with us according to the constitution of our own mind. He does no violence to our mental faculty. He does not ask that we stultify ourselves, and that our minds, as such, with all their powers, should cease to function. But, knowing us as He does, He enters in, and takes possession in harmony with the operation of those principles of which He is the Author.

Now let me discuss a principle with you for a moment. There are people who are not very careful to assure themselves of the accuracy of certain reports before they repeat them. They tell things very often that are not true, not always perhaps with the deliberate intention of deceiving anybody, but, like a newspaper reporter you know, they have "a nose for news". And they grasp at any kind of report which they can pass on to somebody else. Whether it is true or false it does not disturb them. It is what the newspaper men call a "good story". "Put it in print as long as it will not get us into serious trouble immediately, and cannot immediately be denied." Well then, they pass on the report. Now that person repeats that, says it a second time, and a third time, and a fourth time, and keeps on saying it until by and by the man or woman has persuaded himself or herself that the thing is actually true. Do you know that you can tell a lie and tell it so often that at last it becomes truth to you. You can persuade yourself that the thing that is utterly contrary to truth if you keep on telling it, is actually true. That is the principle of advertising—the stuff may be no good, but if you keep on telling people that it is the only thing in the world somebody will be sure to buy it after a while. They will hear about it a hundred times, five hundred, perhaps a thousand times, but if they hear it often enough they will be caught. They will go into the store and buy the thing. That is how the charlatans of the world prosper; that is how the religious fakers make their way. Medical quacks prosper in the same way. They keep on telling a thing — though there may not be an infinitesimal element of truth in it — till people hear it so often they believe it. Some people have a way, you know, of exaggerating a story.

Ian Maclaren, Dr. John Watson, had a visitor in his home at one time, and in the course of the talk the visitor told a story. One of the boys chuckled to himself as though he had discovered something funny. So he turned to him and said, "What is there so funny in that?" "Oh, nothing in the story itself, but I was just wishing you could hear that story when my father tells it. You would not know it." That is how the most infamous falsehoods on earth are given wings, and they spread to the uttermost parts of the earth, and no one can overtake them for the simple reason that where there is expression there is always impression. I have discovered that after a prayer meeting the part of the meeting that certain people remember most distinctly is the part they had in it. I have heard men talk about an

ordination council for instance, which has lasted for hours, and a certain man remembers one part of it, namely the question which he asked. Expression always has a reaction upon the mind in the way of impression, and the thing that you keep on saying not only goes out, but it goes in. That is what Jesus meant when He said that it is not what goes into a man, but what goes out of him that defiles him. And you can keep on saying until by and by the whole mind is polluted and corrupted, and becomes incapable of receiving the truth, because you have imposed upon it a kind of paralysis.

Now that principle holds in respect to the truth itself. Once the truth is revealed to us it becomes established in our own minds, and our convictions are deepened just as we allow our lips to express the things which we believe. If you would be a stalwart Christian, one whose faith is unshaken by all the winds that blow, then you must take every opportunity of confessing your faith, and the oftener your faith is confessed the stronger it will become. That is why I am continually saying to our students that it is of little value for them to get things from books. Will that shock you! It is a fact; unless, indeed, they get them from books and take them into their own mental constitutions, until it becomes part of their mental fibre, and they learn to think these things for themselves just by becoming part of them. Impression is made in the measure in which expression is given.

Now Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathaea lost a great blessing. If they had only said, as did Philip to Nathaniel, "We have found him, of whom Moses in the law; and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth." And I am sure that when Philip said that even the telling of it deepened his conviction that Jesus was the very One of whom Moses and the prophets did write. And if you are to grow up into Christ it must be by constant testimony and witness. And as you grow up into Christ you will be rooted and grounded in Him, and established in Him as you have been taught. But to be a disciple secretly, to hold a truth within the realm of your own mind, and never to let it out — well the truth will be like a little child of whom I read the other day, a terrible story of a father and mother who had shut their little girl up in a clothes closet for — I do not know how many years. And they kept her a prisoner. And when at last it was discovered through the report of a brother, and the child was brought out, she was not a fully developed child, as she would have been if she had been brought out and allowed to eat at the table, and walk the streets, and play with other children, and go to school, but she was dwarfed and diminutive and sub-normal. Do not keep your faith in a clothes closet. Do not shut it up in a box. Do not keep it to yourself. Let it come out, and let it grow until by and by you have the faith of men and of women.

I am pointing out to you that *the secret disciple robs himself or herself of the greatest of all joys by the way fact that they allow their discipleship to remain secret.* Joseph and Nicodemus had not grown in these three years as they might have grown; they had not become strong as they might have become strong had they boldly acknowledged their faith. So, my dear friends, for your own sake you cannot afford to allow your discipleship to remain secret. You must let it out if you are going to have a blessing.

Then in the next place, *they failed to make their proper contribution to the progress of evangelical truth as rep-*

resented in the person of our Lord Jesus. They knew something about Jesus which they did not tell. They knew more about Him than the majority of people about them believed; and if they did not know all there was to know about Him — and no one knows that — they knew enough to have justified their testimony.

I love to read of the beginning of the apostle Paul's ministry, when as it were scales fell from his eyes, and he rose and was baptized and straightway he preached Christ in the synagogue that He was the Son of God. He got to work immediately. The faith that was in him burned its way out into the open, until at once they began to say that he now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed.

That is why you students must be engaged in practical work. You must be making your contribution to the ongoing of Christ's cause. What right has any man to withhold his testimony when he has a testimony to give? Oh, how much the cause of Christ needed the testimony of men like Joseph and Nicodemus. They had not consented — you know they were members of the Sanhedrin, both of them, and they did not vote — they had not consented to the deed of them, but they did not protest.

You do not do much by staying at home on election day, let me tell you. "Oh," you say, "but I did not vote!" Yes, you did. You stayed away and let the other man vote. You were silent. You must be positive in your testimony. It is valueless merely to take a negative attitude like that, to fail to make your proper contribution to the progress of the cause of Christ.

Supposing we all did as you do who are secret disciples, what then? There would be no church here or anywhere else. If you have a right to be silent, so have I, so have all these Christian workers here. If you have any right to keep your discipleship secret so have we all. Then there would be no testimony to Christ at all anywhere. They failed to make their proper contribution to the cause of Christ, and they failed equally to set a worthy example before others.

I remember being in a prayer meeting once where there was a very wise preacher. There were a company of preachers in the prayer meeting, and the time came for prayer and testimony after the opening exercises. There had been singing and the reading of the Word. As soon as the leader of the meeting threw it open there was a pause, silence. The one preacher got up and said, "Well, Brother So-and-So, I shall speak and get out of the way." And he said a word or two, and sat down. And the others got up and said the same thing. They spoke and "got out of the way" too. The three or four preachers there gave their testimony and sat down, and then the prayer meeting went on like wildfire. Supposing they had been silent? Someone would have said, "Well he has not spoken yet!" And everyone would have been waiting for those preachers to speak. That would have been a regular Quakers' meeting.

Now you old-stagers in the prayer meeting, when you come to the prayer meeting, we do not want you to be quiet but speak quickly and briefly, and get "out of the way" so that the young ones can come on after you. If you just sit there someone will say, "Brother . . . has not spoken yet;" "Brother . . . has not spoken"; "Brother . . . has not prayed yet" and someone else. And they will wait and justify their silence until those who are older in years have had their say. But when they have

spoken someone will say, "Well now, it must be my turn".

My point is this, that by doing nothing we set an example to other people. By failing to confess Christ ourselves we justify the silence of those who are younger in the faith. And so we ought to be foremost in our testimony, instead of being secret disciples like Joseph and Nicodemus.

III.

I WONDER WHY THEY WERE SECRET, WHY THEY KEPT IT TO THEMSELVES? "For fear of the Jews". Actually; both Joseph and Nicodemus were afraid. You remember it says where Nicodemus is mentioned here, "the same who at the first came to Jesus by night." He is a marked man. He came to Jesus by night.

I have had people telephone me and say, "I should like to see you." I remember a very important man, a very prominent man, telephoning me and saying, "I should like to see you." Well, come along. "Well would you mind if I came late?" No; I do not mind what time. "I do not want anyone to see me calling on you." "Well, come any time you like. Come at twelve o'clock, one o'clock or two o'clock if you like. I shall wait up for you." That was not a very brave, a very courageous thing. Afraid to come, for fear anyone would see him! And my dear friends, it is sometimes the case with men who have something at stake, that they fear. You must not put it down to special courage for some people to confess Christ. It is more difficult for some than for others. Joseph and Nicodemus were men of prominence, as religious leaders. There are lots of people who come here from the United Church, and the Presbyterian Church, and other churches, and they say, "I enjoy these services. I love to hear the word of God, and I often wish I were with you — but, of course, you know my position. I am an officer in the church, and all my antecedents were Presbyterians" — or "Methodists" or whatever it is — "and of course if I were to take a stand it would be known all over before the evening. So will you just allow me to slip into the back seat, and not say anything about it!"

You remember the great man with his master and honourable—Naaman the leper. When he was cleansed he asked for a special indulgence — almost like a Roman Catholic. He said, "When I get back home and my master goes into the house of his god, and my master shall lean upon my hand — of course I do not believe in Rimmon now, I believe in the God of Israel — if I bow myself in the house of Rimmon as though I were a worshipper, let me be forgiven." Poor Naaman was a great man with his master and honourable because the Lord had by him wrought deliverance to Syria, and the terror of his name had been put into the hearts of all the foes of Syria; a great man on the field of battle, but an arrant coward morally. He did not want to lose his job, or lose caste in the social circle to which he belonged.

A man wrote me a letter one day. It was when we were broadcasting. He said, "I am a janitor, and my son and I look after a great apartment. And one Sunday evening when we were on duty a lady in the apartment said, 'Would you like a hot dinner?' because they were accustomed to take their evening meal with them as they had to be on duty. I said, 'We should be very glad of it'. And she said, 'Well, when we get through you come up, and we will give you your dinner'. We went up and the door was open, and the radio was turned on, and we heard the Jarvis Street Service. We sat down, and

the dinner was put before us, and I said, "That is Jarvis Street." "Oh," said the lady, "how do you know?" "Oh, I go there whenever I can go to church." "You do! If I had known that I would not have given you a dinner!" But she was listening to the sermon. And in the quiet of her own home — of course, it did not cost her anything, literally — she was listening; but she was afraid of the Jews.

There are many such. Now I do not know what would minister to your fear, I am sure. But for some reason some of you perhaps have been turned from making open confession of your faith.

There is a word in Mark I must quote to you before I close. Joseph, you see, ceased to be a secret disciple. On the other side of the cross he was a disciple of Jesus secretly. And I am sure that when Jesus died and the earth shook in sympathy with its Maker's death, all the attendant circumstances together with the demeanour of that glorious Victor, served to convince Joseph that Jesus was the Messiah. The centurion said, you know, "Truly, this man was the Son of God." And then Mark tells us this, that after Jesus died, Joseph of Arimathea came, and — listen! — went boldly unto Pilate and craved the body of Jesus. He said, "I will be afraid no longer." And Nicodemus came with spices and these two men who had kept their interest in Jesus secretly, in view of the cross, threw caution to the winds and boldly let the world know that they were on the side of the Crucified.

I tell you the cross of Jesus Christ ought to put an end to all our fear. The cross of Jesus Christ ought to inspire us with the greatest possible courage. He Who died and rose again ought to make heroes of us all, and will, if we will just yield ourselves to Him.

May the Lord lead us so to do this morning. He died in your room and stead. All your sins were laid upon Him. Into the grave He went and out again He came in resurrection power and glory, and you were in His accepted, and rejoice in your salvation.

Let us pray:

We thank Thee, Lord that Thou art so infinitely patient with us, that though we have often behaved so shamefully yet Thou dost have compassion upon us, and Thou come give us another opportunity of declaring our faith in Thee. O Lord bring the backslider home this morning. Bring many, who in their hearts have been trusting Christ, to open confession; and may others who have seen men as trees walking, to whose mind have come but the first grey streaks of dawn, may the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, shine unto them. Bring many not only to Thyself, but to open confession this morning, for Thy name's sake, Amen.

SUNDAY IN JARVIS STREET

The preacher on the past Lord's Day was Pastor Samuel Dempster of Fundamental Baptist Church in Kingston, Ontario. In the morning his subject was "What The Church Needs". In the evening he spoke on "Life For Less Than Ten-Cents". The presence of the Lord was felt at all services and two responded to profess faith in Christ.

ANOTHER SEMINARIAN OFF THE PRESS

Another issue of *The Seminarian*, the publication of the students of Toronto Baptist Seminary has come off the press. This sixteen page issue combines the January and February numbers and is full of good articles by students and faculty members. If you desire a copy, write Mr. H. Hill, 337 Jarvis St., Toronto 2.

Bigger — But Better?

By Edwin Raymond Anderson

There are two words in our English language which often are confused one with the other. They are frequently used as if they were synonyms.

Both words are composed of six letters. Both begin with the letter "b". Both end with the same two letters, "er". But there the similarity ends. There is where it is meant to end.

The first of these two words is "bigger", and the other is "better". And it is vainly imagined that what is "bigger" is always "better". Never is that vanity fraught with greater consequence than when carried into the realm of the Lord's work.

Someone has said that Americans have a mania for bigness. An observation of certain business affairs and public endeavours certainly gives the impression that there is a passionate worship of the great god "Big". A passion for magnitude, for an overwhelming of former things, for the wide spread and the loud noise, has taken hold of us. We are told that America's vastness is what made her great. Because we have the most of the best we are sitting on top of the world heap.

However, a great deal of bitterness exists beneath the boom of bigness. Bigness has not lessened the scourge of crime nor obliterated the host of sorrows and tragedies which are evident everywhere.

When the Lord's people join the world in its worship of the great god "Big" something is wrong. In many organizations everything done for the Lord must be on a "giant" scale, and this very thing has become a searching measure of our true smallness. To the Old Testament question, "Who hath despised the day of small things?" there are some embarrassing answers in these latter days. The intense itch to be up to date has produced a bad rush, and spiritually hungry people who are looking for the deeper, quieter things of the Spirit are left on the sidelines disappointed over the shallowness. They are confused and bewildered by those of the Christian company who imagine that the blessings must be served by jet propulsion.

We profess, of course, to follow the old-fashioned gospel. We claim that nothing has really changed in this old world. Sin is still sin; speeded up a bit no doubt, but sin nevertheless. We claim that the gospel is still the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth and that its message alone can meet the need of every heart. But if we verily believed this, would we not have greater effectiveness than we do in transmitting His message, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord" (Isa. 1:18)?

Think of the impact the Early Church made upon the people of its time. They had none of the equipment publicity and size which we feel are so important. But their comparative smallness lacked nothing in spiritual largeness, which we seem to be missing. A careful restudy of the Book of Acts will furnish many practical and convicting lessons.

The question for us in the work of the Lord is "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And we may well add, "and how wilt Thou have me to do it?"

—The Alliance Weekly

Australian Mission



Los Angeles Times Photo

Australia bound! Pictured above prior to their departure from Los Angeles are (from left to right) Dr. McIntire, Dr. Kinney and Dr. Slade.

Letter No. 7

Sydney, Australia,
February 3, 1956.

Dear Christian Friends,

We are feeling the strength and the results of prayer.

We know that in many places the Lord's people are beseeching Him on behalf of our International Council of Christian Churches team. Wednesday night I was in the Phillip Street (Sydney) Baptist Church, Pastor Robert M. Leghorn's church. He is in Scotland just now, and I learned that a prayer group had been meeting regularly asking the Lord to open up these very issues here in Australia. Several of the members of this group consider our coming a direct answer to their prayers and this group is organizing other prayer groups. A special prayer meeting is to be held tonight. I wonder just how much of this there is behind the meetings of the World Council of Churches?

Hromadka arrived in town yesterday and the papers were full of his picture and comments. He spoke at the Festival of Faith last night and the city had police on hand, fearing some kind of a demonstration. The Czech refugees who demonstrated when he was here before did not make any move. It seems to be a little different when it's under the church! This is one of the reasons why the communists will certainly concentrate on the church and do everything in their power to stay in there. The Reds are getting all kinds of the very best publicity from Hromadka's lips and the World Council of Churches has furnished him the rostrum from which to advance communism and undermine the churches themselves.

The *Telegram's* report on his arrival quotes him as saying: "Sen. McCarthy's claims that I am the No. 1 Communist spokesman in the religious world are just absurd propaganda. Either all the churches who elected me to the executive are blind or Sen. McCarthy is very wrong."

Thus Hromadka wraps the robes of the W.C.C. about himself and sits down in their midst. The *Herald* this morning gives reports of the W.C.C. meeting last night, saying, "The meeting received Dr. Hromadka enthusi-

astically." Oxnam was also quoted on arriving last night, "I think the churches of the West ought to penetrate the Iron Curtain." Oxnam has done this by getting a D.D. degree from the communist-controlled Budapest Theological Academy. The *Herald* continues to give full coverage of the W.C.C., front page pictures and stories, with not a word on us or the arrival of our men. A release which I gave to them yesterday on the arrival of Hromadka apparently found its place in the waste basket or the file!

But this sort of thing does not go on forever. Some people here are beginning to object and to protest.

When the *Telegram* refused to carry our advertisement, we asked for an interview with the editor, David McNicoll. He had told Mr. Kennedy that there would be no use in our coming and that the meeting would be abortive. He received us coolly. We explained exactly how we felt and the injustice which he had done to the I.C.C.C., and that the people of Australia were entitled to hear our side of the story. I showed him, from my briefcase, some of the documentation to support our statements — *Hungarian Church Press* from Budapest, *The Protestant Churches in Czechoslovakia*, edited by Hromadka. Much to our surprise, he said that he would assign Dr. Emery Barcs, one of his staff, to interview us and also the other side. The story appeared this morning, four columns, "Christians Despite the Curtain?" It is favorable to the W.C.C., but there is enough in it about us and our position that much good can come from it. Dr. Barcs makes the whole issue the W.C.C. versus the American Council of Christian Churches, and says, "Last week eight members of the I.C.C. flew into Sydney from America. In our interview we never even discussed the American Council of Christian Churches though in some way he got confused, apparently by the W.C.C. men who gave him his material about the A.C.C.C. I gave him Spinka's book and he quoted him on Hromadka as "the principal Protestant defender of Communism." After his interview with me he had a two-hour talk with Hromadka. He quotes him, with his approval, that he is not a communist. Barcs concludes, however, "Despite Prof. Hromadka's efforts to convince me that he sees none of the shady side of Communism, I doubt whether he really lives with those mental blinkers he pretends to wear. I felt sorry for him. I fear he'll finish his career by 'being hated by God and by God's enemies.'"

Barcs' conclusion is right. Years ago when I was debating in college our coach-used to say constantly, "Don't let your opponent divert you but continually return to the main point." All the other side has to say about us concerns A.C.C.C. statistics, the fact that I have been "tried" ecclesiastically, and for these reasons they refuse "to dignify the opponent by answering him".

The I.C.C.C. has hold of eternal truth and is standing in the present conflict for the truth of the Gospel. It is impossible to have conflict without all kinds of antagonisms being raised. The W.C.C. is coming out of this present struggle with real loss.

Australia's communist paper, *The Tribune*, cannot stay out of the fray. Their issue of January 25 has great swelling words for the W.C.C. and a three-column headline stating, "U.S. McCarthyites Coming Here to Meddle in Our Religious Affairs". Think of the communists talking about "Our Religious Affairs". Maybe that's the case with Hromadka around. They repeat that there is

not one bona fide recognized church among the members of the I.C.C.C. and that we have seemingly unlimited resources of finance. Wouldn't it be something if we really knew what consternation and confusion must exist in the camp of the enemy? It is inevitable when facts are presented and they cannot be met. *The Tribune* states: "Meddling in Australians' religious activities is the latest method of U.S. reaction to appear in this country. Seven Senator McCarthy-sponsored Protestant clergymen are coming from America to do the meddling." It is nice, isn't it, to know the communist line concerning us and we can always recognize it when it is used.

Hromadka, in one of the interviews which has been reported, gave a choice definition relative to a Christian being a communist. Here it is: "It all depends on what you mean by Communism. If you mean the metaphysics of Communist ideology, then a Christian cannot be a Communist. But if you mean by Communism a certain method of political action and reconstruction on a Socialist basis, I do believe it is possible to be a Communist and a Christian."

The Festival of Faith, according to the W.C.C.'s publicity here, covers the entire session of the W.C.C. executive, including public meetings on four evenings. The last evening, 50,000 people are expected at the Sydney Showground. Powerful searchlights of the military are to throw a lighted cross upon the sky. The last two nights they apparently have been practicing. It is a part of the over-all mass demonstration. It will impress people who will not bother to consider the issues at stake.

One of the pleasant surprises of the contact came from the General Consul of the Government of Korea, Dr. L. H. Kim. He contacted us and has given us valuable information and assistance. He is fully aware of what communism is doing in the W.C.C. Yesterday our party was his guests for dinner — a full spread Chinese dinner! This was the first one I have had since Bangkok in 1949. We all enjoyed the fellowship together. My, how our hearts go out to our brethren in Korea who are suffering because of appeasement of communism! Now, the struggle is on, with top leaders of the W.C.C. aiding and abetting it, to give recognition to Red China. I am thinking of Dr. John A. Mackay, president of the International Missionary Conference, and Dr. O. Frederick Nolde, director of the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs.

Burgomaster Warnaar is off with the Dutch brethren. They have taken him captive and have arranged meetings and conferences, and requests from the Dutch in other sections are coming for him. A telephone call just came in for Mazierski. A Polish delegation wishes to meet him this afternoon. He was over this morning at *The Mirror* for an interview.

Dr. Slade is going with me to Perth tomorrow. Kennedy and Kinney will be in Adelaide over the weekend. Dr. Slade and Dr. Kinney have had many contacts with Baptist brethren. We have been having a good time with Dr. Slade about his hat. Last Saturday some friends drove him out to the Gap. This is one of the scenic spots, called the Sydney Heads, and is a great precipice going down into the sea. While he was standing there taking a photo, the Australian breezes gently lifted his hat from his head and it made a satisfactory descent into the ocean. He now has a hat made from Australian rabbits. Well, he won't mind my telling this story, for, like Dr.

Shields on previous visits, he'll have plenty to tell about me.

Mail from home reported that Fulton Lewis, Jr., spent some time on his broadcast discussing Hromadka and Oxnam, and telling of our trip. Things should open up in our own country on these issues in a larger way. With the W.C.C. going to Hungary for its next Central Committee meeting next August, and with Albert Bereczky as chairman of the committee, it presents a situation which they cannot explain by talking about a "deposed preacher". We all had quite a time last night discussing it. Kinney pointed out that perhaps they were going there to get away from us. The W.C.C. must needs go behind the Iron Curtain to the security of the communist realm to be delivered from many open conflicts in the public press, radio, or I.C.C.C. teams! We wonder just what would happen if an I.C.C.C. team would request visas for admission to Hungary?

In our interview with Dr. Barcs, I told him that I wanted a statement in the story emphasizing that our main difference with the W.C.C. is not communism, but the Word of God and the departure from it. Barcs was very blunt when he said, "The press is not interested in that; the issue here is the question of communism." The communist issue does have the public mind and is the particular facet in the picture which is now being used to stimulate questions concerning the difference and the position of the I.C.C.C. upon the Word of God.

It is clear indeed that communism is out to win the world and it is going to do so unless those of us who stand for Christ and freedom will resist it. This is our Christian and patriotic duty. I am very much disturbed over the way President Eisenhower and John Foster Dulles are being used by the W.C.C. to promote their cause and to discredit us. This ought not to be. Eisenhower ought not to permit it or be a party to this sort of activity. But with his heart trouble what can be done now to reach him?

Australia is a land of abundance. Its people are more American in their present attitudes, though they are loyal to the British Commonwealth. We surely thank God for the saints who are here, and in love for Christ have given us such a gracious reception.

There is no discharge in this war.

Affectionately in Christ,

(Sgd.) CARL MCINTIRE

Letter No. 8

Sydney, Australia,
February 3, 1956

Beloved in the Lord,

(The Rev. Roman Mazierski, leader of the Polish Reformed Church in Exile, is a real magnet for the exiles. Before he arrived people were calling and asking about him. This afternoon a very important development has come for our cause in this country. Count Alfred Poninski, former high official in the Polish Foreign Office, a refugee in this country, came to see him and presented a communication to him for the International Council of Christian Churches. Count Poninski is now the president of the United Council of Migrants from Communist Dominated Europe in Australia. The letter is one of endorsement and promise of assistance from the executive body which represents some 300,000 migrants in Australia. Other officers include: Sawel Jaskewych (Ukrainian),

vice-president; Martin Halas (Slovak), vice-president; Lia Looweer (Estonian), secretary-general; and Václavas Saudargas (Lithuanian), treasurer. Others include individuals from Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Latvia, Bielo-Russia, Rumania.

I met Count Poninski at the Hotel and he said, "All of our people from communist-dominated Europe are with you in this battle."

The full text of the letter reads:

20 Macleay Street
Potts Point, Sydney,
1st February, 1956.

Rev. Mazierski,

On behalf of 11 migrant groups from the countries of captive Europe, forming this body, I have the privilege to congratulate Dr. Carl McIntire and the leaders of the International Council of Christian Churches for their keen endeavours in exposing the anti-religious aims and activities of Prof. Hromadka and other Red agents disguised as ecclesiastics, and just now very busy in Sydney with propaganda detrimental to the cause of Christianity and freedom behind the Iron Curtain.

Our delegates have been present at the impressive Rally at the Town Hall, January 31st, and will also attend the Rally on February 13th. May God bless your initiatives in defending the truth and in branding the conspiracy of the enemies of Christ infiltrating the free world and the ecclesiastical bodies of the democratic nations.

We look forward with pride and hope to your address on the 13th. February at the Town Hall, and remain,

Yours sincerely,
On behalf of the Council,

ALFRED PONINSKI

P.S. We fully endorse the protest motions of your rally; this was the unanimous decision of our last general meeting held in the Estonian House, Sydney, on Jan. 25th. The executive has been directed to support your timely initiatives to awaken public opinion in this country to the danger of communist disciples inside the Christian churches.

The Lord will use this and it has come from the hearts of these people. They can really see that the I.C.C.C. is their friend and is in the forefront of the battle on behalf of the Christian faith. Thank God, and take courage.

The Peoples' Union, a non-party organization, led by a former member of the Communist Party, runs a radio program here and is very active against communism in all fields in Australia. Lo and behold, today the *Telegraph*, which turned down our ad, has an ad by the Peoples' Union entitled, "Communism, Role of Churches." There is no direct reference to Hromadka or the World Council of Churches—probably the reason the ad got in. The first part reads: "The Kremlin plans to win the battle for men's minds. It frowns on religion but uses the churches. Limited religious observance is permitted subject to church support for communism. Criticism is an offence, within the Soviet or overseas. Visiting churchmen, so restricted, will refer publicly to the 'Czecho-

slovak Republic' and its 'peoples' democratic order', and, inter alia, 'the peoples' democratic state' and 'do everything to support efforts at reconstruction for the welfare of the people,' viz., Communism, "Soviet law says so. These are samples of the Kremlin's "upside-down" language designed to deceive. A Soviet police state administration was forced on Czechoslovakia by Communists and Soviet troops. It is not a Republic or a peoples' democratic state. The people were not consulted and have no free elections. Moscow is the central — final authority."

This is indeed a strange world. The W.C.C. leaders are talking about the "deposed minister" and making me out for worse than Hromadka. In fact, he is a "very fine gentleman". In the press, Hromadka has received respectful treatment with no personal abuse. His statements have been quoted. It's a different story with our I.C.C.C. men.

One of the major problems here in Sydney and in Australia center around Archbishop H. K. W. Mowall, the primate of Australia. He is the leader of the Anglican Church, a member of the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches, and is right in the center of all the activity here. When Hromadka was here before he entertained him in his home. The Archbishop is a former China Inland Mission missionary. He is on the board of the Australian Keswick and is considered generally by all an evangelical. When he goes along with all the W.C.C. inclusivism and modernism, people are naturally confused. He is the key to Australia on these matters, and because he endorses the W.C.C. the struggle here in years to come will have this difficult hurdle to overcome, for even after he is gone, if he does not change, his influence will abide for the W.C.C. The W.C.C. leaders know this and they use him in their defense. He is such a personable individual, kind and gracious. May the Lord change his mind in these matters.

Ormeo came in a few minutes ago. He has spoken today to three groups of Christian young people in the public schools. There seems to be some kind of a programme here where young people meet on their own in Religious Instruction classes at the schools. How the open doors came, I do not know.

This is all for now.

In haste, and in Him,
(Sgd.) CARL MCINTIRE

CABLEGRAM RECEIVED FROM MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA, FEBRUARY 12, 1956, 1.30 p.m.

Entire team have had magnificent day preaching to full churches. The Lord is doing wonders for our cause. Opposition continues with two church halls in this city cancelled for our meetings. God has overruled with a real stirring among the people in Tasmania. Friday we organized the Launceston auxiliary of the I.C.C.C. Entire W.C.C. executive in Melbourne today. Police guarded Deepdene Presbyterian Church as communist Hromadka preached. We are getting our story before the entire country. God is answering prayer. We are anticipating a great meeting in Sydney Town Hall, Monday night, and a final mass meeting, Wednesday night, here. Leaving Thursday for home. Greetings and love to all.

MCINTIRE

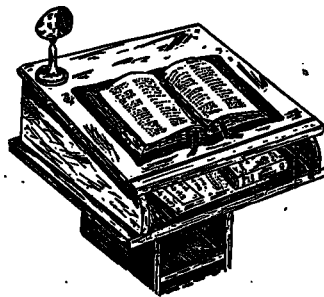
COME INTO THE ARK

"Come thou and all thy house into the ark."
—Genesis 7:1.

The text invites you to bring your family. "Come thou and all thy house." That means your wife and your children. You cannot drive them in. If Noah had tried to drive the pigeons and the doves into the ark, he would only have scattered them. Some parents are not wise about these things. They make iron rules about Sabbaths, and they force the catechism down the throat, as they would hold the child's nose and force down a dose of rhubarb and calomel. You cannot drive your children into the ark. You can draw your children to Christ, but you cannot coerce them. The Cross was lifted, not to drive, but to draw. "If I be lifted up, I will draw all men unto me." As the sun draws up the drops of morning dew, so the Sun of Righteousness exhales the tears of repentance.

"Come thou and all thy house into the ark." Be sure that you bring your husband and wife with you. How would Noah have felt if, when he heard the rain pattering on the roof of the ark, he knew that his wife was outside in the storm? No; she went with him. And yet some of you are on the ship "outward-bound" for heaven; but your companion is unsheltered. You remember the day when the marriage-ring was set. Nothing has yet been able to break it. Sickness came, and the finger shrank, but the ring stayed on. The twain stood alone above a child's grave, and the dark mouth of the tomb swallowed up a thousand hopes; but the ring dropped not into the open grave. Days of poverty came, and the hand did many a hard day's work; but the rubbing of the work against the ring only made it shine brighter. Shall that ring ever be lost? Will the iron clang of the sepulchre-gate crush it forever? I pray God that you who have been married on earth may be together in heaven. Oh! by the quiet bliss of your earthly home; by the babe's cradle; by all the vows of that day when you started life together, I beg you to see to it that you both get into the ark.

—TALMAGE



English Bible Course

EIGHTEENTH LECTURE
in the
ENGLISH BIBLE COURSE
TORONTO BAPTIST SEMINARY
By Dr. C. D. Cole
February 16th, 1956

BLESSINGS OF GRACE Ephesians 1:1-14

A BRIEF introduction must suffice as we take up the study of the epistle to the Ephesians. Ephesus was an important city on the western coast of Asia Minor, the metropolis of proconsular Asia. Its inhabitants were a mixture of Greeks and Asiatics and their religion was a compound of the East and the West. Asia Minor came successively under the rule of the Persians, Macedonians, and Romans. In 262 A.D., the city of Ephesus was destroyed by the Goths and, although it was rebuilt, it never regained its former glory, and today it is only a squalid village, bearing another name reminiscent of the apostle John who lived there a while, with only a handful of inhabitants. Ephesus is famous as the home of the Temple of Diana. This temple was one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. The statue of the goddess was believed to have fallen from heaven according to local superstition as recorded in Acts nineteen thirty-five. Away back in 356 B.C., on the very night Alexander the Great was born, the Temple was burned down, but the inhabitants of the city set themselves with great enthusiasm to the work of rebuilding and the women contributed their jewels. The new structure was erected on a magnificent scale taking 220 years in which to complete it. Its dimensions were four hundred and twenty-five by two hundred and twenty feet. Its roof was supported by one hundred and twenty-seven columns sixty feet high, and the entire structure was composed of marble. When Ephesus was ravaged by the Goths, of course, this Temple was not spared. The city of Ephesus could boast of other great buildings. There was a Greek theatre there which accommodated fifty thousand spectators and in the same vicinity was the stadium where the races were held and where wild beast fights were conducted.

The church at Ephesus was founded by the apostle Paul. Winding up his second missionary campaign, he sailed from Corinth for Syria with a brief stop-over at Ephesus. While in Ephesus he went to the Jewish synagogue and reasoned with the Jews and it seems he had a favourable reception, as they urged him to remain longer. But he was in a hurry to get to Jerusalem for the feast and so he leaves them, leaving behind, to follow up his brief work, Aquila and Priscilla. On his third missionary journey, after going over all the country of Galatia and Phrygia strengthening the disciples, he came

March Missionary Rally

WHEN?—Thursday, March 8

WHERE?—Jarvis Street Baptist Church

Session for Pastors and Christian Workers
at 2.30 p.m.

GREAT PUBLIC MEETING AT 7:30 P.M.

Speaker: Pastor S. Dempster
of Kingston

At this evening rally, Pastor Yvon Hurtubise of Valleyfield, Quebec, will tell of the progress of the work in that French-Canadian centre.

BE SURE TO -ATTEND!

to Ephesus where he laboured for three years, so that all Asia heard the Word of God. This period of Paul's ministry is covered in Acts nineteen by Luke. Paul's great success in Ephesus was hurting the sale of the little images of Diana so that Demetrius and his union, smarting under the loss of revenue, raised a mob against the apostle and created a great uproar. When order was finally restored by the town clerk, Paul takes farewell of the disciples and leaves for Macedonia. On his return to Jerusalem for the last time, he makes a brief stop at Miletus where he addresses the Ephesian elders, and in this address he reminds them of his labours among them. He warns them that after his departure grievous wolves will attack the flock and that from among themselves men will arise speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them. The church at Ephesus was also distinguished by having the apostle John in her midst for a while. Eusebius, the early church historian, tells some interesting incidents in the life of John at Ephesus.

In the course of divine providence, one day a man named Tychicus left the city of Rome bearing three letters from the apostle Paul. One of them was to the Colossians, another was to Philemon, a wealthy member of the church at Colossae, and the third was this letter to the Ephesians. This man Tychicus was also entrusted with the runaway slave of Philemon, named Onesimus, who was being returned by Paul after he had made a Christian of him. There has been much discussion concerning the address of the Ephesian epistle. The traditional view was that it was addressed to the church at Ephesus, but in view of the fact that the phrase, "in Ephesus", in the text is not in the two oldest manuscripts and because of certain expressions in the epistle itself, the prevailing view now seems to favour the idea that this was a circular letter for all the churches of the area, and that the letter we have before us was a copy of this circular letter that reached Ephesus and became a part of the New Testament canon. After reading both sides of the argument, I have no decided or settled conviction about the matter and regard it as of small importance. The Ephesians did have this letter and so we regard it as the epistle to the Ephesians with truth for all churches of that day and of this.

This letter has been called the epistle of grace. There is as much about grace in Ephesians as there is in Romans, and all the spiritual blessings are traced to the grace of God. This means that human merit has no place in the scheme of salvation at any point. Everything in connection with salvation will redound to the praise of the glory of His grace. From election in eternity past to glorification in eternity future, everything concerning salvation is of grace. That is the emphasis in this epistle.

In Ephesians the church of Christ becomes the centre of the universe. It is the book of God's eternal purpose in relation to His eternal Son. Ephesians gives us God's plan of the ages in which He will gather together in one all things in Christ both which are in heaven and which are on earth.

The first three chapters of this epistle are doctrinal in their nature. The last three are hortatory and of great practical value.

I.

The Address and Salutation

In the first two verses we have the address and the salutation. The Ephesians are greeted as saints and

as believers — saints, objectively, as those who are set apart in Christ — believers, subjectively, because faith is their chief characteristic. Romanism seeks for saints among the dead. Paul finds his saints among the living. "In Christ Jesus," denotes the source of their life and the element in which the Ephesians lived. They were set apart in Christ and He was the object of their faith and the source of their life.

"Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ." Grace and peace are like mother and daughter. Grace is the source of all real peace. Apart from grace, no man would have peace with God or enjoy the peace of God. Christ is associated with God as the source of grace and peace. The Father and Son are always in opposition as the source of blessing, and never in opposition. It is unscriptural, I think, to think of God the Father as burning with indignation against us until Christ rushed in and appeased His anger. Nothing was needed to reconcile Persons in the Godhead in connection with salvation. The reconciliation that was needed was the reconciliation of the divine attributes, but all three Persons in the Godhead were equally concerned about, and interested in, the salvation of sinners. Of course, God as a judge was angry with the sinner, the rebel, and something had to be done to satisfy His justice and uphold the honour of His law and government. And so Jesus Christ, the Son, was sent by the Father to do this work and to make it possible for God to be just and yet justify the ungodly. Without something done by way of expiation and satisfaction to the justice of God, the divine attributes of justice and mercy would have pulled against each other. Justice would have cried out for the damnation of the sinner and mercy would have pleaded for him to be spared. And so Jesus Christ is His death on the cross, in His atonement, reconciled the attributes of God. In Jesus Christ, mercy and truth met together, and righteousness and peace kissed each other. On the ground of the death of Christ, God can be just and justify the sinner who believes in Christ.

II.

The Blessings of Grace (3-14)

Now in verses three to fourteen, we have the blessings of grace. The third verse summarizes these blessings, and the verses that follow give us these blessings in detail.

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." Here in this summary, the Father is the author of the blessings. The blessings are of a spiritual and heavenly nature, not earthly and material. And the Son is the medium or mediator of these blessings. All the spiritual blessings include all that the Father can bestow, and all that the Son can merit or provide, and all that the Spirit can apply. With all three Persons in the Trinity working together to bless us poor sinners, how great will our salvation be when it is completed and we get to glory. No wonder it is written that, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." No wonder we read, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." We bless Him because He first blessed us. We cannot bless God in the way He blesses us. When we bless Him, we can only thank and praise Him for His mercies. When we bless Him, we can only

ascribe all blessedness to Him. But when He blesses us He confers favours and blessings upon us.

Now in giving these blessings of grace in detail, the apostle uses a sentence which is twelve verses in length. In the Revised Version, there is no period from verse two to verse fifteen. In the Authorized Version, there are three periods. But in reality, verses three to fourteen inclusive are all one sentence, and this sentence is difficult to analyze. Dr. Carroll says that he had never found a man who had thoroughly followed the sentence through and kept up the connection. So, I shall not try to do what others have tried and failed to do. But we will take a look at some of these blessings of grace and examine them separately.

Chosen To Be Holy and Blameless

The first of these blessings to be mentioned are holiness and blamelessness—holiness referring to character, and blamelessness to conduct. These blessings are the result of God's choice or election. The Ephesians were not chosen because they were holy and blameless but that they should be holy and blameless. They were elected and given to Christ that He might make them holy and blameless. They were elected and given to Him in the covenant of grace. In other words, they were elected to be saved and not elected because they were already saved. Election is used in scripture in various ways. Sometimes it signifies the choice or appointment of a person to an office or to service. Paul was a chosen vessel to bear the name of Christ before the gentiles and kings and the children of Israel. Sometimes election means approbation, as when Christ says, "Many are called, but few are chosen,"—that is, few are accepted, or approved. And sometimes election is used in a wide sense to include all of the professing people of God. The whole nation of Israel are called the elect of God and the whole body of Christians are referred to in Peter as a chosen generation. But here and elsewhere, election is used of individuals as being chosen to salvation. In 2 Thess. 2:13 Paul gives thanks for the Thessalonians because God has from the beginning chosen them to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth. As individuals the Thessalonians had been elected to salvation. The Holy Spirit was the efficient agent and the truth of the gospel was the suitable means in bringing them to salvation. Before the foundation of the world, mankind presented themselves to the eye of God as lost and God chose out of the mass of humanity a multitude whom no man can number, and gave them to His Son for Him to save. And concerning these, Christ says, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me." And again He says, "And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." He said to unbelieving Jews, "Ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you: My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." So, we were elected from the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before God in love. And election is the cause of our ultimately becoming holy and blameless in the sight of God.

Predestinated to Sonship

Now the next blessing is adoption. "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself." In the Greek, it is sons, not children. Adoption literally means "placing as a son". Adoption covers an aspect of salvation that is not covered by any other scriptural term. Justification removes the sentence of condemnation but it does not make the sinner a son of God. When the judge justifies the defendant at the bar, that defendant does not become his son by virtue of being justified. And if that judge wants to make the defendant his son, he will have to play another role, the role of an adopting father. Regeneration expresses the fact that we get the nature of God in the new birth. But we are sons of God by adoption. Regeneration is experimental and subjective. Justification is objective and judicial and adoption is both subjective and objective, both experimental and judicial. In a legal way, God takes those who are not His sons, and legally makes them members of His family. And so, adoption covers an aspect of salvation that is not covered by any other term. "And because we are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father." This predestination to sonship was according to the good pleasure of His will, which means that it was an act of sovereignty. In the Bible, predestination is never said to be to damnation, but always to salvation. Predestination makes us sons of God, but it does not make us children of the devil. We are children of wrath by nature. God does not have to do anything to make us the children of the devil and the children of wrath. Sin has done that. But in salvation, in rescuing us from our rebellion and the consequences of it, God has to do plenty. Now election and predestination are to be to the praise of the glory of His grace. Many have not learned to praise God for election and predestination. The sovereignty of God in these truths is to be presented to the saved for their praise and thanksgiving. The unregenerate will spew these doctrines out of their mouth and a lot of Christians will choke on the doctrines of election and predestination. But they are given to us to bring praise from our hearts and our souls. Who would not praise God for being elected to such a glorious salvation as we have? Who should not praise God for being predestinated to sonship of God? So these truths are primarily for the saints. I do not think it will hurt for them to get out anywhere, but they are not primarily for lost people and cannot be appreciated by any but the saved.

Now the efficient cause of salvation is the will of God. I am saved because God willed my salvation. "Which were born, not of bloods, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." And James says, "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth." The meritorious cause of our salvation is the death of Christ, His blood atonement. And the chief design of it all is the glory of God, that it shall redound, "To the praise of the glory of his grace."

Redemption by Blood

The next blessing of grace is redemption. "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." The word redeemed means "to buy back that which had been sold." We were sold under sin. Redemption in the scriptures has both a commercial and a judicial aspect. Peter gives us the commercial aspect when he says, "Ye were not

redeemed (or purchased) with corruptible things, as silver and gold . . . but with the precious blood of Christ." Paul in 1 Cor. 6:20 gives us the commercial aspect when he says, "Ye are not your own. For ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." But here, and in other places, Paul gives us the judicial view of redemption. Redemption is from the curse of the law and this judicial redemption is by the blood of Jesus Christ. The sinner needs something more than education or an elevating influence or a favourable environment. He needs redemption. The sinner needs something more than a subjective work of grace inside of him. He needs an objective atonement. He needs to be redeemed from the curse of the law of God which he has violated and that redemption is through the blood of Jesus Christ. Redemption is the basis of forgiveness. Without redemption there could be no forgiveness, and without the blood of Christ there can be no redemption, "and without shedding of blood is no remission." Redemption is twofold. There is a present and a future redemption. As a person, the believer is already redeemed so that the curse of the law does not rest upon him. But he has to wait for the redemption of his body. As a person, he has been redeemed by blood, but his body must await redemption by power from the grave. And like all spiritual blessings, redemption is "according to the riches of his grace." All spiritual and eternal blessings are dispensed from the storehouse of grace. These riches of grace are made to abound toward us in gospel revelation. It is called "the mystery of his will." This mystery is not some secret decree of God. This mystery is not something that cannot be known, but something that cannot be known apart from divine revelation. This mystery is something that man cannot discover and that God must reveal. The gospel is the mystery of His will, and the gospel was once hidden from the world in general, and known by preparatory revelation in Israel. And it is now thrown open to the whole world. The law and the prophets witnessed to the gospel, but in types and shadows. There was not a clear revelation of the mystery of God's will. In Rom. 16:25, 26, we read, "Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith." Now this mystery of God's will calls for everything to be brought together in one in Christ. And this will of God is to be administered by Christ. The word translated dispensation in the Authorized Version, literally means "house management". The word is also translated "stewardship", as when the rich man said to his steward, "Give an account of thy stewardship." In 1 Cor. 9:17, Paul uses the same word when he says that "a dispensation (or stewardship) of the gospel is committed unto me." Now this administration of God's will in grace has been entrusted to Jesus Christ, and His administration is to carry out to the letter and to a success, the will of God. For the purpose of all this, Christ has been delegated all authority in heaven and in earth. The work of saving and judging has been turned over to Jesus Christ, and He will ultimately subdue all things unto Himself. His elect will be subdued by His grace. Christ rejectors will be subdued by His wrath in the day of judgment, but everything and everybody in the universe will ultimately

be subdued to Jesus Christ. And this is to be done in a period called "the fulness of times". The Christian era is this period. All previous periods of time reached their fulness with the coming of Jesus Christ. All time centres in Him and is reckoned as before Him or in the year of our Lord. The mediation of Christ is for the purpose of bringing the whole creation into harmony with the people of God. Sin has effected division between man and other parts of creation. If a province of a great empire should rise up in rebellion against the established government of the empire, all peaceful communication between that province and the royal subjects, would be prohibited. This must have happened in regard to the holy angels and apostate humanity. Those who at the laying of earth's cornerstone sang and shouted for joy, when man turned rebel against the government of God, must have turned away from men in disgust and indignation. But all this is to be changed. There is to be a reunion of the entire family of God in heaven and earth, including the saints and all the holy angels. By Christ's administration of God's will and through His work of mediation, a reunion, I say, is to be effected. The time is coming when all will be peaceful and harmonious in the family, in the household, of our God.

Predestinated to an Inheritance

Now another blessing of grace is the believer's inheritance. Paul tells the Ephesians that they have a part in this inheritance. This inheritance like all blessings of grace is a heavenly inheritance. It is a spiritual blessing. Peter speaks of it as being incorruptible, and undefiled, and unfading, reserved in heaven. While waiting for this inheritance, the believer is said to be sealed so as to assure his coming into full possession of this inheritance. This sealing is with the Holy Spirit, not baptism. Baptism is never anywhere called a seal in the Word of God. We are sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise. The object of the seal is to indicate ownership and to assure our heavenly destination. We mail a letter addressed to someone in Montreal. We put a stamp on it. That stamp protects it and assures delivery. And if the government is strong enough, that letter will reach its destination. If that letter does not reach its destination, the government has failed in that particular case. That stamp is a rather important thing on a letter. And so believers are sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise. That seal indicates ownership of God and guarantees safe delivery in glory. The Holy Spirit is also the earnest of the inheritance. The Holy Spirit is the sample as well as the pledge of future glory. It is because the Holy Spirit is in us as the earnest of our inheritance that He is also our seal. The indwelling of the Holy Spirit is also called the firstfruits of the inheritance. The Holy Spirit in us is the inheritance in miniature, a bit of the heavenly inheritance in us. But the earnest also means that the inheritance is not yet possessed. In Romans eight Paul says that we who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. What the first sheaf is to the full harvest, the first entrance of the Holy Spirit into the human soul is to ultimate glory and complete salvation. These are all blessings of grace. They originated in the purpose and the will of God and are executed and administered by the Lord Jesus Christ who has been delegated authority in heaven and in earth, given power over all flesh that He might give eternal life to as many as the Father had given Him.

A NEW DISPENSATIONALISM?

POPULAR among many evangelicals today is the prophetic teaching known as dispensationalism. We trust that we are not guilty of over-generalization when we say that this school would view God's dealings with men as being of a different character in each of several succeeding ages. For various reasons we cannot accept most of the conclusions of these dispensational brethren but we must confess that we have observed in ourselves and other evangelical brethren some dangerous tendencies toward a form of *practical* dispensationalism that is more to be dreaded than the prophetic variety.

What do we mean? Just this—today we are called upon to proclaim the gospel as did the apostles but how often we proceed in our business as though the God of the apostles no longer is upon the throne, or, if He is, His power is not what it was in those earlier days! In other words, we formulate two dispensations — one in apostolic times where men could trust the Lord; the second in our day when such trust is out of place.

Oh, no one would dare express such a thought in so many words! Our whole outlook and lack of vision, however, are often eloquent and speak more loudly than any words. In the matter of reaching out in a vigorous missionary drive, we allow a thousand and one imagined obstacles to interfere and serve as excuses. Does it ever occur to us that these same (and greater) obstacles have faced God's servants in other days but they regarded them as opportunities to see God work. Away with this practical dispensationalism! The God of the prophets and the apostles is still upon the throne and waits for men to trust Him that He might show His mighty hand.

For Younger Readers

SOMEONE IS WATCHING

By Alice Hitchcock

"Thou God seest me."—Genesis 16:13.

Pearl Brown lived across the street from a beautiful old mansion. There was a lovely walled garden at one side and Pearl often wished she might go inside and see all the beautiful flowers. But there was a stern-looking old gardener, who didn't look as if he would allow children inside the wall. One day Pearl noticed that the stern-faced gardener was gone. Instead there was a round-faced, jolly-looking fellow busy with a hoe.

"Do you suppose he would allow us to go in and see the flowers?" Pearl asked her little sister Lois.

"Want to see flowers," Lois cried. "Want to smell flowers."

Pearl walked up close to the wall. The round-faced gardener looked up.

"Hello, there!" he said, with a smile.

Pearl spoke as politely as she knew how. Lois smiled and showed her pretty dimples.

"We would love to see all the flowers in there," Pearl told him.

"Come right in," the gardener invited. "You may walk along the gravel paths and see them all. But you must not pull them. Mr. Saunders would be angry if you were to destroy his flowers. There are several little folks in the garden now. They all promised to be very careful and not to pull the blossoms."

"Oh, thank you," Pearl beamed. "We won't touch a single flower."

Pearl took Lois by the hand, and together the little girls walked along the pretty paths. Finally Lois became tired of being led. She wriggled loose and ran ahead of Pearl. Up the path she went toward the stone steps that led into the rose garden.

All of a sudden Pearl heard a cry. It sounded very much like Lois' voice. Pearl rushed up the path toward the stone steps. The sight that met her eyes made Pearl throw up her hands in horror. She could not even utter a word as she stood looking at Lois with wide eyes and an open mouth! For that mischievous child had strewn roses all over the walk. Piles of red, pink, and yellow petals lay everywhere. She had pulled the roses and torn them apart!

"Lois!" cried Pearl after a moment. "Lois, what have you done?"

"Old pin on the pretty rose stuck Lois," the baby answered, holding up an injured finger.

"Oh, Lois, what shall we do?" Pearl moaned. "Just look at the lovely flowers you have ruined. Whatever will the gardener say?"

The little girl did not seem to understand what mischief she had done, but poor Pearl knew that this was the last time she would ever be allowed into the beautiful garden. Suddenly a thought came to her. Perhaps if she took Lois and ran out as quickly as she could, the gardener might not know who had destroyed his flowers. He might even blame those other children. Grabbing Lois' hand she began to run toward the gate.

"Hurry, hurry, maybe we can get out before he notices what you did."

When they reached the gate, the gardener was busy pulling weeds. His face was turned the other way. Pearl knew she could slip past within being seen. Just as she was about to do it, she remembered that Someone had seen her, Someone who watched over the world night and day, Someone who would be grieved if one of His little ones deceived. Pearl stopped short. If she told the gardener what had happened, she would never be allowed in the garden again. She hesitated, but not for long.

"Mr. Gardener," she said in a small voice, "I'm terribly sorry, I . . ."

"Why, what's wrong?" the astonished gardener asked. And Pearl told him what had happened. "Lois is so small, she didn't understand about pulling the roses, I guess."

"Come and show me which ones she pulled," the gardener said.

Pearl ran ahead. She bounded up the stone steps and pointed to the heap of petals lying there. Then she looked up into the face of the gardener. Why, he didn't look angry at all! He was smiling! Pearl couldn't understand.

"The little girl didn't pull the roses," he said. "Those are just old blossoms that I snipped off this morning so that the buds would grow nicer. You needn't have been so frightened, little Missy, but I am very glad to meet such an honest little girl. You and your sister may come in and see the flowers any time you like."

"Oh, thank you!" Pearl said with shining eyes. Only a few moments before, everything had been all wrong and now everything was just right. "And all because I remembered Jesus was watching me," Pearl said to herself.

We, too, should remember that Jesus sees everything. It helps us in our studies at school, in our play, in fact in everything we do.

—*The Prairie Overcomer*

ONLY ONE WAY

"There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."
—Acts 4:12.

Says some one, "Why could not God have made more ways to heaven than one?" I do not know but He could have made half a dozen. I know He made but one. You say, "Why not have a long line of boats running from here to heaven?" I cannot say, but I simply know that there is only one boat. You say, "Are there not trees as luxuriant, as that on Calvary? — more luxuriant, for that had neither buds nor blossoms; it was stripped and barked?" Yes, yes, there have been taller trees than that and more luxuriant; but the only path to heaven is under that one tree. Instead of quarrelling because there are not more ways, let us be thankful to God there is one— one name given unto men whereby we can be saved— one laver in which all the world may wash. So you see what a radiant Gospel this is I preach. I do not know how a man can stand stolidly and resent it, for it is such an exhilarant Gospel. It is not a mere whim or caprice; it is life or death; it is heaven or hell. You come before your child, and you have a present in your hand. You put your hands behind your back and say, "Which hand will you take? In one hand there is a treasure, in the other there is not." The child blindly chooses. But God our Father does not do that way with us. He spreads out both hands, and says, "Now this shall be very plain. In that hand are pardon, and peace, and life, and the treasures of heaven; in that hand are punishment, and sorrow, and woe. Choose, choose for yourselves!" "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned."

"Thou art the way; to Thee alone
From sin and death we flee;
And he who would the Father seek
Must seek Him, Lord, in Thee."

—TALMAGE

Oh, that men were half as careful in God's service to serve Him as wisely as His enemies are to attack His kingdom craftily. Sinners have their wits about them, and yet saints are dull.

—C. H. SPURGEON

Bible School Lesson Outline

Vol. 20 First Quarter Lesson 10 March 4, 1956

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

JESUS WARNS OF EARTHLY ANXIETY

Lesson Text: Luke 12:16-32.

Golden Text: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you."—Luke 12:31.

I. The Peril of False Security: verses 16-21.

Although an innumerable company of people had gathered around our Lord, His chief concern was the instruction of His own disciples (verse 1; John 17:9). He warned them against the sins of hypocrisy and covetousness (verses 1, 15), both of which are common in this materialistic age. Hypocrisy results from the desire for unmerited fame (Matt. 23:28), and covetousness is caused by the lust for undeserved wealth (1 Tim. 6:6-11). This parable illustrates the nature of true

prosperity and indicates the importance of having a right perspective in life (verse 15).

In the first place, the rich farmer was foolish because he was ungrateful. He failed to bless the Lord for a plentiful harvest. An abundant crop affords no one the right to boast; the Lord alone gives the power to get wealth (Gen. 8:22; Deut. 8:10-18; Psa. 65:9-13; Matt. 5:45).

The problem of an over-crowded barn is sometimes as difficult to solve as that of an empty granary. At one time the economic experts of the nation may be perplexed because of famine, scant provisions, and consequent high prices; at another time because of over-production, glutting of the markets and low prices. The rich man was foolish; as nations may be foolish, in that the problem is considered from the standpoint of self-interest. He did not stop to enquire why God had given him a plentiful supply of grain (Gen. 41:25-36), nor did he take thought for the need of others (Jas. 2:15, 16; 1 John 3:17). Notice the repetition of the words "I" and "my".

Again, this rich man lived and planned as though there were no God and no eternity. In this he was most foolish, for it is the part of wisdom to care for the interests of the immortal soul (Mark 8:36; 2 Cor. 4:18). To seek to increase one's worldly possessions while neglecting one's spiritual welfare is folly in God's sight (Psa. 62:10; Jas. 5:1-5). This man discovered that his soul was not his own, but was to be required of him (Eccl. 11:9). He deemed himself secure for many years, but God demanded a reckoning that very night. He lost both his soul and his possessions, for wealth cannot buy salvation (Psa. 52:7; Isa. 55:2; Heb. 2:9; Matt. 19:22, 23). Every one is foolish who is not rich toward God in faith (Jas. 2:5; 2 Pet. 1:11), wisdom (Prov. 8:11) and good works (1 Tim. 6:18).

II. The Folly of Undue Anxiety: verses 22-32.

Worldliness hinders saints as well as sinners. The disciples had supposedly left all and followed Christ, but like many modern disciples, the things of the world had a large place in their thoughts, plans and ambitions (2 Tim. 4:10; 1 John 2:15-17). The Christian is inclined to be anxious and troubled about many things, when but one thing is needful (Luke 10:41, 42). Since spiritual interests are of paramount importance, Christ admonished His disciples to take no anxious thought regarding their food and clothing.

The nations of the world may aim to secure material prosperity, but believers should seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness (Matt. 6:25-34; Rom. 14:17). To do His will should be their chief aim and ambition (John 4:34). Too many resemble Jacob, who promised to follow the Lord if he were given bread to eat and raiment to put on (Gen. 28:20-22), while too few display the courage of the three Hebrew youths who were determined to obey the Lord, no matter how great the cost (Dan. 3:17, 18). The God who is our Father and our King is also our Shepherd (verse 32). He knows our need, and He will provide for those who trust Him and obey (Psa. 23:1; Phil. 4:19).

The rich man's treasure was laid up on earth and his heart was centered upon earthly things (Psa. 119:25). The Christian's treasure is deposited in heaven and he directs his affections to Divine things (Matt. 6:19-21; Col. 3:1-4; 2 Tim. 1:12). It is God's pleasure to make His children rich (Rom. 8:17; 1 Cor. 3:21-23; 2 Cor. 8:9; Eph. 1:11, 18); to bestow upon them an inheritance which will not fade or fail, which is safe and secure, which is imperishable and incorruptible (1 Pet. 1:4).

Daily Bible Readings

- Feb. 27—Beware of Covetousness Luke 12:1-15
- Feb. 28—Heavenly Treasures Luke 12:33-40
- Feb. 29—Laying up Treasures Matt. 6:19-24
- Mar. 1—No Anxious Thought Matt. 6:25-34
- Mar. 2—Fret Not Thyself Psa. 37
- Mar. 3—He Careth For You 1 Pet. 5:6-10
- Mar. 4—I Shall Not Want Psalm 23

Suggested Hymns

- Though troubles assail.
- The Lord's my Shepherd.
- God will take care of you.
- Simply trusting every day.
- My Father is rich.
- God holds the key.

Christians! — Ponder these facts

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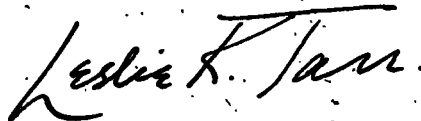
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LESLIE K. TARR, EDITOR.

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