

# The Gospel Witness and Protestant Advocate

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## Gibraltar Spirituality

**T**HE rocky fortress of Gibraltar stands as a silent but eloquent symbol of stability. The furious, lashing waves and the howling winds make no noticeable impression upon that massive heap of stone. The centuries rise up and pass into eternity but still Gibraltar towers above the surrounding land and sea, oblivious to the ravages of time and the elements.

The world, too, places great value upon stability in business relations. Honoured among commercial firms is that business which has survived and prospered despite national and international economic depressions. Such companies proudly advertise the fact that they have been in business for twenty-five, fifty, one hundred or more years, for they realize that a public confidence is created by reliable, consistent and lengthy service. Indeed a firm that has been characterised by stable and honourable dealings merits our trust that we rightly deny to other "fly by night" enterprises.

In our ordinary relationships with individuals, we correctly place great emphasis upon this trait of stability. If someone is forever changing his place of employment for no reason whatever, we naturally question his reliability. The man who has the unenviable reputation of daily embracing and then discarding every passing, novel idea is not regarded as a model of stability. The persons who demand our trust are those who doggedly and consistently guide their lives and conduct by certain well defined principles.

That which the world rightly esteems is often despised or overlooked by Christians! Scriptural stability is unfortunately too often conspicuous by reason of its absence. Evangelicals place such an emphasis upon salvation that they are apt to forget that the believer has to continue on in this world after he has been saved. If our concept of spirituality does not include a spiritual stability (not stagnation!) then we are not speaking of true spirituality. We fear that some Christians and churches are very unstable and could embrace a dozen conflicting and mutually exclusive opinions and practices in as many days. Those very persons and assemblies would probably pride themselves upon some misty, indefinable quality which they designate "spirituality"! Our age calls for Gibraltar Christians and Gibraltar churches.

Lest it be thought that we are merely expressing some personal opinion, we hasten to point out that the Word of God emphatically exhorts believers to consistency of creed and behaviour and admonishes against changeability and instability. Paul, alone, sounds this note over and over again. To the Corinthians he said, "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong" (1 Cor. 16:13); to the Galatians he wrote, "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage" (Gal. 5:1); his word to the Philippians was that they should "stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel (Phil. 1:27); again to the Thessalonians he emphasized the need for them to "stand fast in the Lord" (1 Thess. 3:8). Paul had no admiration or commendation for the Christian who, in the name of superior spirituality, was one thing today and something else tomorrow. He realized the truthfulness of the statement that he who stands for nothing falls for anything.

With sorrow, we must confess that much of modern evangelicalism seems to be permeated with a lax, unstable spirit and a toleration of any and all opinions if these obvious errors are accompanied by some orthodox-sounding cliché. A man may be carnal to the core in both his beliefs and actions but he is acceptable to some Christians if he will make some passing reference to the blood of Christ or to regeneration. In short, we are raising a whole generation of believers who are unstable in both their thinking and their convictions. Lord, send us some good, old-fashioned, intolerant Gibraltar Christians!

It is not by accident that the Bible likens instability to a wavering before the wind. In Ephesians Paul tells the believers to "be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive" (Eph. 4:14). James, the "practical apostle" declares that "he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed" (James 1:6). He proceeds to observe that "a double minded man is unstable in all his ways" (James 1:8).

How unfortunate it is that this unstable spirit creeps into some churches so that the members tolerate anything. They are blown hither and yon by every gust of religious

extravagance that comes along to deceive the unwary. Since we are Baptists, we will confine our limited observations to Baptist churches for they seem to be especially liable to this curse.

It is our conviction (and with this no one else need agree) that the historic Baptist position is the New Testament position. Such churches are characterized by certain well-defined beliefs based upon the Word of God and it should therefore be relatively easy to reject decisively any teaching that is contrary to that scriptural position. Ah! here the element of stability or instability enters the picture. A stable, spiritual person would reject that which was contrary to the Word; the unstable soul toys with any idea and lets every conceivable consideration influence his judgment; while he thus halts and deliberates, the novel teaching or practice makes its inroads and weakens a testimony. Indeed more good churches have been rendered ineffective because of this instability than for any other cause.

Let us be more specific. As we sit here penning these lines we think of a Baptist church outside the city. It has been riddled and shattered by the invasion of a certain youth organization that exists to entertain sinners and carnal Christians. That church that once was characterized by a Biblical ministry and a spiritual, soul-saving testimony is now a Baptist church only in name. Doubtless this extra-church, unscriptural organization first posed as a help to the local church and so seemed inoffensive. Christians who were not too stable were unwittingly deceived and now cheap, frothy entertainment is the regular diet.

Or again, we may think of other churches that have allowed healing extravagances to make inroads. Unstable Christians who tremble at their own shadow, have loved toleration more than truth and so these excesses have rendered ineffective another testimony. Much heartache in our churches could be eliminated if Christians were more stable.

Can we have a genuine revival if the people of God are themselves blown about? With God all things are possible but the deplorable tendency to compromise is surely blocking the blessing. Let us pray for the establishment of stable Christians equally as fervently as we pray for the salvation of the lost. When Christians are so rooted and grounded in the truth they will be in a position to be used in the saving of sinners. To heaven we send the appeal, "Lord, make us Gibraltar Christians!"

### IT'S GREAT TO BE FREE!

Evangelicals are apt to emphasize "spiritual blessings" so much that they neglect to thank the Lord for what we conceive to be lesser blessings. As we read of the present visit to Britain of the Russian despots, Khrushchev and Bulganin, we could not help but reflect that freedom is a priceless gift.

The Russian leaders were angered that the crowds booted them and carried slogans denouncing them. It is obvious that the Soviet guests were not accustomed to such free expression in their own land and that they were not pleased with its exercise elsewhere. It is only as we see such sharp contrasts that we realize how privileged we are. Thank God that we live in a country where there is to a great degree the freedom to dissent from even those who are in the majority.

## The Gospel Witness

and

## Protestant Advocate

FOUNDER AND FIRST EDITOR—Dr. T. T. Shields  
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### 1956-1957 SEMINARY PROSPECTUS

Within the next few weeks Toronto Baptist Seminary's new prospectus will be rolling off the press. This publication has complete information about the courses offered, the terms of entrance, the faculty and other items of interest to prospective students. Several new subjects of importance have been added to the course so that the best possible training will be offered to the servants of the Lord. Write today to the Registrar, Toronto Baptist Seminary, 337 Jarvis Street, Toronto 2, Ontario, and we will send you a copy as soon as it comes from the press.

### SUNDAY IN JARVIS STREET

The pastor, Dr. Slade, preached at both services on the past Lord's Day. In the morning his subject was, "True Confession". In the evening he spoke on, "The Stupendous Miracle of Pentecost". At the conclusion of the morning service four responded to the invitation.

### TAMPERING WITH THE MAIL?

Several readers of THE GOSPEL WITNESS have written to inform us that their copies of the paper have arrived in an imperfect condition. Some have had the front page missing and still others have had written messages across the paper. It is apparent that some persons in the post office must be interfering with the mail. If your paper has been tampered with, please notify us that we may approach the postal authorities about this matter.

# The Jarvis Street Pulpit

## The Eternal Birthday Book

A Sermon by Dr. T. T. Shields

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Morning, March 29th, 1925

(Stenographically Reported)

"Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven."—Luke 10:20.

IN ALL the long history of the human race the world has never known another so perfectly qualified rightly to appraise the values of life as our Lord Jesus Christ. He knows the worth of everything in this life. He knows it because He knows the relation of this life to another, of this world to another. And in the text before us this morning He is telling us of that which should give us our supreme joy, the thing about which we should rejoice as we rejoice about nothing else. The contrast named here is a very striking one.

He does not discuss material values at all. He does not suggest that a man ought to be glad because he has a good bank account, that he ought to be happy because he owns his own house; He does not even suggest that good health should be an occasion of rejoicing. But the seventy disciples whom He had commissioned to preach, have returned to Him, and they have told Him that even the devils were subject unto them through His word. The Lord answered, in effect, by saying, "That is a very small matter. I will give you greater power than that. I give unto you power to tread upon serpents and upon scorpions and over all the power of the enemy; and nothing shall by any means hurt you." That is enough to make you happy, is it not? Would you not like to have power over the Devil, over all temptation? Would you not like to be sure that God's angels are roundabout you, and that nothing can by any means hurt you? Surely now we have arrived at the thing for which we ought to be supremely thankful. But the Lord Jesus says that there is something of greater importance than even this. That is something to be thankful for, beyond doubt. "Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you. I will tell you what you ought to be happy about, what ought to make you sing 'Hallelujah' all the day—and that is, that your names are written in heaven. That is the thing that ought to make you supremely glad."

I want to discuss in a very simple fashion, this morning, three things with you: first of all, *the condition upon which our names may be written in heaven*; in the second place, *how we may be sure they are written there*; then in the third place, being sure they are written in heaven, *why we ought specially to rejoice in that fact*.

### I.

UPON WHAT CONDITION ARE OUR NAMES WRITTEN IN HEAVEN? First of all, let me tell you that no man has power to write his own name there. That is absolutely certain. However, our names get there, we shall not

write them there ourselves for it is not our doing. They will be written by another Hand than ours. Men have power to write their names on earthly rolls of honour and some of these things are not to be despised. It is not a good sign when men are careless of the good opinion of other people. We must not be in bondage either to the fear or to the favour of man; but if you are a rightly constituted man you will desire the favour of good men. You will be uncomfortable without the favour of good men and will examine yourself to see the reason for it. It is possible so to serve our fellows, to render real and valuable service to men on this earth in such a way that our names will be honourably mentioned, and written where we may be justly proud to have them written.

I have many times walked through Westminster Abbey and studied the names that are there written. I have spent a long time in the poets' corner and I have thought of their glorious singing, and of how they have blessed the world with their music. I have stood before the statues of men there in the Abbey — men like Gladstone and Chatham and many others who, in their day, rendered conspicuous service to the state, and did much to ameliorate the conditions of life. I think it is legitimate that men should desire to live their lives in such a way that good men will speak well of them, and will hold their memory in honour. It is possible to write your name in Westminster Abbey — I do not suppose any of us will get ours there — but it is possible for men so to do.

I have spent hours and hours in St. Paul's Cathedral. I know some of you boys would like to go there; you would like to see the tomb of Nelson. I have stood by the crypt where the body of Nelson actually lies, right under the dome of the Cathedral with the heroic statue of Wellington above. I remember on the first anniversary of the outbreak of the war having a seat of privilege just about nine or ten feet from His Majesty the King — I had never been so close to him before, and I have not been so close to him since. But I happened to be in London when there were very few Canadian civilians there; and I was given a seat of honour. I saw His Majesty sitting there right under the dome, and directly under where he sat was the tomb of Nelson, down here a little way was that magnificent statue of Wellington, and the naval and military history of the world's greatest Empire was cut in the walls of that great building. The war was then on, and I shall never forget the sensation I had. There were hundreds of thousands of people outside, that great Cathedral was crowded, and everybody waited for the movement of the king. When His Majesty arose in

his place and bowed his knee, and his head, and his heart, to God, the thousands of people followed suit; everyone kneeled in prayer before God. It was a great occasion; and I felt it was an honour for any name to be mentioned amid such surroundings.

But that is not to be compared with this — *that a man may have his name written in the Lamb's Book of Life*. A man may write his name there in the Abbey, but not even a Wellington or a Nelson or a Wolsley or anyone else, can, of himself, write his name in heaven. You young men! if you were to attend all the universities in the world, if you were to receive recognition from all the institutions of learning whose recognition is of value, and you were to multiply degrees until it would take a page of foolscap to write them, if you were to receive all honours from all earthly governments — all that combined would not help you to write the first letter of your name in God's book in heaven. And the Lord Jesus says it is better to have your name written there than to have it written anywhere else, better to have it written there than on a cheque for a million dollars, better to have it there than anywhere else in this world or in the whole universe. You cannot write it yourself. How are you going to have it written there?

Another thing: no man can write it there for you, no one else can write it there. Sometimes I have married people who could not write their own names. Sometimes I have had to write the bridegroom's name, and on a few occasions I have had to write the bride's name, and then have her put her mark opposite the name. But you cannot get any man to write your name in the Lamb's Book of Life. You can have it written on the church roll, but you cannot get it written up there. Not one of us has power to write it there. And do you know, if you had the Pope and all the cardinals and all the priests to help you, you could not write it yourself, and all of them combined could not enable you to do it; and if, in addition to that, you had all the preachers of all the churches in all the earth, even they could not write your name in heaven. It has to be written in some other way!

I will tell you how it is written, and Who writes it. The Lord Himself writes every name that is written in that book! You cannot make Him write it; He alone writes it. Will you mark this? The thing that should give you the supreme occasion for rejoicing is something that is done by the hand of God. You cannot do it nor can anyone do it for you — God Himself will do it. You had better get on right terms with God, so He will write your name in that book.

Further, if your name is ever written in heaven, it will be written on God's terms, nobody else's. There is some man here who says, "Well, sir, I will tell you my idea of religion." Do not waste your breath. Your idea of religion is not worth expressing, not a bit of it. "But I will tell you the conditions upon which I think a man ought to be saved." I want to tell you the conditions upon which you think men should be saved do not make a bit of difference; your opinions are not worth anything at all. "But I think everyone should have his own opinions; we are entitled to our opinions." That is all right, but that will do you no good for that will not write your name in heaven. Oh no! Do you not see, dear friends, that if your name is to be written in heaven, and God is to write it, and it is to be written on His terms, that you had better find out what His terms are? Some young man here says, "I am at college; I have studied at the

university, and I have had a theological course, you know; and my opinion is this—"I tell you your opinion is not worth anything at all, nor are the opinions of your theological professors. Do you not see that this is a matter that is in the hands of God in heaven? and God is going to have His own way there. Do not make any mistake. That is one place where God is absolutely supreme, even now! You cannot break into heaven and all the universities cannot teach you how to break into heaven. God has the books and He will write your name on His terms, or it will never be written at all. So you had better come to His terms.

What are His terms? Well, it will be written by the hand of Grace. It will not be written because of anything you have ever done for God. "But," someone says, "you were talking last Sunday morning about giving a tenth; I have given a great deal of money to the Lord." But you could not give enough money to get your name written up there. No! If you had all the millions that Rockefeller has given to Chicago University, you could not get your name written up there. "But, sir, I have been religious all my life." But thousands of religious people have not got their names written in heaven! "I have been a praying man all my life." But thousands of praying people have not got their names written in heaven! "I never did any harm; I never robbed anyone." There are a great many people who have kept out of the police court, whose names are not written in heaven! When your name is written in heaven it will not be written because of any good thing you have ever done. There are a great many names written in St. Paul's Cathedral that are not written in heaven. There are a great many names written in Westminster Abbey that the angels do not know anything about. They have forgotten all about them; they are not written up there at all. It is all of grace, my dear friends.

" 'Twas grace that wrote my name  
In God's eternal book;  
'Twas grace that gave me to the Lamb,  
And all my sorrows took."

And grace means that you have nothing to pay, and nothing to do, that you cannot earn the right to have your name there. You cannot pay for its being put there, you cannot put it there yourself, nor can anyone else put it there. It is just God's act. His work from beginning to end — just because He wills to do it.

Well, is there any way by which we can have it written? God does it. I cannot do it; no one else can do it. How can I get my name there? I remember during the war there was a certain Canadian hero who had a record of gallant service to his credit. He came home right in the middle of the war, and it was in a time when they were not permitting passports to women to go through the war zone. And do you know what he came home for? He got leave and came home, and he did that strange thing that young men will do — he got married. He actually came all the way across the sea to Toronto and got a bride! I remember reading about it. He had one passport for himself, and the authorities wrote his bride's name on that same passport, and, because he was going through, they let her through, too.

The only way by which you can have your name written in the Lamb's Book of Life is just to be married to the Lamb. Then it will be written there. I know some families who have the register of all the family's birthdays in the back of the Bible — or is it the front — all

the birthdays of all the family are there. The Lord in heaven keeps a record of all the people who are born again. Every time a soul is born again the name of that second birth is written in heaven; and if you are going to have your name there you have got to be born again. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." I was talking to a little boy last night who is to be baptized to-night; and I asked him how he knew he was saved. With absolute assurance he said, "Why, I believe on the Lord Jesus Christ." That was the end of all argument with him. That, too, is how we may have our names written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

## II.

LET ME ASK, HOW MAY WE BE SURE OF IT? Is it possible for us to be absolutely certain that our names are written in heaven? I believe it is, or the Lord Jesus would not have told us to rejoice that they were there. You cannot rejoice about something you are not certain of; but when you are sure that you have a valuable thing, then you can rejoice. So we are admonished here to "rejoice" that our names are written in heaven.

How, then, may we be absolutely sure of it? I will tell you some ways by which you can not be sure. You cannot be sure that your name is written in heaven because it is written on the church book. That is one thing. There is a record in this Book of the Lord's examining a church roll. The church was in Sardis. The Lord went over the long list of names. Apparently He compared it with His heavenly record and He said to the messenger of the church in Sardis, "You have a few names down there that I have up here. There are a few people in Sardis who have not defiled their garments. But there are a great many names there which I do not know anything about; they are not on My books."

You know, my friends, the Lord examines our church rolls. While I think it is very important that those who really believe should have their names on the roll of a Christian church, the most important thing is that we should have our names written in heaven. I am perfectly sure that there are thousands and thousands of names written on earthly church roll-books that are not written in heaven at all. And I want to say to you members of Jarvis Street Church, the same is true of this church as of all other churches. You must never assume that because your name is on our church roll-book it is therefore in heaven. I would have you sure of your salvation. Every time the Pastor preaches to the unconverted, I would have every member of this church say, "I am going to take that for myself; I am going to examine and re-examine myself, and be perfectly sure that I am making no mistake in this matter. A young man came to me two or three Sundays ago. He came with glowing face, and said, "I have been a member of this church for years, but I have been converted only a few months." He had been converted after he had joined the church. It is a terrible thing for people to come into the church unconverted. We do not want any of you to come into the church unconverted, nor to be baptized until you are perfectly sure that you have passed from death unto life. But I do beg of you, every member here, do not trust to your name being written on the church roll. The important thing is, that it should be written in heaven; and it is possible to be sure of that.

I will tell you in a word how to be sure of it. The Lord Jesus told these men that their names were written

in heaven, — He did not say, "Rejoice if you find your names are written in heaven," but "Rejoice because your names are written in heaven." I have never seen that book up there, but He has and, if He tells me that my name is written there, I am not going to worry any more about it. He will write my name there and, writing it there, He will write it in my own heart, and His Spirit will bear witness with my spirit:

"The Spirit answers to the blood,  
And tells me I am born of God."

If that is so, I do not need to worry — even if I am forgotten by the "four hundred". "Why, do you know, I had my name once — I really did — in the 'blue book' with all the important people! I found it there. I do not know how it got there, but it was there. Thousands of people in Toronto did not have their names there, but I had mine there. And while it did not do me any good, it was there. But I am not concerned about that at all. I want to be absolutely sure that my name is written in heaven.

I want to ask all you boys and girls, Are you sure that your names are written in heaven? "Well," you say, "I hope so." But that will not do. I would ask some young lady here this morning, Are you sure that your name is written in heaven? "Well, I do the best I can." But that is not the question: Is your name written in heaven? Is it really written in heaven? And you over here, even you little girls and boys, Are your names written in heaven? "Well, I have seen my name written in the family Bible." That is a good thing; but are you sure it is written in heaven? That is a simple question, is it not? And everyone here on the floor, Are you absolutely certain that your names are written in heaven? ("Yes!" "Hallelujah!") You do not all say it but there is a great host of you who are sure. Some of you are sure but you do not say so out loud. But is there anyone here who is not quite sure? If you are not sure that your name is written in heaven, you are without the supreme cause for rejoicing mentioned by the Lord Jesus. You may have plenty of money (some of you look as though you had) but the great question is, Is your name written in heaven?

## III.

IF IT IS, WHY OUGHT WE TO REJOICE?. Why ought we to be supremely happy when our names are written in heaven? Well, one reason is that it can never be blotted out; it can never be erased from God's book! You know, we have a great deal of trouble with our church roll-book. When I became Pastor of this church nearly fifteen years ago, we had one thousand and three names on our books. We had a dear old gentleman who was church clerk and he loved this church with all his heart. He was about as deaf as the proverbial post and it was rather difficult to get anything done. But because he was such a good man we put up with it for about four years. He used to sit right here in this chair. When I got through preaching I would say, "Well, Mr. So-and-So, did you hear anything this morning?" And he would reply, "I got your text and when I get your text I know pretty well what you will say." And he was quite satisfied. I used to go to him about that church roll. I found that there were three hundred and fifty or four hundred names on that book that were only names. I did not know anything about them — whether they were in Toronto, Hamilton, Montreal, New York, or Chicago, or whether

they were in glory. I could not find them at all. And we had a great time trying to bring that book into some semblance of order. Then, after a while, after a most careful investigation, I actually found there were some people who were dead, whose names were still on our books. So I said to my dear friend, "You will have to cross those names out; those people are dead." "What do you say?" "That person is dead." "Oh, no!" he said, "that name is still on my books." "But," I said, "that does not make any difference; he is dead." He could not believe that anyone was dead if his name was on his book, although they might have been dead for some time. Finally we got that roll reduced to order; and we thought we had a model church roll. We got the people all placed in districts and we said, "We will publish a double church roll, alphabetical and in districts." And we did it — and one month after it was published it was of no use at all; it was not worth the paper it took to print it, because the people would not "stay put" as the Scotchman said. I said to one person, "Why don't you get a gypsy wagon and be done with it? You are always moving from place to place anyway."

If you were to look at some of our old church roll books you would find some names written on and crossed off again. Sometimes we have had the sad and solemn duty of considering a name that had been put on the church roll, a man or woman who had seemed really born of God, but who later lapsed into sin, and we have had to cross the name off the book so that he or she was no longer a member. But, my friends, I am glad there is one Bookkeeper who never has a blot on His books, I am glad there is one book where a thing has not got to be written the second time; where it is written by the hand of unerring wisdom and abounding grace. And when God writes a name in His book it is there for ever! That is why we ought to be glad that we have our names written in heaven: because if it is written in heaven that settles it, and you are just as safe this moment as if you were already within the gates of pearl.

If we have our names written in heaven; we have a permanent address. That is where we are going to be by and by. That is a great thing. "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." That is my permanent address. I am here for a little while, just travelling about, living in tents; but if you want to know where to find me by and by, you will find me in heaven. If you have any interest in that, you make sure of going there. Let's all make sure of going there and we shall know how to find each other. It is a great thing to have a permanent address, to know where we are going. "Rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven."

If our names are written in heaven, we shall never be forgotten; there is no possibility of our ever being forgotten. They are written down. Some years ago I was preaching in Spurgeon's Tabernacle. At the close of the service a man came to see me, a man past seventy years of age. He had a clerical collar on and I saw that he was a minister. He addressed me by name, and said, "You are T. T. Shields?" "Yes, that is my name." And he said, "Your father was —" and he called my father's name. And he continued, "You used to live at so-and-so many years ago?" And I said, "Yes." Then he took out of his pocket a little birthday book, and he said, "I can tell you how old you are to the very day." I said, "That

is interesting." "And furthermore," he said, "I can tell you your birthday." And he turned over and found the date. "There," he said, "read that." And sure enough my name was written in his book. And then he said, "I can tell you your brother's name, too; and I can tell you when he was born." And he turned back and found another date, and said, "See that." And he went through the whole family, father, mother, and every member of the family. And I said, "That is most interesting." "Oh," he said, "my name is Mr. So-and-so." "Well," I said, "now I know you." I was just a little boy when I saw him last. It was at our house, and he was interested in all the children. He took his little birthday book with him and took all our names. And through the years he had remembered us. It was a great joy to meet an old friend who knew so much about us.

Sometimes you have met a friend and said, "How do you do, Mr. So-and-so." And he looked at you blankly. You tried to introduce yourself, and he looked worse than ever. And you have gone away saying, "I wish that I had not spoken to that person at all." You had a feeling that you did not amount to anything to that person. But when someone remembers you and knows all about you and you feel you have a place in their heart, what a joy it is! The Lord has our names written in heaven, written in His "birthday book", and He will not forget any one of us. Some day we shall get home and it will be like the brethren of Joseph going down into Egypt, when they saw the Governor and the table all arranged for the strangers. They were all put around that table in order of birth and Benjamin had a special place and a double portion was put for him. And when they came and sat at the table they said, "Who in the world prepared this table? It must have been one who knows all about us." "Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?"

When we get home to heaven we will find a place at the Father's table and we will find our name at the place. I really believe that will be so. I have sometimes gone to big banquets, and I have waited until someone found me a place. I have been afraid I might get in the wrong seat. Sometimes I have been ushered to the place and right there on the plate was my name. And I have said, "I am going to stay right here; this belongs to me; my name is here. I am expected and I am going to sit right here and enjoy the feast." It will be like that when we get to heaven. Our names will be there; we will not be forgotten; and all the record of our lives will be open and can be read by all our friends.

Now, my friends, are you going there? Are you sure your name is there? If it is you may be happy about it this morning. Just rejoice that your name is written in heaven. And if there is anyone here this morning who does not know his name is written there, simply say, "I am going to be sure before I leave this building that my name is written there." May the Lord help us every one to put our trust in Him, so that we can go home from this place with that assurance in our hearts; that our names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

God being my helper, I will never own fellowship with a man who denies the deity of my God and Saviour Jesus Christ, or sneers at His atonement.

—D. L. MOODY



## PROGRESSIVE THEOLOGY

*At the close of the last century, unbelief had made some deep inroads in the churches of Great Britain. One of the first to raise his voice in protest was C. H. Spurgeon. As we read the following article from his pen, we realized that if he had one cause to be alarmed in his day, we have ten thousand today. The bud of heresy has become a full flower (or, more properly, a weed).*

**I**N THIS age of progress, religious opinions move at railway speed. Within the last few weeks many have made an open advance of a very special kind; we say an open advance, for we suspect that secretly they had for a long time harboured the errors which now they have avowed. And what a revelation it is! Here, one sees a "Moderate" declaring his advance to "another gospel" in the boldest terms; and there, another, highly esteemed for his supposed love of the truth, stabbing it after the subtle manner of its most malicious foes. While some of the most perverted cunningly endeavour to appear orthodox, others of a braver nature come out in their true colours, and astonish us with the glaring hue of their heresy. That which makes manifest is light; and, however, much we may deplore the unwelcome discoveries however much we may deplore the unwelcome discoveries they are made, for it is better for us to know where we are, and with whom we are associating.

The idea of a progressive gospel seems to have fascinated many. To us that notion is a sort of cross-breed between nonsense and blasphemy. After the gospel has been found effectual in the eternal salvation of untold multitudes, it seems rather late in the day to alter it; and, since it is the revelation of the all-wise and unchanging God, it appears somewhat audacious to attempt its improvement. When we call up before our mind's eye the gentlemen who have set themselves this presumptuous task, we feel half inclined to laugh; the case is so much like the proposal of moles to improve the light of the sun. Their gigantic intellects are to hatch out the meanings of the Infinite! We think we see them brooding over hidden truths to which they lend the aid of their superior genius to accomplish their development!

Hitherto they have not hatched out much worth rearing. Their chickens are so much of the Roman breed, that we sometimes seriously suspect that, after all, Jesuitical craft may be at the bottom of this "modern thought". It is singular that, by the way of free-thought, men should be reaching the same end as others arrived at by the path of superstition. Salvation by works is one distinctive doctrine of the new gospel; in many forms this is avowed and gloried in — not, perhaps in exact words, but in declarations quite unmistakable. The Galatian heresy is upon us with a vengeance: in the name of virtue and morality, justification by faith and salvation by free grace are bitterly assailed. Equally a child of darkness is this New Purgatory. It is taught that men can escape if they neglect the great salvation. No longer is the call, "To-day, if ye will hear his voice"; for the to-morrow of the next state will answer quite as well. Of course, if men may be gradually upraised from sin and ruin in the world to come, common humanity would lead us to pray that the process may go on rapidly. We are hearing every now and again of "a night of prayers for the dead", among certain priests of the Establishment. Nor is it among Ritualists alone, or

even mainly, for the other day, at a meeting for prayer, an eminent believer in this motion prayed heartily for the devil; and his prayer, upon the theory of the restitution of all the sinful, was most natural. Prayers for the dead and prayers for the devil! Shades of Knox and Latimer, where are ye? How easy will it be to go from prayers for the dead to payment to good men for special supplications on their behalf! Of course, if a devout person will spend an hour in praying a deceased wife out of her miseries, a loving husband will not let him exercise his supplications for nothing. It would be very mean of him if he did. "Purgatory Pick-purse," as our Protestant fore-fathers called it, is upon us again, having entered by the backdoor of infidel speculation instead of by the front entrance of pious opinion.

Nor is this all; for our "improvers" have pretty nearly obliterated the hope of such a heaven as we have all along expected. Of course, the reward of the righteous is to be of no longer continuance than the punishment of the wicked. Both are described as "everlasting" in the same verse, spoken by the same sacred lips; and as the "punishment" is made out to be only "age-lasting," so must the "life" be. Worse even than this, if worse can be, it is taught by some of these "improvers" that even the blessed of the Father are by no means blessed over much; for, according to the latest information, even they will have to undergo a sort of purgatorial purification in the world to come. There are degrees in the inventiveness of the nineteenth-century theologians; but, to our mind, it is the license given to this inventiveness, even when it is most moderate, which is the root of the whole mischief. What is to be taught next? And what next?

Do men really believe that there is a gospel for each century? Or a religion for each fifty years? Will there be in heaven saints saved according to a score sorts of gospel? Will these agree together to sing the same song? And what will the song be? Saved on different footings, and believing different doctrines, will they enjoy eternal concord, or will heaven itself be only a new arena for disputation between varieties of faiths?

We shall, on the supposition of an ever-developing theology, owe a great deal to the wisdom of men. God may provide the marble; but it is man who will carve the statue. It will no longer be true that God has hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes; but the babes will be lost in hopeless bewilderment, and carnal wisdom will have fine times for glorying. Scientific men will be the true prophets of our Israel, even though they deny Israel's God; and instead of the Holy Spirit guiding the humble in heart, we shall see the enthronement of "the spirit of the age", whatever that may mean. "The world by wisdom knew not God," so says the apostle of the ages past; but the contrary is to be our experience nowadays. New editions of the gospel are to be excogitated by the wisdom of men, and we are to follow in the wake of "thoughtful

preachers", whose thoughts are not as God's thoughts. Verily this is the deification of man! Nor do the moderns shrink even from this. To many of our readers it may already be known that it is beginning to be taught that God himself is but the totality of manhood, and that our Lord Jesus only differed from us in being one of the first men to find out that he was God: he was but one item of that race, which, in its solidarity, is divine.

It is thought to be mere bigotry to protest against the mad spirit which is now loose among us. Pan-indifferentism is rising like the tide; who can hinder it? We are all to be as one, even though we agree in next to nothing. It is a breach of brotherly love to denounce error. Hail, holy charity! Black is white: and white is black. The false is true; the true is false; the true and the false are one. Let us join hands and never again mention those barbarous, old-fashioned doctrines about which we are sure to differ. Let the good and sound men for liberty's sake shield their "advanced brethren"; or, at last, gently blame them in a tone which means approval. After all, there is no difference, except in the point of view from which we look at things: it is all in the eye; or, as the vulgar say, "it is all my eye"! In order to maintain an open union, let us fight as for dear life against any form of sound words, since it might restrain our liberty to deny the doctrines of the Word of God!

But what if earnest protests accomplish nothing, because of the invincible resolve of the infatuated to abide in fellowship with the inventors of false doctrine? Well, we shall at least have done our duty. We are not responsible for success. If the plague cannot be stayed, we can at least die in the attempt to remove it. Every voice that is lifted up against Anythingarianism is at least a little hindrance to its universal prevalence. It may be that in some one instance a true witness is strengthened by our word, or a waverer is kept from falling; and this is no mean reward. It is true that our testimony may be held up to contempt; and may, indeed, in itself be feeble enough to open to ridicule; but yet the Lord, by the weak things of the world, has overcome the mighty in former times, and he will do so again. We cannot despair for the church or for the truth, while the Lord lives and reigns; but, assuredly, the conflict to which the faithful are now summoned is not less arduous than that in which the Reformers were engaged. So much of subtlety is mixed up with the whole business, that the sword seems to fall upon a sack of wool, or to miss its mark. However, plain truth will cut its way in the end, and policy will ring its own death-knell.

### SPIRITUAL CHILL

For a Christian to be cold is sin. It can only come from our neglecting to stir up the gift that is in us. People reproach us with extravagant emotion: let us confess that we have never deserved that reproach half as much as we ought. The world's ideal of religion is decorous coldness — has not the world's idea been our practice? We are afraid to be fervent; our true danger is icy torpor. We sit frost-bitten and almost dead among the snows and all the while the gracious sunshine is pouring down, that is able to melt the white death that covers us, and to free us from the bands that holds us prisoner in their benumbing clasp.

—ALEXANDER MACLAREN

## QUACKERY OF CEREMONIALISM

Dr. Ceremonial has patented a lotion for producing regeneration in little children, by the application of a few drops to their forehead. He puts his hands on the heads of boys and girls, and by what he calls occult influence, confirms them in grace. He professes to be able to make a piece of a loaf and a cup of wine to be actually divine, and in themselves a channel of grace to the souls of men. The substances are material — a mouse may nibble at the one, a bottle will hold the other; you can touch them, taste them, smell them, and yet fools adore them as divine, and imagine that material substances can be food for souls. Surely this Dr. Ceremonial flourishes all the more because of the monstrous absurdity of his teachings; his pills are huge, but men have wide swallows and can receive anything. Why, think for a minute, and then wonder for an hour: men are to be sanctified by gazing at genuflections, millinery and candles! The east is said to be a more gracious quarter of the heavens than the west, and creeds repeated with the head in that direction possess a peculiar efficacy. It appears that in spiritual operation certain colours are peculiarly efficacious; prayers said or sung in white are far more prevalent than in black, and according to the age of the year and the condition of the moon, pure, violet, scarlet, and blue, are more acceptable to God. I have no patience with these things; it is hardly good enough sport for laughter; but so long as fools abound, knaves will flourish, and this Dr. Ceremonial will get men to spend their substance in abundance, and laugh in his sleeve to think that rational beings should be his silly dupes. I trust there are none such here. I hope none of you are so befooled. What can there be in crossings, bowings, and uttering over and over the same words? What is any worship unless the reason and heart enter into it? What can there be in one material substance to give it sanctity? Is it not as absurd as the fetishism of the Bushman, to believe that bricks and mortar, and slates and boarding, could make a holy place? That, indeed, any one place can be a jot holier than another; that any plot or ground can be holier than common ground; or that any man because certain words have been said over his godless, graceless head, can be made a dispenser of the grace of God, and a pardoner of sins! We are not so befooled, but still this quack drives a good trade, and is held in very high repute.

—C. H. SPURGEON

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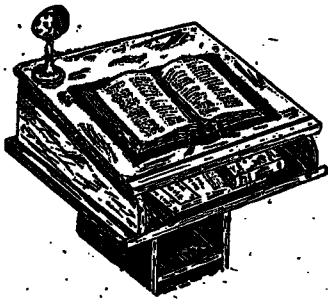
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### THE RAW MATERIAL FOR THE BODY OF CHRIST Ephesians 4:17-5:21

**WE** ARE to take a look tonight at the raw material out of which the Lord Jesus Christ is building His church for glory. Those of us who are saved will readily recognize that we belong to that material, and if there should be anyone here who is not saved, he should get courage as we think together about the material out of which Jesus Christ is building His church.

#### The Touch of the Master's Hand

Most articles reflect the raw material from which they are made — the finer the material, the better the article. In recognition of this, human industry searches far and near for suitable material for their finished products. Because of this, something imported is usually thought to be superior to what is found at home. But in building His church, the Lord Jesus Christ reverses human procedure. The raw material for His church in no way accounts for its glory. His church is not meant to be an exhibit of what human nature can become, but to be a display of His skill and wisdom in redeeming grace. It is the touch of the Master's hand that explains the glory of His church. The beauty of the bride's garments is the result of being washed white in the blood of the Lamb. Christ builds His church out of sorry material so that all the praise may be His and that no flesh shall be allowed to glory in His sight. It is sweet music to His ears to hear His redeemed ascribe all honour and glory and praise to Him. Yes! saints are made from sinners, from the vilest of the vile. People fit for the denizens of the damned are by redeeming grace fitted for the society of God and the holy angels. The church of Christ is built of stones quarried from the pit of human wretchedness. The raw material for the church in glory is transported from the far regions of darkness and depravity. The bride of Christ must be cleansed from moral pollution. The raw material for the church at Ephesus was found in heathenism, and heathenism is fallen human nature fully developed. It is what man becomes when left to himself. Religious evolution is a terrible lie. It is the truth in reverse. God made man upright, but he has sought out many inventions. The potential wickedness of fallen humanity beggars description and defies all definition. The fact that none of us

reached the depths of depravity in the days of our unregenerate state was not due to any potential goodness in us, but solely to the restraining grace of God.

The Jews were no better than the Gentiles by nature, but the restraints of grace held them more or less in check from going over to heathenism bodily. And even with their Bible and the external blessings of God upon them, they were prone to wander in the ways of the heathen.

Now in the Scripture before us tonight, we have the old man exhibited in the walk of the Gentiles, the new man as a divine creation, and the whole man consisting of both the old and the new man. The old man is described in condition and conduct, and set aside. The new man is described and put on as a garment. And the whole man, with his two natures, is earnestly and seriously admonished.

#### I.

#### The Old Man Exhibited (17-19)

In verses seventeen to nineteen, we have the old man exhibited in the walk of the Gentiles. "This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind." The apostle calls upon the Ephesians to make a clean break with their past. They must have no fellowship with their heathen neighbours in their unfruitful works of darkness. Their old vices must be discarded. It is a clarion call to separation. And this call needs to be sounded today for in most cases the line of demarcation between the church and the world is all too dim.

The heathen are described as walking in the vanity of their mind. This is a summary of their condition followed by particular characterization. The mind is not limited to the intellect but includes the entire moral nature with its thoughts and feelings and desires. There are two Greek words translated "vanity". One of them means "empty, void of contents". But that is not the word used here. The word here means "uselessness, or purposeless, without any aim," and describes the kind of contents. Paul is not saying that the heathen mind was empty. It was full, all too full, but full to no purpose or usefulness. It was full of deceitful lusts. The heathen mind put them on a wild goose chase, as somebody has said, that did not lead to any goal. They had no aim or purpose in life but for present sensual gratification. Peter employs this same word for vanity when he speaks of the false teachers as speaking great swelling words of vanity, that is, words to no purpose or profit. There is a lot of talk like that in the world today. In the vanity of their mind, the heathen had their understanding darkened. This refers to moral or spiritual darkness and not so much to the use of intellectual faculties in natural things. Satan's kingdom is full of moral darkness. In the next chapter, Paul tells the Ephesians that they were sometimes darkness, but now are they light in the Lord. And he reminds the Colossians that they had been delivered from darkness and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son.

#### The Human Intellect Degraded

Heathenism is the degradation of the human intellect. Now I know that the pagan world has boasted of its mighty intellects in such men as Plato, Socrates and others. But these men were an exception to the general rule. Moreover, with all their intellect they were never able to discover the true God. For the world by wisdom

cannot know God. We are sometimes reminded of the pagan Euclid who prosecuted mathematical science to such a great degree of success, but Euclid never discovered the true God and how to worship Him: Sin has slain the moral reason. Man forfeits his claim to be a rational creature when he worships objects so degraded as the heathen gods, and practices vices that are so detestable and ruinous.

They were alienated from the life of God, that is, they were dead in trespasses and sins. They were without the life that can be had only in Jesus Christ who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. In the vanity of their mind, the heathen had become ignorant of all moral values and their heart was as hard as a stone, insensible to any moral compunction. They had become past feeling. They had no sense of sin and shame. Moral madness sat upon the throne of reason. They could feel no prick of conscience at anything they did. To become past feeling is to reach the bottom of human depravity and moral degradation. A bodily disease without pain is the most dangerous and hopeless. And a moral disease without any pang of conscience is apt to be fatal. With no conscience to reprove and warn them, the heathen had given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. They were gluttons for unclean living. Impurity marked all that they did. They were unclean in their religion and worship, in their pleasures, in their business, in their social relations, in their politics, and in everything. They were hogs for all that was vile and impure. Yes! I am talking about human beings, when human nature has been allowed to fully develop itself. They could not get enough sin. What a contrast with Christians who get so sick and tired of sin, and who so long to be free from every vestige of sinfulness. That was heathenism in Paul's day. And these very people to whom he is writing came out of that class. And it is the same in our day. That is what you find in human nature when it is fully developed. It is only in remote places today that we find human nature fully developed. And this is where Christian influence has not reached. Missionary endeavour not only results in the salvation of some of the heathen, but it throws restraints upon and around heathen practices of the masses who may not be saved.

When William Carey went to India one hundred and sixty years ago, he found human nature fully developed in the heathen Hindus. They had their gods, but they had no idea what the true God looked like. They had gods of their own imagination and manufacture, and they ascribed to these deities the foulest of vices without any conception that they were wicked. Andrew Fuller in his letters to the East India Company tells us that a considerable part of the religion of the Hindus in his day consisted of self-torment. It seemed that the East India Company at that time governed India under some sort of a charter from the English government. Fuller tells us that a man would hold up his hand until it would grow stiff, and could not take it down, as a form of religion. Another man would lie on the points of iron spikes just blunt enough not to pierce him to death. And in the worship of the Juggernaut, that massive wooden god was carried on a huge carriage drawn by many persons howling and shrieking. And anyone who would throw himself beneath the wheels of that carriage to be crushed to death, was counted happy. Another part of their religion was the burning of widows on the funeral pyre

of their dead husbands, as an act of religious devotion. And if a man died far away from home, the widow was supposed to take his sandal or some other part of his apparel and enter the fire with it in the place of her dead husband's body. Another practice was that of throwing infants into the river as offerings to the gods. And a child that would refuse its mother's milk would be put into a basket and hung in the branches of a tree for the ants to devour or birds of prey to eat. That was human nature, the same nature that you and I have, left to run its course and fully develop. Carey tells us that India at that time swarmed with deists who opposed the work of missions and sought to have the missionaries recalled by the English government. These opponents of missionary work charged that the work of Carey and his associates was apt to lead to rebellion of the natives against British rule. Andrew Fuller as the secretary of the Society that sent Carey and Marshman and others to India, replied to these charges in letters to the East India Company. In one of his letters he affirms that the heathen were incapable of any unity, of any sort of organization to resist the British government. He likened the heathen to a vast number of atoms incapable of cohesion. Sin disunites. It has no power for unity among men. And Fuller pointed out that in India, parents were against children, and children were against parents, and brother against brother, and that human life was cheap. It was like this in Ephesus in the days of Paul. Everybody was against everybody else, and the Jew and the Gentile were especially against each other. But the gospel of Jesus Christ brought warring factions together in the bonds of peace. Rome united people after a fashion by their iron rule of government, but Rome never united anybody in heart and life. Christ made peace by the blood of His cross, and making peace for men, all classes come together in peace when they meet in Him. It is the same today. The united homes of Toronto are Christian homes, while the homes of the ungodly are divided. The only way for unity among men is to meet around Jesus Christ and have Him for the centre of the circle. The gospel separates the saved from the lost and then unites the saved in the bonds of a common brotherhood. Nothing else does that. Nothing can do that but the gospel of the Son of God.

## II.

### The New Man Created (20-24)

In verses twenty to twenty-four, we have the new man as a new principle of life, which is to be developed by constant renewing of the mind. We have seen what the old man is when fully developed. And the old man is what we were before conversion. The old man is the sinful ego, the Adamic nature, plus our own acquired habits of life according to the culture of the age and country in which we live. Nobody ever improves the old man, but intensifies its depravity by sinful deeds. The old man is called the flesh which profits nothing. The mind of the flesh is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. The flesh cannot get better; it can only become worse.

### The Old Man Crucified

Now the old man is legally put to death when the new man is created in righteousness and true holiness. We are crucified with Christ and also live with Him. In Romans six Paul says, "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him." And in the eleventh verse

he says, "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Being united to Christ under the moral law of God, His death was our death, and when converted to faith in Him, we are to reckon or consider ourselves to be dead unto sin and alive unto God through Him. The purpose of baptism is to symbolize this legal union with Christ in death and in resurrection. Baptism was not meant to kill us to sin and to make us alive to holiness, but to declare that we are dead to sin and alive unto God through Christ. The old man is dead objectively and legally, but he is much alive subjectively and experimentally. He is still around and we have him to face and to deal with. He is to be put off and given no recognition. We are to make no provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof. We must not even be on speaking terms with the old man and his deceitful lusts. But we must put on the new man which is created in righteousness and true holiness. Moral renovation must follow spiritual regeneration. The new life principle begotten in us must be nurtured and developed. We are saved from the guilt of sin in justification, that we might be saved from the defilement of sin in sanctification. We are saved from hell that we might be saved for heaven.

Now the old man and the new man represent two sources of divergent life. In Galatians the figure is that of two trees. In one the fruit is bad because the tree is bad. In the other the fruit is good because the tree is good. The old man is the bad tree bringing forth corrupt fruit which is called the works of the flesh. And the new man is the good tree bringing forth good fruit called the fruit of the Spirit.

### III.

#### The Whole Man Admonished (25-32)

Beginning at verse twenty-five, there is a series of admonitions addressed to the whole man, to the saved person with two natures. The former conduct of the old man is to be no longer permitted. The old vices are to be discarded. *There must be no more lying.* Christians must be truthful in ordinary conversation, in their public dealings and in their witnessing for Christ. "Lying lips are abomination to the Lord: but they that deal truly are his delight," says Holy Writ. Lying is an attribute of fallen humanity. It is one of the first vices to appear in children. We do not like this, but it is the truth. The psalmist said, "The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies." A dear friend of mine, my father in the ministry, dear old Dr. A. S. Pettie, said that when his first child was born he was sure she was a little angel, but it wasn't long until he learned that she was only a little Pettie.

*Paul said we must be angry without sinning.* Righteous indignation is a virtue not to be crushed but to be watched. Righteous anger is enthusiasm for what is right and hatred for what is evil. Now anger must not be the explosion of a bad temper, but the expression of love for God and holiness, and what is right and good. Anger must be controlled and not allowed to dwell in the heart. Prolonged anger will become malice and do us much harm as it has in multitudes of cases. Therefore, the apostle says, "Let not the sun go down upon your wrath, your righteous exasperation." We should never go to sleep while we are angry. It is better to pray anger away than to sleep it off. We had better commit that which caused the anger to God before we go to bed.

*We must not give place to the devil.* If we are not watchful and prayerful when angry, the devil will tell us to move over and let him handle the situation. And when he takes over, what he does is our sin and responsibility. "Who is the most diligent Bishop in all England?" asked Hugh Latimer in one of his quaint sermons. And he replied, "I'll tell you. It is the devil. He is the most diligent preacher of all others. He is never out of his diocese. He is ever applying to his business. His office is to murder religion and set up idolatry."

*Paul said there must be no more stealing.* This was a common vice among the Ephesians in their unregenerate days. And there are many ways to steal besides entering a home or an office after dark. The employee is stealing when he fails to render faithful service to his employer. The merchant is stealing when he uses a false weight. I do not have to remind you of the many ways that stealing can be done. It is one of the most common vices of our proud civilization, and it was common among the heathen. Stealing is any form of getting something wrongfully.

Paul said, "Instead of stealing, go to work and get something to give to folks who are needy." We usually think about working for our own sake. But Paul said, "Work to get something for somebody else." Work to give something to the cause of Christ — the greatest investment anybody can make, the way to lay up treasures in heaven where moth and rust doth not corrupt, and where thieves do not break through and steal.

*Then there must be no more corrupt speech.* The thought here is that there must be no worthless talk. The tongue should be used for edifying, for ministering grace to the hearers. This condemns all idle talk which Christ says must be accounted for in the day of judgment. Solomon says, "A wholesome tongue is a tree of life." And in speaking of the virtuous woman he says, "She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness." Now in the next chapter, at verse four, filthy speech and foolish talk are condemned. Obscene speech is disgusting to anybody with any moral sense, as foolish talk is destructive to spirituality. Filthy talk is the proof of a corrupt heart, "For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." A better use of the tongue, the apostle says, is to express thanks to God for His abundant mercies. In Colossians four six Paul says, "Let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man."

*Then the apostle said there must be no grieving of the Holy Spirit;* whereby we are sealed unto the day of redemption. Here is a startling thought. "Grieve not the holy Spirit of God." I cannot explain how deity can suffer grief. But God can be grieved. I cannot understand it, I cannot explain it, but I know we can always hurt most those who love us most. The mother can be hurt most by her prodigal son or wayward daughter. What an argument we have here for a holy life. Sin is a grief to the Holy Spirit of God. Paul must have had in mind the sin of corrupt speech, for this admonition joins the previous one. Flippant conversation on sacred subjects as well as language that is debasing is grievous to the Holy Spirit, and it reveals a low tone of spirituality. God has sealed us for Himself. His seal guarantees our delivery in glory. We are Christ's precious jewels. He paid a tremendous price for us and He wants us to be clean in speech and thought and life. And when He comes to

make up His jewels He is going to bring a book of remembrance of them that feared the Lord, and that spake often one to another and that thought upon His name.

What sweet hours of fellowship I have enjoyed in the homes of our Jarvis Street members as we have had fellowship around the Word and have made Christ the centre of our social circle. And I shall ever thank God for the rich experiences I have had in the Jarvis Street church and the homes of its people. In closing let us sing about that Name which is above every name:

"Take the Name of Jesus with you,  
Child of sorrow and of woe;  
It will joy and comfort give you —  
Take it then where'er you go."

#### THE BELOVED'S LITTLE WHILE\*

- (1) The Christian's life upon the earth is a little while—  
of warning.
- (2) The Christian's life upon the earth is a little while—  
for winning.
- (3) The Christian's life upon the earth is a little while—  
for working.
- (4) The Christian's life upon the earth is a little while—  
of waiting.
- (5) The Christian's life upon the earth is a little while—  
for watching.
- (6) The Christian's life upon the earth is a little while—  
of winnowing.
- (7) The Christian's life upon the earth is a little while—  
for warning.
- (8) The Christian's life upon the earth is a little while—  
of weeping.
- (9) The Christian's life upon the earth is a little while—  
of wandering.

\*From "The Beloved's Little While."  
By Rev. W. Fergusson, Ellon.

—From *The Christian Treasury*

#### CHARLES WESLEY'S GREATEST HYMN

Each line was inspired by a verse from the Bible

Jesus, Lover of my soul, (John 13:23)  
Let me to Thy bosom fly, (Psalm 69:2)  
While the nearer waters roll, (Psalm 55:8)  
While the tempest still is high; (Psalm 27:5)  
Hide me, oh my Saviour hide, (Psalm 27:4)  
Till the storm of life is past, (Psalm 107:30)  
Safe into the haven guide, (Acts 7:59)  
Oh, receive my-soul at last. (Psalm 46:1)

Other refuge have I none (Prov. 10:3)  
Hangs my helpless soul on Thee, (Hebrews 13:5)  
Leave, oh, leave me not alone, (Isaiah 65:12)  
Still support and comfort me; (Isaiah 26:3)  
All my trust in Thee is stayed, (Isaiah 41:10)  
All my help from Thee I bring (Psalm 140:7)  
Cover my defenseless head (Psalm 57:1)  
With the shadow of Thy wing. (Colossians 3:2)

Thou, O Christ, art all I want, (Col. 2:9)  
More than all in Thee I find; (Psalm 145:14)  
Raise the fallen, cheer the faint, (Matthew 10:8)  
Heal the sick and lead the blind. (Matthew 15:14)  
Just and holy is Thy name, (Acts 3:14)  
I am all unrighteousness, (Romans 1:29)  
False and full of sin I am, (1 John 1:8)  
Thou art full of truth and grace. (John 1:14)

Plenteous grace with Thee is found, (II Cor. 12:9)  
Grace to cover all my sins; (Rom. 2:20)  
Let the healing streams abound, (Ezekiel 47:9)  
Make and keep me pure within; (Psalm 51:10)  
Thou of life the Fountain art, (John 1:4)  
Freely let me take of Thee (Rev. 22:17)  
Spring Thou up within my heart, (John 4:14)  
Rise to all eternity. (John 4:14)

—*The Moody Church News.*

### ATTENTION: Pastors and Churches

## SEMINARY QUARTETTE PLANS TOUR

During the month of May the quartette of Toronto Baptist Seminary plans to make a tour of Ontario and western Quebec. Accompanying the group will be Pastor Samuel Dempster who is in charge of the thriving new work in Kingston. Each night they will visit an evangelical Baptist church and hold a service of song, testimony and preaching. Any Baptist church that desires to have such a service should immediately contact the Seminary secretary, at 337 Jarvis St., Toronto 2. State several alternative dates in order that a suitable schedule may be organized.

Those who have heard the quartette have ex-

pressed the feeling that it is one of the finest in this area. Each of the young men has a testimony to give that will bring blessing to the souls of young and old. The four members of the group came from four different lands, — Mr. Keith Davies of England; Mr. James McCombe from Ireland; Mr. Kenneth Miller from the United States; and Mr. Samuel Pourret from France. The preacher, Pastor Dempster, also hails from the Emerald Isle.

The quartette stands ready to accept the invitation from any evangelical Baptist church that wishes to make use of its services.

## UNAVOIDABLE SITUATIONS

Genesis XXXIX.

**J**OSEPH'S position in Potiphar's house is one full of instruction. He was in an *unavoidable* situation. Such is sometimes the only adjective which we like to apply to our lot — as regards especially our family, or our country, or our neighbourhood, or our estate in life. We didn't choose it — perhaps wouldn't have chosen it. Perhaps we even feel it so evil that we don't like to say of it that God has placed us in it. We just retire upon the vague ground of its being *unavoidable* — *our necessary lot*.

Perhaps Joseph felt so too in regard to his service in Potiphar's house. And the temptation to cherish this feeling would increase more and more as his difficulties increased. Yet we see clearly, looking back on his whole history, that this part of his life was of *God*. It led him to the prison, whence his wisdom, there displayed, led him to Pharaoh's presence and confidence, and finally to his being set on the throne over all Egypt, saving only the king. Even **THE** evil, *par excellence*, of his position in Potiphar's house was the plainest means of leading to his greatest after good.

The trying temptations which, "day by day", he had to combat, and the difficulties which, in his daily duty, he had to surmount, led directly to the false accusation of Potiphar's wife, — an accusation brought with so much plausibility and apparent proof as to prevail seemingly to the ruin of the servant of the Lord.

Would he have no pain in all this? no doubt? no darkness? no despair even? Yes, just as we would have had — just as we often *have*, under similar trials, temptations, unjust accusations, and the seeming triumph of our enemies. Let us, then, in such trials, take courage, and remember how, in Joseph's case, these were just *the very means* of his advancement to that place which God had appointed for him, *though he saw it not while the trial lasted*.

Let us also learn *to be still* in such circumstances. Joseph did not fly or complain. He continued "day by day" to go about his rightful work, in a right way, — resisting evil, and doing his daily duty as unto the Lord. He walked not so much, we may say, *in the ways of God*, as emphatically "*with God*," — step by step, side by side, hand in hand, turn by turn, steep by steep, smooth by smooth, moment by moment.

*To-day*, I will do *to-day's* work, with *today's* light, *to-day's* comfort, *to-day's* help, whether in spirit direct from God, or through means of his choosing and using. My rule is for *to-day*. My promise from Him is for *to-day*. My trust is for *now*. I will not look beyond *to-day*. I will do right *to-day*; pray, trust, rejoice, praise all *to-day*, and again *to-morrow*, when it becomes *to-day*, till that day dawns which will have no night.

This is living a heavenly life below; to have no night to our day, no yesterday or tomorrow.

Ah! you stop me. "No yesterday! I can understand living without care for *to-morrow*; but what do you mean by having no *yesterday*?" This — that we are to take our daily lot *as it is*. Do not say: "Ah, if I had not acted so on such an occasion, I should not have been in such a position *to-day*;" or, "If I had not been so treated, or so long ill, or so poor, etc., this or that would not have been *to-day*."

All true. Perhaps it was even our sin, or that of others, that worked out our present position to what it is. But who permitted us so to act as to do this? Could not a watchful, all-powerful God have, in some turn of affairs, altered all this for us, had He willed it to be different? Unquestionably He could. Then, as unquestionably, our position *to-day*, as it exists when we rise in his fear and to his service this morning, is in *every* point, and whatever the *human* element leading to each may have been, the appointment of God for us, — the path prepared, in which He will lead us, in which we can walk with Him, and find "his presence, which is fulness of joy."

—From "Bible Hours".

*The Christian Treasury*

## AUTHORITY OF THE BIBLE

The mother of a family was married to an infidel, who made pest of religion in the presence of his own children; yet she succeeded in bringing them all up in the fear of the Lord. I asked her one day how she preserved them from the influence of a father whose sentiments were so opposed to her own. This was her answer: "Because to the authority of a *father* I do not oppose the authority of a *mother* but that of *God*. From their earliest years, my children have always seen the Bible upon my table. This holy book has constituted the whole of their religious instruction. I was silent, that I might allow it to speak. Did they propose a question, did they commit a fault, did they perform a good action, I opened the Bible; and the Bible answered, reprov'd, or encouraged them. The constant reading of the Scriptures has wrought the prodigy which surprises you."

—ADOLPH MONOD

## SPIRITUAL INFLUENCE

Is it not true that the religious condition of a Church, and that of its leaders, teachers, pastors, ever tend to be the same, as that of the level of water in two connected vessels? There is such a constant interaction and reciprocal influence that uniformity results. Either a living teacher will, by God's grace, quicken a languid Church, or a languid Church will, with the devil's help, stifle the life of the teacher. Take two balls of iron, one red hot, and one cold, and put them down beside each other. How many degrees of difference between them, after half an hour, will your thermometer show? Thank God for the many instances in which one glowing soul, all aflame with love of God, has sufficed to kindle a whole heap of dead matter, and send it leaping skyward in ruddy brightness! Alas! for the many instances in which the wet green wood has been too strong for the little spark, and has not only obstinately resisted, but has ignominiously quenched its ineffectual fire! Thank God, that when His Church lives on a high level of devotion, it has never wanted for single souls who have towered even above that height, and have been elevated by it, as the snowy Alps spring not from the flats of Holland, but from the high central plateau of Europe. Alas! for the leaders who have rayed out formalism, and have chilled down the Church to their own coldness, and stiffened it to their own deadness!

—ALEXANDER MACLAREN

### THE CHURCH'S TASK

A church of Christ is not an ark in which a few of the elect are to be happily housed in order that they may float around joyfully over the drowning world beneath them. Nor is it a ship, passage upon which will land us in the heavenly country. Nor is it an insurance company, to which we may pay dues now and then, and thus certainly secure our dear selves against all loss. Nor is it a hospital for healing all manner of sickness. Nor is it a select social club with a toast-master to call out such themes as shall provoke the building up of a mutual admiration society. Nor is it a debating society where more attention is to be given to the fine points of ecclesiasticism rather than to the consuming passion of Christianity. Nor is it a school where we may gather as students to be forever taught. Nor is it merely a place of worship where we may give ourselves to song and praise and meditation about our heavenly inheritance.

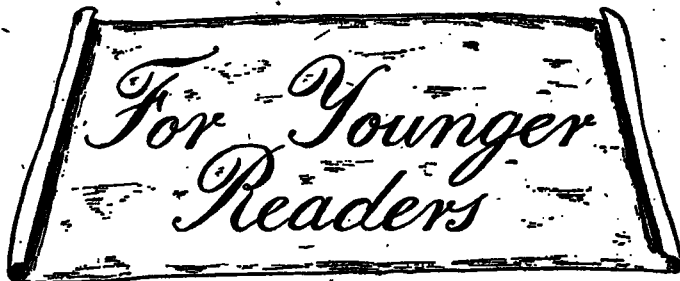
Christ's Church is not any of these nor all of them combined; but with my whole heart I declare that His Church exists primarily to give the Gospel to all the world.

—G. W. TRUETT

### EMPTY WORDS

The New Theologian sings our hymns, but cannot mean what we do when he sings them; he uses our litanies and prayers, but they do not mean to him what they do to us; he uses the old Bible texts, but that meaning which the apostles, prophets, and martyrs put into them, he studiously avoids. It is as though he bakes bread in the same sized loaves as we have been accustomed to from childhood and labels them by the same name, but the life-giving elements which nourish health and strength are absolutely wanting.

—F. B. MEYER



### JIMMY PETERSON

"A new heart also will I give you."—Ezek. 36:26.

"Mother, make Jimmy quit teasing me!" complained Geraldine for the twentieth time in the last hour.

"Jimmy, whatever shall I do with you? I do wish you would turn over a new leaf and decide to be a good boy for a change. How about making some New Year's resolutions?"

Jimmy shrugged his shoulders. "What's the use," he said under his breath, as he dragged himself away from temptation, and with a rather hopeless sort of sigh, curled up on the dining-room couch.

For a few minutes undisturbed peace reigned in the Peterson household. Geraldine played contentedly with her dollies near the kitchen stove, while Mother, glad

for a few minutes quiet, hummed as she rolled and cut out plump, round cookies with raisin eyes and mouth.

"Who is the man coming into the room?" Jimmy hadn't heard any company arrive.

An elderly stranger stepped up to the couch where Jimmy lay.

"Good afternoon," said the stranger. "I believe you are Jimmy Peterson. I thought you might be interested in looking over the history book you've been writing for the last twelve months." So saying, the old man handed Jimmy a thick, heavy book.

Jimmy took the book rather gingerly, since there seemed to be nothing else to do. The cover was ragged and soiled; not very inviting looking to be sure, and Jimmy never had cared for history.

His eyes grew big and round, as he read on the flyleaf his own name in large print—"Jimmy Peterson of Sunnydale." That was he all right.

The first page showed a long list of New Year's resolutions dated January 1, 1955. Jimmy remembered them well.

The next page was badly smudged, but he was able to read, "Kept in after-school for misbehaviour in class."

Farther on he read, "Spent Sunday-school collection for candy." Jimmy winced. He had thought he was the only one who knew anything about that.

Then he read, "Disobeyed his parents, and went skating on the creek without permission."

Another page read, "Refused to help his mother, who was tired and ill. Quarrelled with his sister."

One particularly black page stated, "Lost his temper today and swore at his chum."

So it went all through the book. Two or three pages were fairly white and clean with such records as, "Played with baby sister today. Helped his mother with the dishes," and so on. But the good pages only made the rest of the book look worse.

Near the back Jimmy was startled to see, "Told his mother a lie and went to the poolroom with Toughie Dick." He had forgotten that! Suppose Daddy should find out about it!

It seemed nothing had been left out of the book. There were some ugly words and bad stories that he tried to erase, but they only smeared and showed up the more.

As he closed the book with an awful feeling of guilt, he saw, in clear type across the back cover, these words: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die!"

With a thud Jimmy dropped the book as though he had been stung. But the old man slowly bent over, picked up the book, carefully tucked it under his arm, and slipped noiselessly from the room.

No sooner had he disappeared, than a fine young man approached Jimmy's coach. He handed Jimmy a book the same size as the one the old man had given him, but this same book was different. The cover was unsoiled. Written across the front, in gold, were the figures 1956. The pages were clean and white.

Jimmy began to leaf through it, admiring the beauty and pure whiteness; when he saw, to his horror, that his hands were dirty. Already the book was smudged and soiled from his fingerprints.

"Oh," said Jimmy aloud, "I must have clean hands if I'm going to keep the book nice."

A voice said tenderly, close to his ear, "A new heart also will I give you." Jimmy knew that was what he needed most of all.



"Come, Jimmy, take this glass of milk and some nice sugar cookies."

Jimmy sat up with a start, "Mother, I must have been dreaming!"

Without another word, or a backward glance, he grabbed his coat and cap and ran down the steps and hurried up the street to see his Sunday-School teacher, Mr. Ray.

Mother gasped. Never before had she known Jimmy to refuse cookies.

But Jimmy had more important business to attend to just then. Reaching Mr. Ray, he blurted out, "I want the Lord Jesus to give me a new heart and clean hands. I don't want a soiled book like the one — 'cause it won't rub out. Besides I'm so awful miserable"; and Jimmy told of his dream.

Soon he and Mr. Ray were on their knees, telling the Lord all about it.

"Well, it sure feels good to know my sins have all been blotted out," said Jimmy, grinning happily as he said goodbye to Mr. Ray. "I'm glad I don't have to worry about the old record book any more!"

—Young Observer

## Bible School Lesson Outline

Volume 20 Second Quarter Lesson 6 May 6, 1956

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

### THE PARABLE OF THE POUNDS

Lesson Text: Luke 19:11-27.

Golden Text: "For I say unto you, That unto every one which hath shall be given; and from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him."—Luke 19:26.

#### I. The Period of Trial: verses 11-14.

Our Lord, who had been ministering in Galilee in the northern section of Palestine, was returning to Jerusalem for the last time. Miracles of healing were performed on the way, and the disciples were instructed by the Master, that they might be prepared to carry on His ministry after He had departed from the earth. At Jericho, which was approximately twenty miles from Jerusalem, Zacchaeus the publican received Christ into his heart and home (verses 1-9).

To observe the setting of a parable is most important, since most of the parables of our Saviour were given for a particular purpose, to stress a definite, timely truth; for example, Luke 15:1, 2 gives the clue to the meaning of the parables of the lost sheep, the lost coin and the lost son, and Luke 18:1 states the lesson of the parable of the unjust judge. In this instance our Lord had been expounding the nature of His mission on earth: He had come "to seek and to save that which was lost" (verse 10). In order to save men He would give His life as a ransom for many, and afterward would depart to be with the Father in glory and carry on His ministry as Intercessor. And it was as they neared Jerusalem, where He would die and rise again, that this parable was uttered. The departure of Christ, represented by the journey of the nobleman in the parable, was imminent. Again, our Lord spoke this parable to correct their mistaken supposition that as the Messiah He would immediately deliver them from the Romans and set up a great kingdom (Jer. 5:17, 18; Mic. 4:1-8). "Therefore" (verse 12) He uttered this parable.

The details of the parable are readily understood. The nobleman went into a far country; the journey was long, so that he would not soon return. Christ would teach His disciples that He would not soon return to them, but they must ever watch and serve Him (Matt. 24:48; 25:14; Mark 13:34). He would indeed go to heaven, and in God's time would receive His authority and return (Dan. 7:13, 14, 27).

To each of the ten servants the nobleman gave one pound, approximately fourteen dollars in our money, but much more valuable at that time. They all shared alike, whereas in the parable of the talents, the talents were distributed to "every man according to his several ability" (Matt. 25:14-30). The pound may represent our Christian testimony, the Gospel as committed in trust to every Christian (2 Cor. 5:18; 1 Tim. 1:11). "Christianity is not a selfish luxury, but a sacred trust." We are saved by grace, but we shall be rewarded according to our works.

The servants were commanded to "occupy" or "trade" till the nobleman should return. They were not to waste their time idly waiting for their master's coming; they were to be busily engaged furthering their master's interests (Acts 1:6-8). Their love and faithfulness to the absent lord would be judged by their actions, as well as by their attitude (Luke 12:37, 43).

The citizens of the country hated the nobleman; they were his enemies. Their rebellious message, "We will not have this man to reign over us" is a clear declaration of the sentiments of many of the Jews and Gentiles in the day of our Saviour and throughout the ages till the present time.

#### II. The Time of Reckoning: verses 15-27.

When the nobleman returned, his servants were called before him to give an account of their actions during his absence. So shall it be when our Lord returns to this earth (Rom. 14:10, 12; 1 Cor. 3:14, 15).

The faithful servants were rewarded by being given positions of authority. But the one, thinking he could not do much, did not do anything. Instead of taking the blame for his idleness, he cast reflections upon the character of his lord, openly slandering him as being severe, exacting so much and bestowing so little. His master replied that if such were his opinion, he should have put forth greater effort, so as to be sure to please. The legal Christian who has had little experience of grace should launch out for his Master, and then he would learn about the Lord's true nature.

The indifferent and careless servant, who had hidden the master's pound in a napkin, proved by his actions that he was not worthy of being entrusted with the money. There was no injustice in taking it from him and giving it to the one who had gained ten pounds. The principle of the Golden Text is true in the natural, as in the spiritual realm. That which is not used to advantage will deteriorate. An arm, bound up, even although organically perfect, will in time lose the power of motion. In spiritual matters, every grace received and appropriated will enlarge our capacity for further gifts, but every grace rejected renders us unfit to retain the graces already possessed. The lamp of testimony will be removed from the unfaithful lampstand, and will be given to the one who will let the light shine (Rev. 2:5). Let us be faithful in that which has been committed to us, that we may give account to our Master with joy, and not with grief.

When our Saviour comes again, He will not only reward His own, but He will also judge and punish the wicked who have wilfully refused His offer of pardon (2 Thess. 1:6-10). This solemn fact is taught in the parable. The wicked men who sent word that they would not allow the nobleman to rule over them were destroyed. Every knee must bow to Christ the Lord (Isa. 45:23; Rom. 14:11; Phil. 2:10). Those who will not receive Him as Saviour must in time bow before Him as their Judge. He waits in mercy to receive them, but one day that mercy, if slighted and despised, will give way to righteous wrath (Gen. 6:3; 2 Thess. 2:8-12; 2 Pet. 3:9-15).

#### Daily Bible Readings

Apr. 30—The Faithful and Wise Servant	.....	Matt. 24:42-51
May 1—The Parable of the Talents	.....	Matt. 25:14-30
May 2—The Command to Watch and Work	.....	Mark 13:32-37
May 3—The Necessity of Watching	.....	Luke 12:31-40
May 4—The Necessity of Working	.....	Luke 12:42-48
May 5—The Time of Reckoning	.....	Rom. 14:1-12
May 6—Faithful Stewards	.....	1 Cor. 4:1-7

#### Suggested Hymns

When Jesus comes to reward His servants.  
Hark! 'tis the watchman's cry.  
Hark! 'tis the Shepherd's voice I hear.  
Work, for the night is coming.  
Dismiss me not Thy service, Lord.  
Hark! the voice of Jesus crying.

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