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Baptists, Forward March!

THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT AND THE BIBLICAL ANSWER IN CANADA

BETWEEN dead, formal religion and the gospel of Jesus Christ, there is a great gulf fixed. The former resembles some shallow puddle of stagnant water while the gospel is a pure, bubbling fountain, bringing life and refreshment to all who partake of it. A Christian must therefore deplore the attempts which are made to equate lifeless, soul-destroying religion and the pure gospel.

Just this week, the local papers printed stories of the coming to Toronto of Dr. Robert Nelson, general secretary of the faith and order commission of the World Council of Churches. What is the purpose of the work in which this religious leader is engaged? The *Globe and Mail* reporter interprets his mission as follows:—"to reconcile Roman Catholics, Anglicans, Baptists, Presbyterians and 100 splinter denominations of the Christian faith into one ecumenical movement." In fairness, we emphasize that this is the newspaper reporter's interpretation of Dr. Nelson's mission and the aim of the World Council of Churches: at the same time, we are persuaded this is a fair appraisal of the *immediate* aim of the ecumenical movement, although doubtless it has even more astounding far-reaching plans.

Christian! ponder these things! There is on foot a well-planned scheme to unite in one movement the Roman Church, Baptists, Presbyterians and all others who are blind enough to be deceived into thinking that the one world religion is the ideal. How can we impress Christians with the seriousness of this matter? Can it be that some will be roused only when that which is now a proposal becomes a terrible reality?

Unfortunately many believers seem to regard this menace as being a purely theoretical and academic question with no practical import to any but a select circle of religious leaders, theological professors and theorists. The plain fact, however, is that the whole movement is of vital practical and spiritual concern to you, to the work of the gospel and to the never-dying souls of the people around you. Just as real as the paper which you now hold in your hands is the menace of the dead religion

which men today are seeking to establish as the one "recognized" or "approved" form of Christianity.

The spiritually unwary may be fooled by this sweet, specious talk about the desirability of union for it sounds plausible indeed to express the conviction that "Christians should be one". Most who speak in these terms fail to define the two major words in their proposition—"Christians" and "one". If there is no difference whatever between believers and unbelievers and if all men can be called "Christians" in some sense, then by all means there should be some great visible organization to give expression to this "unity". *Only on this false, unbiblical, basis can the present day ecumenical movement be justified.* If, however, the Bible is right in stating that all by nature are sinful and that only those who are born and led of the Spirit of God are the sons of God, then the very foundation of the modern ecumenical message and program is seen to be unreliable and a dangerous base upon which to erect a great superstructure.

It is at this point that the weakness of the modern call to unity is seen. How do these leaders seek to examine the whole question and realize this "unity"?—by reverently and prayerfully consulting the Word of God? No! the leaders of all the different denominations, including the Roman Church (if it would participate), semi-Romanists, Unitarians, modernists and quasi-evangelicals are to sit in these ever-recurring, never-ending conferences to discuss the various "traditions", "creeds" and "customs" of the participants. The ecumenical movement, if it succeeds, must issue in an impossible combination of the lowest common denominator in lesser matters and of the well-defined, authoritarian dogma and practice of Rome in the essentials. For instance, if the discussion is about church government, the basis of discussion will not be—"What does the Bible say?" or "What was the inspired practice in the churches of the apostolic days?" Instead, the whole discussion must centre around a comparison of existing types of church governments with the end result being an episcopal-domin-

ated set up such as that which has been established in South India. Likewise on every other question, the procedure will be one of compromise among the many streams of thought which have arisen during twenty centuries rather than a return to the source.

How sharply does this whole business differ from the purity, simplicity and splendour of the New Testament days! Then the concern was for the glory of God, the power of the Holy Spirit and the precious souls of men. It seems as though the churches came fresh from the workshop of God and were permeated with divine power. The practice of "church politics" was rebuked and not commended. Let Christians return to this divinely-given pattern and be captured by this sense of urgency and reality and they would have no time whatever for the ecumenical mania but, on the contrary, would have a positive contempt for it.

The Scriptural Alternative

It is not enough, however, to expose and attack that which is wrong, without, at the same time, presenting a positive, scriptural alternative. What is our answer to this present plague? Indeed let us ever be more specific and ask what is the answer in *Canada*? We are certain that our observations with regard to our own country will apply, in principle, in other lands. Various answers have been given to this problem. Some would urge that large protest rallies be held to expose modernism and other erroneous teaching. Still others urge the publication of booklets and tracts to inform men of these pressing issues. These all have a definite place but it is a secondary place for *the scriptural, positive, effective answer is a program of vigorous evangelization with the establishment of gospel-preaching, Bible believing churches.* We may sponsor all the rallies imaginable and issue countless numbers of pamphlets but these are stop gap methods that may temporarily arouse men's emotions but which will have little long range effect.

The best answer then in Canada to the ecumenical threat is the establishment of evangelical Baptist churches. Indeed every centre of population of any consequence in this dominion needs *now* such a church. Thus on the local level there is planted the best possible defence against infidelity but, more important, there is created a centre to send the gospel out to perishing souls. Our aim, after all is not merely to warn men against danger but rather it is to see men saved from an eternal danger and so instructed in the things of God that they will not be the defenceless victims of satanic delusions.

It is regrettable that Christians should become negativists who *protest, protest, protest*, and who can become vehement in speaking *against* anything — whether it be Romanism, modernism or Communism; it is sometimes painfully noticeable that such persons can be strangely quiet and inconspicuous when a positive program is suggested. Deliver us from ecumenicalists and also from evangelicals who are negative protesters. May the Lord raise up pastors, churches and Christians all across the land to launch and sustain by prayer, work and money a positive, vigorous, evangelical Baptist offensive to capture countless numbers of souls for the Lord Jesus Christ!

Faith is the vivid realization of the unseen.

—ALEXANDER MACLAREN

CHRISTIAN UNITY AIM OF CHURCH MOVEMENT

Will it be possible to reconcile Roman Catholics, Anglicans, Baptists, Presbyterians and 100 splinter denominations of the Christian faith into one ecumenical movement?

Dr. Robert Nelson, Geneva-based general secretary of the faith and order commission of the World Council of Churches, is working toward that goal.

In Toronto this week, he launched the first meeting of the central Canadian study group, one of 16 preparing for a North American conference on the nature of Christian unity. This will be held at Oberlin, Ohio, in September, 1957. Membership in the sponsoring bodies represents more than 30,000,000 Orthodox and Protestant Christians.

Professor D. W. Hay, Presbyterian clergyman, is chairman of the group, which includes representatives of Anglican, Baptist, Lutheran, Disciples of Christ and United Church denominations.

Toronto leaders of these churches attended the inaugural meeting, at which Dr. Nelson described arrangements for the Oberlin conference.

The World Council of Churches is composed of more than 160 member churches in 47 countries throughout the world, involving some 170,000,000 worshippers. Practically all major Protestant, Eastern Orthodox and Anglican churches in North America are included.

Some problems to be considered by the 16 groups during the next 15 months include baptism, the nature of the Eucharist, the seat of ecclesiastical authority (the congregation, the presbytery or the episcopacy) and to what extent ecumenical consciousness can break down denominational, economic, sociological and racial barriers.

In an interview Dr. Nelson said only four large denominations in North America are staying outside the discussion—Missouri Synod of the Lutheran Church, Southern Baptists, Russian Orthodox and Roman Catholics.

While no church unions have been achieved in the eight years since the World Council was founded, Dr. Nelson said there may be three unions in the next three years.

A measure of amalgamation may be achieved among three Lutheran denominations — the Evangelical Lutheran Church, the American Lutheran Church and the United Evangelical Lutheran Church.

Anglicans, Presbyterians, Methodists and Baptists may come together in Ceylon and North India — areas of the world where Christianity faces stiff competition from other great religions.

Dr. Nelson does not expect a measure of Christian unity that would produce uniformity. "Even among existing denominations there are the High Church and Low Church factions," he said. "What we learn is that wider church union can and should include a broad diversity, not only in worship but in moral judgment."

Dr. Nelson described his organization as a movement for the redirection of Christian thinking and action.

He said he has noticed, in his travels, changing attitudes among Christian people.

"Hostilities and prejudices are diminishing rapidly," he said. "There is almost a whole new climate of Christian understanding developing — perhaps the best we can hope for in the present decade."

—"The Globe and Mail"

THE POSITIVE PROGRAM

The devil doesn't care how much you denounce him so long as you don't organize against him. You can destroy every modernist church on earth; but if you don't establish a genuine New Testament church out of the wreckage, you have done nothing.

—Noel Smith, in "Baptist Bible Tribune"

The Jarvis Street Pulpit

CANDLESTICKS

A Sermon by Dr. T. T. Shields

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

"And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks."

"The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches."—Rev. 1:12, 20.

WE NEED no vivid imagination in order to understand what the Holy Spirit would teach us in this figure. The candlesticks are representative of the churches. Remember, there was no big church like the United Church of Canada, or the Presbyterian Church of Canada, or the Anglican Church of Canada, or the Baptist Church of Canada. No, no! it was not the *United Church of Asia*. There were *seven individual churches*. The Bible speaks nothing about one big church with bishops and archbishops and cardinals, and all the rest of it. There were churches, and the local body of believers was the church. I shall try to tell you this morning what a church ought to be, and I think I can put it so simply that the youngest child here can understand it.

I.

The lesson we have had before us this morning tells us that **EVERY INDIVIDUAL CHRISTIAN, AND EVERY COLLECTION OF CHRISTIANS CALLED A CHURCH, SHOULD BE A LIGHT-BEARER**. We are likened to candlesticks. What is true of the church collectively, the body of believers, must be true of each individual member. There are people sometimes who talk about the church. Jarvis Street Church — what is it? It is not this building, with its adjoining buildings. This is our meeting house, the place where we meet, our workshop where we are privileged to work, or at least to do part of our work. But the church is made up of men and women, boys and girls, who constitute its membership, who have been saved by divine grace, and brought together into this church fellowship.

If the church as a whole is to be what God has designed it should be, then every individual member must be what the church is to be. You have heard that little rhyme which asks the question:

"What sort of a church would our church be,
If every member were just like me?"

What sort of a church would Jarvis Street Church be if every individual member were just like you? What sort of a prayer-meeting should we have had last night if every member of the church had been just like you? Many of you would have to confess there would have been no prayer meeting. You would have to admit, "I was not there." What sort of witness should we be bearing to the world as a church if every member of the church were to do exactly what you do — no more and no less?

You have no right to expect that somehow or another

the church, as a church, will fulfil its mission and exercise its function if you fail in your share of that general mission. If the church is to be a candlestick, then you must be a little candlestick too. If the church as a whole is to bear light, then you also must be a light-bearer. If the church is to give witness to the gospel, you also must be a witness, by the power of the Holy Ghost. Let me lay that upon every heart and conscience, to begin with this morning, that you have no right to expect more of any other church-member than the other church-members have a right to expect of you. If they must walk with God, so must you. If they must know the Bible, so must you. If they must be men and women of prayer in order that we may get our work done, then you must be a man or a woman of prayer too. If they are to honour the Lord with their substance, and with the first-fruits of all their increase, if they are to give a tithe of all they possess, if they are to be generous in their giving and live not for themselves but for other people, then you must do the same thing. What the church as a whole ought to be, you as an individual member ought to be. Now everybody can understand that.

What ought the church to be? It ought to be a light-bearer. It ought to be a light-bearer for the reason that it is set in the midst of great darkness. This world is full of spiritual darkness. I read an article in one of our popular magazines last week, written by a man who is said to be a great scholar, a man who has been a minister of several churches. He writes about God, and he undertakes to represent the God of the Bible, to tell us how the Bible represents God. I do not think I ever heard, or read, greater blasphemy. The Bible does not say what he attributes to it. He describes God as a God of hell, who delights to put people into torment. He says that religion can never prosper until people get away from the biblical conception of God. Oh, what a misrepresentation! I care not how many universities he has attended, nor what his scholarship, that man is utterly ignorant of God.

Do you know, you Christian boys and girls, that the boys and girls with whom you meet as you go to school, or in your play, and the men and women with whom those of maturer years are associated in business and in other ways, apart from a revelation from above, are in utter darkness so far as the person of God is concerned? They do not know God; they know nothing about God; nor do they know anything about Jesus Christ, His

Son. There are a great many ministers who do not know Jesus Christ. I am sure they do not know Him. I have no hesitation in saying that a man like the man who writes in *The Star Weekly*, Dr. Salem Bland, never saw Jesus. A man who really knew Jesus could never write as he writes, could never be guilty of the misrepresentations of God with which his articles abound.

People about us, I say, are in darkness; they know nothing about what sin is. They do not really know that sin is a deadly plague, that sin has death in its heart, that sin is a fatal malady, that it destroys everyone it touches. They do not know where they are going. "If a man walk in the night, he stumbleth."

Perhaps you have been in the country where there were no electric lights, some black night. You came out of a friend's house when there was not a star in the sky, and everything was pitch black; you could not see where you were going. The friend perhaps had to go back into the house and get a light, to light you out to your car, or wherever you were going. And this world, spiritually, is as dark as that. Someone says, "I know that it is true of Africa, that it is true of China, that it is true of India and of South America; but surely it is not true of Canada, of Toronto!" Somebody asked me last week if Toronto had lost its right to the title of "Toronto the Good". I said, "It never had a right to be so called; it never was 'Toronto the Good'. It is not now." You may go into universities in this city, into educational institutions, and while they have the electric light, they think they have the light of education, and of a very general knowledge; but so far as spiritual matters are concerned, they are utterly in the dark, and are greatly in need of a candle to light them on their way.

That is what we are for, if we are Christians. We are to be candlesticks, light-bearers.

A candlestick is a very useful article. That is, it was once upon a time! Candlesticks were made for use. Nowadays, in most cases, they are made for ornament. I never can understand why ladies buy candlesticks and put pretty candles in them, and never light them at all. They put them on the mantel, or somewhere else, and think they look very nice. They are just ornaments, that is all. They do not shed any light; they have no light in them at all; they are there simply for ornamental purposes. The church once upon a time was a candlestick; it was made to give light. But the church in our day is supposed to be some sort of ornament. There are Christians who seem to think they are very ornamental. I wonder whether there are any here this morning? Are you useful? Do you bear any light? If I were to ask you how you feel, you would probably say, "Quite fit, thank you". Well, fit for what? There are some people who are fit — but apparently fit for nothing, unless it be as an ornament! I intend no reflection, you know, upon anyone's personal appearance!

I remember hearing Sam Jones, the great Methodist preacher of the South, preach to a large congregation in a city where I used to minister. Very solemnly he warned his hearers of the dangers that were awaiting people who were good-looking. Men who were disposed to be a bit handsome would become conceited and, of course, the ladies who were blessed with good looks were tempted to be vain. He very solemnly warned them against all the perils that were in store for beautiful people. And then he said, "Now as for you, you need not be afraid; you are quite safe!"

I do not know how far members of this church may be ornamental, literally, but we are not here to ornament the world at all. There are a good many people in this world that are better looking than we are. It would not be a very beautiful place if there were not. But we are here really to do something. You were saved by God's grace, and brought into the membership of the church — and you have been a member of this church how long? What are you doing? What use are you? Are you carrying a light? Are you serving the Lord? Are you doing anything to lessen this world's darkness? Or are you chiefly serving as an ornament?

Then I would remind you that these candlesticks were made of gold. Science has never learned, with all its achievements, how to produce gold. The ancient alchemists laboured long to discover a secret whereby baser metals might be transmuted into gold — but they never found it. No one but God ever made a piece of gold. Gold is one of the original metals. It comes from the hand of God. It cannot be produced artificially. It cannot be made. It is a direct creation of God. And you cannot have a golden candlestick from anywhere but out of the divine workshop. God will not put His light into a brazen candlestick. You remember in Rehoboam's day, the enemy came and took away the shields of gold out of the temple, and then later the king substituted shields of brass for the gold? The enemy of the church has despoiled her of her beauty, corrupted her, substituted brass for gold, so that the church is filled with people who have not been made new creatures in Christ.

What sort of candlestick are you? Are you made of gold? In other words, have you been born again? Have you been made a new creature in Christ? Are you a direct creation of God, spiritually? Can you say, "We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them"? You cannot have a candlestick made of any sort of composite. You cannot combine baser metals with gold, and expect the Holy Ghost to put His light in any such candlestick. "I saw seven golden candlesticks", and the material of which they were made was a direct creation of the hand of God. He will put His light in no other kind of candlestick than that.

Have you thus been made over? I wonder if there is anyone here who says, "Well, there is no gold about me. I do not know whether I am brass or not" — it would not be difficult to imagine some people's being made of that material! — "or iron, or clay, or just a piece of earthenware. I do not know what I am. I only know I am not gold." There is a divine Alchemist Who can do what no human scientist ever accomplished. He can transmute the basest of all metals into gold. And although we are nothing but clay, worms of the dust, so wonderful is He that He can make us into pure gold. I wonder if there is some boy or girl here this morning who is saying, "I wish I were a candlestick. I wish I knew that I had a very definite mission in life. I wish I could get a job right from God Himself, a divine commission to go and carry my light somewhere." You may, but first of all you must be saved, made into a candlestick of gold.

Then gold needs to be refined. It is found in different conditions. It is not often found pure, usually there is a great deal of dross mixed with it. Sometimes it has to be crushed, and then put into the fire, purified, and refined, until it is made pure gold. Christian people sometimes complain when they are crushed beneath the

divine presses, when they are put into the fire. They say, "What is the use of being a Christian? I have a harder time now than I had before. I have seen the wicked in great power spreading themselves like a green bay tree. As for me, I am doing the best I can, I am trying to walk with God, I am studying the Word, I am abiding in Him so far as I know how; yet everything seems to go wrong with me. I am under the wheel all the time, and in the fire. I do not see how it is." The Lord would not waste His furnace upon you if you were not really gold. He puts you into the fire in order that you may be purified.

I have seen some people, in my experience as a pastor, who were of very little use until the Lord put them to bed, sent some affliction, or tribulation upon them, and then He turned them into gold, and made a golden candlestick of them. I have often told you of a woman I used to know in London, who had been bedridden, when I knew her first, for three or four years. I visited her several years after I became pastor of this church, so that for more than twenty years, to my knowledge, she had never risen from her bed. She was never free from pain. But she was a golden candlestick, the light was always burning brightly in her; and people came by scores and hundreds to her bedside just to hear her testimony for the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now that is our mission; we are to be candlesticks.

Then, in the next place, a candlestick has no light of its own; it is only a candlestick, or a lampstand, if you like. Gold cannot give light. Put a golden candlestick in a dark room, and you will never get any light from it, no matter how beautifully it may have been moulded, no matter how pure the gold. Gold has no light inherently; it cannot shine of itself; it is made to bear another light. Thus, the Christian has no light of his own. You have no light of your own, not a bit. If there be some young man here who says, "But, sir, I got a degree last spring, and I am going to get another one pretty soon; I belong to the educated class" — I do not care to what class you belong, if you are as wise as fifty Ahithophels, if you have the wisdom of ten Solomons, you have no light of your own. It is not possible for any one of himself, apart from God, to give light.

"The whole world was lost in the darkness of sin,

The Light of the world is Jesus!

Like sunshine at noonday His glory shone in,

The Light of the world is Jesus!"

A candlestick without light in it is not a bit of use. I would rather have a broken bottle with a dip candle in it on a dark night, than the finest golden candlestick in the world without a candle in it. A little bit of a mission somewhere composed of uncultivated people, men who have never been to school at all, men who do violence to the king's English every time they open their lips, men who may be very coarse, and, as yet, almost vulgar in their speech, rough in their dress, without education at all, but who know God, and in whom the light of God's truth burns brightly, a little mission or a little church like that, I say, is worth a million times more to the world than the greatest cathedral on earth from which the Spirit of God is absent.

We have no light of our own. You Sunday School teachers came this morning to your class to be — what? To be a candlestick to those scholars? I hope you were a golden candlestick. But you had no light whatever of your own. You remember how Jesus said to His disciples,

"Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?" And they told Him what they had heard; that some said He was Jeremiah, some Elias, others said He was one of the prophets. But He said, "Whom say ye that I am?" Then Peter, who was never backward in answering, said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." The Lord answered in effect, "That is right, Peter. But you did not find that out for yourself. No man ever knew that of himself. Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." He put the light into the candlestick and we are useless to anybody unless God Himself lights the candlestick.

Do not trouble about the kind of candlestick you are — the shape of it, the beauty of it, because when the light is really burning people do not think about the candlestick. The only kind of candlestick that people admire is the candlestick that has no light in it. You go into a house when the electric light is on, and look at the candlesticks and say, "Oh, are they not lovely? Where did you get them? How much did you pay for them?" But if the electric light were out, and the candle burning in the middle of the table, they would never even see the candlestick at all. They would say, "You are fortunate to have a light when all the rest of the lights are gone out."

When the light is in a man, people will see the truth. It is a poor business when people talk much about the preacher and the church. That is my constant fear for this church. I hear people so constantly talking about Jarvis Street! Jarvis Street! Jarvis Street! Well, perhaps it can be explained on the ground that there are so many who do not like us, and who say so many unkind things about us, that when occasionally you hear a good word spoken you want to pass it on. But let us cease to think about these things. Never mind the candlesticks so much, but let us think about the light, and ask whether we are giving a light to the world. "No man, when he hath lighted a candle, putteth it in a secret place, neither under a bushel" you read this morning, "but on a candlestick," that they which come in may see the light. That is our business, to be candlesticks here in Toronto, where we work, among our friends; perhaps out in China, or Africa, wherever the Lord may send us, our business is to bear His light. And remember we have none of our own.

II.

Now in a simple word, WHAT IS THE LIGHT? Well, it is always two-fold. Every candle has two elements in it. In every candle there is the wick and the wax, or the congealed solid oil about the wick. If it is a lamp, the oil is liquid. It flows up through the wick and gives light to all in the house. There are those two elements in the testimony of every believer, and in the testimony of the church. There is the wick, and there is the oil. Do you know that we are put in trust with the gospel? You and I are to know our Book. If you like, this is the wick. We are to know the great principles of the gospel. Our hearts and minds should be stored with them. We should be full of the truth of the gospel so that we are able to quote the Word of God, to expound the Word of God.

I have an ambition for every member of this church that he or she should be a candlestick with a candle in it, a light bearer, so that if you meet the darkness of Russellism, you will have the light of God's truth to shine upon it. The same is true of all the errors that

are abroad to-day. To the natural darkness of the human mind you should be able to bring the truth of the gospel, and be able to tell Who Jesus is, and where He came from, and that His life did not begin at Bethlehem. It never did begin. There never was a time when He was not; from everlasting to everlasting He is God. We ought to know all these things about Christ, how He died, why He died, what He died for; how men are saved, and how they are born again; what it means to be justified, what it is to be sanctified; what it means to live a worthy Christian life. All these things we ought to know:

Too often, though, when we know them, they are only wicks. You can set a light to a wick, and have nothing but smoking flax. Try burning a piece of wick with no oil in it, set a light to a piece of rag of some sort, and you will see how it makes the darkness denser and more offensive. It will fill the room with a disagreeable odor—smoking flax! But if there be oil, the oil will come through the wick, and give light to all in the house. Thus the oil of the Holy Spirit must be in every one of us. "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?" Are you depending upon the power of the Holy Spirit in your daily life? When you try to witness for Christ, is it in the spirit of one who thinks he is very clever, and is going to successfully argue a point with someone? I know many professing Christians like that. They can meet you on any subject whatever. They bring out their Bibles, and think they can drive you into a corner in your arguments. You get nothing but a smoking flax—and everyone wants to run away from it. There is no profit in that at all. But when the truth of the gospel is set on fire by the Holy Ghost, and when a man bears witness because he must, wherever he is, then it will give light; and people will see that they are on the edge of the precipice and will turn right-about-face, and turn to God.

That is a simple story, is it not? What a lot of candlesticks we have here! What a torchlight procession we ought to be able to conduct here in Toronto! How many streets ought we to be able to light up with the gospel! How many homes, how many offices, how many schools, how many class-rooms, how many towns, how many provinces, how many continents we should be able to light! We have young men and women here who ought to be bearers of the light of the gospel to the uttermost parts of the earth. But if we are going to do it, we must bear it at home first. I have not much confidence in the young man who comes and says, "I want to be a minister" who has not been used of God in his every-day life. I say to him, "What have you done?" "I have not done anything." "How long have you been a Christian?" "Oh, a year or so." "Have you won anyone to Christ yet?" "I do not know." "Have you tried?" "Well, I fear not very hard, but I should like to be a minister." "Have you borne witness to the Lord Jesus in the place where you work?" "Well, no; I did not think of that. I always thought I should like to preach from the pulpit." "You have not done anything at all" "No." "Well, then, go back and do something before you talk about being a minister." Get the light burning in the candlestick, and go and bear light somewhere. If you have got a bright light, the Lord will soon find a place for the candlestick. He will put you in a dark room somewhere, so that you will have plenty of opportunity to witness.

I have tried to make this profound passage—about which scholars make so much—I have deliberately tried

to make it so simple that even a child will know all about the candlestick. Spurgeon once said that Baptists were "dips". You know what a dip candle is? Oh, no; you are too young!

Shall we come to Him this morning? If you have not been made into a candlestick, or made into gold, let Him make you into a golden candlestick, and after He has done that ask Him to make the light to burn.

III.

"In the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man." But that is too big a subject to touch this morning. There He is, trimming the lamps, and lighting them. If you will say to Him this morning, "Here I am, Lord, I want to carry a candle. I do not care where you put me, whether in Toronto, or in China, or in Africa, wherever you want me, only make me a candlestick", and you will find that He will come and light you, and give you oil; and before next Sunday you will say, "Is it not wonderful, the Lord used me to lead someone to Christ this week. I wonder how it happened that I have been a Christian so long, and have never led anyone to Christ, so far as I know. But I just gave myself up to the Lord, and asked Him to help me to witness for Him, and before a week is past someone is born again through my testimony". There is no joy in the world like that. Let us pray that it may be so!

"I am so glad that our Father in heaven
Tells of His love in the Book He has given,
Wonderful things in the Bible I see:
This is the dearest, that Jesus loves me."

SEMINARY QUARTETTE RECORD

The International Quartette of Toronto Baptist Seminary has just concluded an inspiring tour of a number of evangelical Baptist churches in Ontario. Those who heard this singing group have testified that it compares favourably with many better known quartettes. Indeed the response was so encouraging that the quartette has made a recording and now offers this record to any who desire it.

A twelve inch, 78 r.p.m. high quality record, it sells for only \$1.50. The songs which are recorded are, "Were You There When They Crucified My Lord?", the Twenty-Fourth Psalm, and "I Stand Amazed". The selections and the quartette are introduced by Pastor S. Dempster who was the preacher during the tour.

Those who desire records should write immediately to Mr. S. Pourret, "Records", 130 Gerrard St. E., Toronto 2, Ontario. Enclose \$1.50 for each record desired.

SUNDAY IN JARVIS STREET

The pastor preached at both services on the past Lord's Day. In the morning his subject was, "Peter's Repentance"; in the evening he spoke on, "A Call to Remembrance".

At the communion service which followed the evening service five were received into church membership.

WORLD CONGRESS OF FAITHS!

In the May 11 issue of the *Church of England Newspaper* (Great Britain), there appears a small advertisement telling of the meeting of a World Congress of Faiths. Participating in the discussion were the Canon of Westminster and representatives from the following religions—Buddhist, Moslem, "Christian", Jewish and Hindu.

NEW PERSECUTION IN COLUMBIA

... 30 Churches Closed in One Month

... Seven Pastors Jailed

... 75 Christians Martyred in 8 Years

IN AN intensified campaign against the Protestant minority the Colombian government closed thirty churches and jailed seven Protestant pastors last month (April). The Rev. John Dyck, Mennonite Brethren missionary from Vancouver, Canada, was fined \$1,000 which he will have to pay upon returning to his residence in Istmina, Department of Choco, where the government has just closed five Mennonite churches.

The civil authorities in the Department of Santander closed four churches of the Four-Square Gospel (Pentecostal). Ten churches of the Evangelical Alliance were closed in the Department of Norte de Santander, seven of the Interamerican Church in the Department of Bolivar, two churches of the Baptists in the Amazonas Department and two of the Lutherans in the Department of Boyaca. Of these thirty churches only two were outside the "Mission Territories". It must be noted that the boundaries of these territories were recently changed so that seventeen of the above mentioned churches were included, as well as the others which were already within the boundaries.

The Minister of Government, Dr. Lucio Pabon Nunez, for a long time has limited seriously the rights of Colombian Protestants in the Mission Territories, but always permitted them the right to hold religious services in their churches. But with Government Order No. 4004, of November 25, 1955, the Minister ordered the definite prohibition of Protestant services, both private and public, inside or outside of the church buildings within the Mission Territories. The only form of religious service permitted the Protestants in those places is prayer in the home of a foreign Protestant. To Colombian Protestants not even that minimum concession is granted. The application of Government Order No. 4004 will affect many other churches including the largest Protestant church in Colombia, the church in Barrancabermeja which has an attendance of 1,700 people.

Protestant medical work has also been prohibited, especially in Choco where the mayor of Istmina closed a Mennonite dispensary. Last month in Noanama, in the same department, a Colombian child of Protestant parents was dying in the presence of two Protestant nurses who had medicine on hand but the civil authorities would not permit the nurses to intervene in the case.

In the village of Palomino, Department of Bolivar, two Protestant pastors were jailed and put in stocks. In Socota, in the same department, three Lutheran pastors were jailed. When they were visited by another pastor he also was taken prisoner. In Achi, Bolivar, also in April, another Protestant pastor was jailed.

The parish priest of Socata on two occasions led processions to the jail where four Protestant pastors were confined and shouted: "Long, live the Catholic Church, down with the Protestants!"

When a mob of twenty fanatical Catholics tried to kill the members of the Christian and Missionary Alliance congregation in La Plata, Huila Department, the mayor and the governor of the department refused to provide protection for the Protestants. The governor of the department told the pastor, "The police have the right to fire at meetings where communism is suspected." This accusation that Protestant Christianity in Colombia is related to international communism has been reiterated recently by the highest governmental and ecclesiastical authorities. The President of Colombia, General Gustavo Rojas Pinilla, in his New Year's address, in January 1956, said that the communists are using the Protestants in their effort to conquer the country; and the Catholic bishop of Cali, Dr. Julio Caicedo said in a pastoral letter this year that the majority of the Protestants, Colombians as well as foreigners, are related to communism. This accusation has been repeated by the Catholic clergy from their pulpits, by radio and in their publications. Immediately after the sermon delivered by Bishop Francisco Gallego Perez at his outdoor mass in the Central Square in Barranquilla on May 1st, there were shouts of "We don't want the Protestants!" "We don't want the communists!"

A Call to Prayer

The Evangelical Confederation of Colombia, in view of the cruel suppression of Protestant Christian work in this country, invited all the believers in Colombia and around the world to a Day of Prayer and Fasting, May 13, 1956. Special prayer was asked for the many Evangelical churches closed in Colombia, for the pastors and members who suffer in the prisons for the Cause of Christ, and for freedom to hold services throughout the country.

Prohibition of Protestant Worship Services and the Closing of a Chapel

In April 1956, the government official of Palomino, Bolivar Department, ordered the closing of the Protestant chapel in the village of Colorado, which is in his jurisdiction, prohibiting as well all services in that village. Some church members were going out into the street after having attended a service when they were detained by the local priest who told them that services were prohibited by the mayor. The next day they were visited by the police who arrested two of them, beating and mistreating them.

Interruption and Prohibition of Protestant Instruction Class

On April 11, 1956, an Evangelical meeting was being held with some children in the village of El Palmar de Varela, Atlantico Department, when two policemen ar-

rived using extremely coarse language. They took away the papers which the children had in their hands saying that that religion was prohibited. The leaders of the meeting, Sr. Luis Barros and Sra. Hilda de Camargo, were taken to the police station. In the public school, the same children were punished by having to stand in the sun with their hands raised.

Prohibition of Protestant Services

In March 1956 the government official in Guajira denied Rev. Roy E. True permission to hold Evangelical services in a place close to Puerto Lopez, stating that it was prohibited.

Obligatory Catholic Teaching in Protestant School

In Sogamoso, in Boyaca Department, the mayor ordered Miss Trella Hall, principal of the American School in that village, to employ a Catholic teacher in her school. To that end he brought pressure to bear on some of the parents to say that their children were Catholic and therefore the school would be obliged to employ a Catholic teacher. She was threatened with a fine of \$200 if she did not hire the Catholic teacher. The fine was later increased \$400 and she had to pay it in spite of a communication favorable to her from the National Ministry of Education which ruled that the father's declaration of a child's religion at the time of enrollment determined the religion of the pupil, and that the enrollment book of the school was to be the authority on the issue as to whether the student was Catholic or not.

Proselytism by Threat in a Commercial School

On February 22nd, 1956, in the city of Barranquilla, Department of Atlantico, Catholic priest Ciro Avila threatened Srta. Amelia Dagand with losing her year of studies if she would not be converted to the Catholic religion. Srta. Dagand is in the last year of the Commercial Course in the Centro Tecnológico de Barranquilla. She was also ordered to tell the priest, who is teacher of religion in that school, what was said and done in the Presbyterian Church.

Arrest of Protestants for Holding Services

April 11, 1956, in the village of Tamalameque, Department of Magdalena, twelve Evangelical believers were taken before the local mayor for holding services and each one was fined 20 pesos or ten days in jail. As they chose the latter the four men were put into jail for ten days and the eight women were detained in another place. The mayor declared that Protestant meetings were prohibited.

Protestant Service Interrupted with Threats

March 11, 1956, near the village of La Plata, Huila Department, as mentioned above, a group of Protestant members were holding a service when they were interrupted by a mob of twenty men armed with knives and stones. Using coarse language they threatened to kill all of them, saying that very soon all the Protestants in that region would be exterminated. The Mayor of La Plata was advised of the attack but said that he could not do anything until he received an order from the Governor of the Department. The pastor and one member took a letter from the mayor to the governor advising him of the incident but the governor refused to help them. The Secretary of the Ministry of Government, Dr. Gerardo Pastrana, said that the twenty armed men

suspected that the service was a communist meeting, inasmuch as the communist meetings were being held under the name of the Protestants, in which case the attack was justified.

Anti-Protestant Campaign

March 4, 1956, in the village of Gigante, Huila Department, the parish priest began a six months' campaign against the Protestants of that community, saying that they are a danger and a threat to the Catholics of the village and that that region must be cleansed of that evil plague.

Evangelical Member Insulted by a Priest

February 12, 1956, in the village of Montanita, Province of Cauqueta, an Italian priest insulted a Protestant believer with unjust words and obliged him to take his children to the Roman Catholic church to be baptized. The same day the mayor of that place sent a note to the Protestant preacher prohibiting his holding religious services in that region.

Prohibition of Protestant Services

April 3, 1956, in the village of Istmina, Choco Department, the military official, Lieutenant Marceliano Silva, sent Rev. John Dyck a note prohibiting his holding Protestant services for the people of that region, since the religion of the country is the Roman Catholic, and threatening to treat the violation of the note as a police offence.

Suspension of Services in Amazonas

During the first days of April of 1956, in the village of Leticia, capital of the province of Amazonas, Coronel Oscar Arce Herrera, Civil and Military Head of the Province, received a note from the national government ordering him to put into effect the Government Order No. 4004, which stated the absolute prohibition of Protestant services in that region. Rev. Blakely Rogers, resident pastor, asked for an explanation and the General Secretary of the Ministry, Dr. Carlos Valdeframa Ordonez answered that in Mission Territories, which include the Amazonas Province, only Catholic missions can function. For this reason evangelical work is today paralyzed in all the Province of Amazonas.

Protestant Evangelist Expelled

On May 11, 1956, in the village of Peque, Antioquia Department, Protestant evangelist, Sr. Juan de Jesus Varela was taken by some soldiers before the military mayor at the close of an evangelical service. After abusing and insulting him, he was given twenty-four hours to leave the village under threat of a fine of 500 pesos, it being said that his services were a mockery to the Catholic religion and were prohibited. Sr. Varela had to leave all his things and leave immediately for Medellin. He asked for a written copy of the order to leave but the mayor refused to give it to him.

Since 1948, that is during the last eight years, the Colombian Protestants have suffered the following:

46 church buildings destroyed by fire or dynamite
75 believers killed because of their religious faith
More than 200 schools closed by the government.

—Latin American News Letter, May, 1956.

The saddest picture at the Judgment Bar of God is that man who stands there with the blood of some unsaved soul on his hands. —L. R. SCARBOROUGH

Should "Healer" be Put Off the C.B.C.?

SOME private television stations across Canada carry the religious program which features Oral Roberts, prominent evangelist-healer from Tulsa, Oklahoma. Into the living rooms of many homes, then, comes the message and spectacular methods of this Pentecostal preacher. With the healing extravagances of Mr. Roberts, we have no sympathy whatever nor do we appreciate his brand of showmanship but, in the name of liberty, we would strenuously resist any move to have him banned on Canadian radio and television.

During the past week, a Lutheran representative on the arbitrary National Religious Advisory Council of the CBC declared that if a sufficient number of protests could be received about the Oral Roberts program, the committee would recommend that it be banned in Canada. Just how despotic can these small-time clerical dictators become? With the extravagances of Mr. Roberts' program we have no more sympathy than does the Lutheran minister although with Roberts' declaration of the way of salvation, we would concur in the main; nevertheless, things have reached a sad state in a free land when a board of censors is to be allowed to ban all religious programs which appear offensive to it.

It strikes us that this is but the beginning. Already in the U.S.A. the National Council of Churches has advocated that the national networks there refrain from selling religious broadcast time. In this way, they would bar from the air the various evangelical broadcasts and substitute instead the National Council-approved "free time" broadcasts. In Canada the whole process should be even easier for here the network is government-owned and operated and is advised on religious matters by a select company of "Protestant" and Roman Catholic representatives.

One may be sure that if the CBC bans the Roberts' program in Canada, the precedent is set and, at the behest of the Religious Advisory Council, any program could be banned. For the sake of freedom, then, "Healer" Roberts should not be banned by the CBC.

"HOT ROD" RELIGION OF U.S. BROADCAST SCORED BY CLERGY

"Hot rod evangelism" was criticized before the Fowler Commission on broadcasting by the National Religious Advisory Council of the CBC.

The program singled out was the Oral Roberts show from the U.S., which deals with spiritual healing. The CBC does not carry it but some private stations do.

Rev. Charles Lamphier, Roman Catholic representative on the council, called the show a particularly bad example of religious broadcasting.

Rev. George Bornemann, Lutheran representative, said there had been private complaints to the committee but no organized protest.

He said he felt that, if protests were made, the committee would recommend the CBC ban the program in Canada.

The Council revealed differences of opinion about commercially sponsored religious programs, which CBC regulations prohibit.

Wouldn't Suffer

Father Lamphier felt there were many good types of religious programs which would not suffer from commercial sponsorship. Rev. Dr. J. R. Mutchmor, of the United Church, was opposed.

The brief expressed satisfaction generally with CBC treatment of religious programs. It also conceded some private stations were doing good work in this field.

Soviet Clergymen in America

DURING this month a delegation of nine Soviet churchmen will visit the United States. The chairman of the group is Metropolitan Nicholas of the Russian Orthodox Church; in addition to this dubious distinction, he is also the founder of the Communist World Peace Council. Actually his position clearly indicates that he is a devoted servant of the Red state; should anyone doubt this, however, his own utterances will serve to demonstrate clearly that the National Council of Churches in the U.S.A. is actually welcoming a convinced Red or a weak puppet who poses as a servant of Christ.

We list below some quotations from addresses by this churchman in order that our readers may gain some understanding of his real nature. All of these quotations are taken from the Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate and so have had his approval.

"The ideas of hatred of humanity are inoculated in children and young people on a broad scale in the U.S.A. . . . It is thus that the American kindlers of war try to raise murderers from their tender years." (Speech in Vienna, November, 1951).

"They (the Americans) dream of realizing that over which Hitler broke his neck: to turn the whole world into their colony, and all humanity into slaves of American millionaires and billionaires. They intend not only to liquidate the fruits of victory over fascism, but to plant the most sombre reaction throughout the entire terrestrial globe. The entire policy of the Anglo-American aggressive block is directed towards this criminal purpose . . ." (Speech in August, 1951).

Rather than multiply the fanatical ravings of this Red clergyman, we merely list some of the *loving* terms which Archbishop Nicholas has applied to America and her allies in his recorded speeches. As you read these, remember that the modernistic National Council of Churches is going to receive this man as a "Christian brother" and that the United Church of Canada was prepared to welcome him! He describes the land (U.S.A.) which now welcomes him, as follows:

"the bunch of insane men"
 "transoceanic lords"
 "world criminals"
 "the imperialistic clique"
 "American propagandists"
 "modernized American monsters"
 "American neofascists"
 "American criminals"
 "American bandits"

Just what game are the modernists playing by welcoming, *as a brother*, this Red cleric? Surely Christians in both the National Council of Churches in the U.S.A. and the Canadian Council of Churches here in the dominion would do well to re-examine their affiliations in the light of the welcome being afforded this Red "brother".

God cannot forget His child. He cannot leave us to suffer, unsuccoured and alone. He *runs* to meet the prodigal; but He rides on a cherub, and He *flies* on the wings of the wind to the sinking disciple.

—F. B. MEYER

A BIBLE CHURCH – ITS NATURE AND WORK

THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH

IN THE previous chapter, the nature of the church was examined for it is impossible to discuss the mission or work of the church apart from a careful consideration of its nature. As we now proceed to discuss the nature of the church, we must marvel at the divine wisdom displayed in establishing the local church for it is seen to be perfectly suited to do gospel work.

Just as the New Testament is the source of reference in any discussion of the nature of the church, so, too, it alone is the authority in a consideration of the work which has been committed to the local bodies. The passing of the centuries between the apostolic days and the present time has not in any way changed the churches' sphere of labour. One hears of the ever-recurring meetings and conferences which are convened to "reconsider" or "rethink" the work of the church in "the modern world". Often there is the underlying assumption that the Biblical program is outmoded and stands in need of drastic revision. A careful perusal of the New Testament, however, will reveal that on this subject, as on all others, the Word of God speaks with an amazing relevancy.

New Testament churches must exercise watchfulness that they do not depart from the New Testament program. It is not enough to boast of Scriptural organization for this must be accompanied by Scriptural labour. The Lord has promised to bless only as His work is done so that the church which ventures into some other alluring field of endeavour does so at the risk of forfeiting the favour of God.

Indeed we would dare to proceed further and declare that the New Testament not only defines the field of labour of the churches but it also lays down definite principles and methods of work. This must not be regarded as an historical accident for the Holy Spirit intends to teach believers by the examples of the Word of God as well as by the precepts. The methods of labour that turned the world of that day upside down are obviously calculated to guide the churches unto the end of time. Hence the work of the Lord in our day has a definite blueprint to follow and the very methods that are employed must be judged not merely by "results" but rather by their conformity to the great principles of Scripture. On this point, the Bible is much more specific than many zealous evangelicals would care to admit.

We shall discuss the mission of the church under five main headings and, as well, shall examine the methods which are outlined in Scripture as suited for these particular spheres of labour. Dare we suggest that these five following spheres of labour comprehend all the work that is required of a New Testament church?

1. Evangelism.
2. Teaching.
3. Administering the Ordinances.
4. Missionary Extension.
5. Works of Mercy.

In the following discussion we shall examine briefly each of these areas of work and note the apostolic methods of approaching them.

I. EVANGELISM

"Go and disciple . . ." commanded the risen Lord. With these words, the Creator of the ends of the earth commissioned His redeemed people to go forth with the gospel which alone can deliver men from the bondage of sin. Someone may object that the work of evangelism is committed to individual believers and not merely to the New Testament churches. It is indeed true that each Christian is responsible for the evangelization of the lost but it must be added that the New Testament knows nothing of an isolated Christian who is not related to a local assembly! Evangelism is the task of believers who find their corporate expression *only* in a local church. After the first evangelistic sermon that is recorded in the Book of Acts, we read that the fruits of evangelism were added to the local church. (Acts 2:41, 42).

It is difficult to overemphasize this point for among "evangelicals" and among many Baptists there is much loose, unscriptural thinking and action on this subject. The New Testament is unacquainted with an extra-local church evangelism which does not result in the addition of believers to the church. Surely we need not further add that nowhere in the New Testament do we find any reference to an evangelism which was sponsored by New Testament churches *and* any other bodies. To the local churches and *to the local churches alone* the Lord has committed this work of works.

Especially in a day of numberless extra-church and inter-denominational agencies is it necessary to sound this note. However well-meaning and spiritual the leaders of such groups may be, it is nevertheless imperative that we place the emphasis where the Lord has placed it. Faithfulness to the Word of God will force us to declare that evangelism is the task of the churches. One must stand back and marvel at the infinite wisdom of God in so ordering it for, from a practical standpoint, the Scriptural church alone is suited for this work.

It is our design in this discussion to be very practical and to that end we shall first note two outstanding characteristics of New Testament evangelism and then five methods of prosecuting this work. The churches of Jesus Christ may with perfect confidence adopt these methods and these alone, for the church that discards them for cheap, colourful modern substitutes will do grave harm to itself and to the souls of men. A prayerful acceptance of the divine plan for evangelism coupled with a deep reliance upon the power of the Holy Spirit will bring heaven's blessing and build up spiritual, conquering churches.

Two Characteristics of New Testament Evangelism

Before examining the five methods of evangelism employed in the early churches, it is necessary that we note two basic characteristics of these churches. Cold, blind adherence to the divine program will not suffice for the secret of the success of this program in the apostolic days lay in the spiritual warmth and power of the believers individually and corporately. At this point, it is essential to stress that a balance is required in our thought. Some good men emphasize that "spirituality" is the only essential and maintain that it does not matter

if we follow the Scriptural pattern of organization. Still others coldly assert that the one prerequisite to blessing is a rigid adherence to the Scriptural organization without any emphasis upon spirituality. Both of these views must be decidedly rejected as doing injustice to the full revelation of the New Testament. There is no full-orbed spirituality apart from obedience to the Word nor is there any true adherence to the divine program apart from a deep spirituality.

The first characteristic of the early churches to which we would draw attention is the dependence upon the Holy Spirit. The very best method attempted in the power of the flesh is doomed to ignominious failure. Powerless mechanics, however glamorous, are poor substitutes for divine power. Spurgeon well declares — "Souls are not saved by 'systems' but by the Spirit of God. Organizations without the Holy Spirit are like mills without power. Methods and plans without the grace of God are pipes without water, lamps without oil, banks without money. Even a church that has an orthodox creed and accepts the Biblical standards is as useless as are clouds without rain until power comes from God."

The apostolic churches were deeply conscious of this need of power and obviously depended upon the Holy Spirit. Someone has suggested that the fifth book of the New Testament could be well named "The Acts of the Holy Spirit" rather than "Acts of the Apostles". At the very commencement of the book the risen Lord emphasized their need for divine power for service as He declared — "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you. . ." (Acts 1:8). He was reminding them that a divine work required divine power. Pentecost stands as a concrete demonstration of the disciples' joyful dependence upon the Spirit.

The triumphant witness of these early Christians, singly and corporately, cannot be explained apart from the fact of divine indwelling and guidance. Their success stands as a puzzling event if we discount the power of God resting upon them and indwelling them. There is a definite connection between the last two parts of Acts 4:31 — "they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, AND they spoke the Word of God with boldness." Boldness in evangelism is desirable if it is in the Spirit; if it is a boldness in the flesh, it will only repel and do harm to the cause of Christ.

The second noticeable characteristic of the early churches was prevailing prayer. This, of course, is clearly related to the sense of dependence upon the Spirit. These believers resorted to the throne of grace that they might bring the blessing of God down upon their labours. Prior to Pentecost, the small band is described as follows — "These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication . . ." (Acts 1:14). Need we wonder that the greatest evangelistic meeting of all time followed this prayer meeting? Immediately after the great Pentecostal ingathering we read of the disciples and the three thousand baptized converts — "They continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." (Acts 2:42).

After every type of experience and before every imaginable venture, the believers felt the need of prayer. Especially was this true in the work of evangelization. Souls must be prayed out of the grasp of the wicked one. Is it not still true that this characteristic is indispensable to the successful prosecution of the evangelistic mission?

Here is no outmoded practice that can be discarded in favour of *improved* techniques. The truly evangelistic church will still be characterized by prayer. A prayer-saturated evangelism was the great pattern of the apostolic program and must once more be restored to its honoured and central place in the work of the Lord.

Methods of Evangelism

This topic is extremely important. Dr. A. W. Tozer observes — "The temptation to introduce 'new' things into the work of God has always been too strong for some people to resist. The church has suffered untold injury at the hands of well intentioned but misguided persons who have felt that they know more about running God's work than Christ and His apostles did."

Are these radical innovations, having no scriptural support by precept or principle, actually necessary? If they are, then we must take the same ground as modernists and declare that the Word of God is not a sufficient guide even in matters spiritual. We refuse to take such untenable ground but stedfastly affirm that in the pages of the New Testament are found both the program of the church and even the methods to be employed in carrying out that program.

In the matter of evangelism, we find five methods that were used in New Testament days and are applicable to this very hour. (Our remarks about the methods of evangelism are also applicable to the methods of teaching). These five methods are: —

1. Public proclamation
2. Personal testimony
3. Visitation
4. Literature
5. Song

Spectacular movies, dramatic presentations and "star" converts may all have more glamour but the Word sets these five methods forth as having the divine sanction. That which contributed to turning the world upside down in the first century should surely command our respect and attention in the twentieth century. Let us examine these divinely-appointed methods of evangelization.

I. Public Proclamation.

"In the Old Testament, as well as in the New, when God would impart His mind to men He embodied it in a message and sent men to proclaim it." (A. W. Tozer). This triumphant declaration of the message of God was conceived to be the chief function of both the prophet and the apostle. The burning conviction of the Old Testament prophet that God's Word "was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay" finds an echo in the great apostle of the New Testament — "Woe unto me if I preach not the gospel!" (Jer. 20:9; 1 Cor. 9:16).

If we fail to sense the primacy of preaching in the apostolic days, we must find the Book of Acts and the epistles to be enigmas. They vibrate with a sense of urgency that finds its expression in the public proclamation of the gospel herald. Thus the atmosphere of the New Testament is not that of the cloistered classroom but is rather that of the great public market place where the messengers of the King can sound forth good tidings.

The various Greek words which are translated as "preach" in our English New Testament convey to us something of this meaning. The one most commonly used is *evangelizo* which means "to cry or to proclaim as

a herald". The other Greek words that are used add further to enrich the concept of preaching — one means to tell *good news* and another means to announce thoroughly.

The apostles placed great emphasis upon this public proclamation as is evidenced by the great sermon at Pentecost which marked the advent in His fulness of the Holy Spirit. Immediately there comes to mind other classical sermons of the Word — Stephen before his accusers, Paul on Mars Hill and Philip in Samaria. With this in mind, Paul solemnly reminds the Corinthians that "it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." (1 Cor. 1:21).

Because there is such an emphasis upon the public proclamation of the gospel as the primary method in both evangelism and preaching, we dare to declare that this method is God's own. His seal of approval is upon it. Still, the order of the risen Lord rings down the corridor of time to His churches — "Go ye therefore into all the world and *preach* the gospel to every creature . . ."

"Preaching is still the appointed means, and although we are in a day when men will not endure sound doctrine but have ear-itch instead of heartburn, let us not forget that the command in that very connection is "*Preach the Word!*" and that God manifests His Word and His will through preaching." (Vance Havner).

The question arises — Even if preaching was the primary method of evangelization in the apostolic days, is it necessarily true that it should be in this day? We answer with a resounding *Yes*. The great commission which states believers are to go and *preach* has been neither abrogated nor amended. It is only at grave peril that believers will lightly regard either the commands or precepts of Scripture even with regard to principles and methods to be employed in kingdom work.

2. Personal Testimony

The second method employed in evangelization was that of personal testimony in which a Christian spoke informally to someone about eternal matters. In the life of Paul we see this method exemplified for, although Paul was a mighty preacher, he was as well a witnessing Christian who made use of every opportunity to speak for the Saviour. Immediately there comes to the mind several recorded instances of Paul's personal testimony — the Philippian jailer, Felix, Festus, Agrippa. We may be assured that there are scores and hundreds of other instances that have not been recorded by the pen of inspiration.

This method of personal witnessing was by no means confined to Paul for the Word tells of others including Philip to the eunuch, and Aquilla and Priscilla to Apollos. It would seem difficult to overemphasize the impact that this personal evangelism made upon the Roman Empire. Behind the phenomenal growth and spread of the churches must have been the fruitful, consecrated testimony of multitudes of unnamed believers who regarded themselves as personal representatives of the Lord Jesus Christ.

This matter of private testimony must be emphasized not only because of its immediate fruits but also because of its culminative effect. The testifying believer may not see the salvation of the one to whom he passes the word of life but this does not discount the value of the testimony. Perhaps the way may be paved for someone else

to come and, in God's time, be used in the salvation of that previously prepared soul. The importance of personal testimony was realized not only in the apostolic churches but in every revival since that day.

3. Visitation

Closely connected with the above is the practice of visitation. The familiar Scripture declares that "daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ." (Acts 5:42). The churches of our day must return to this primitive and eminently successful example. The work of the Lord was not regarded as being limited to one stated time and one stated place. The believers felt impelled to go out daily and to visit from door to door telling the news of a Saviour who could save from sin.

"God never said the lost would come to church. If they should come, it is something in addition to what may be expected. God's program for the lost is that *the church should go for them.*" (Carl M. Sweazy).

If this statement sounds extreme, it is probably only because the church has departed so far from the apostolic example in this regard and has substituted a lifeless policy of waiting for the unsaved to come to hear the gospel. The order still remains — "Go out and compel them to come in."

Surely we must be impressed by the fact that this is a type of evangelism that can engage the attention of all believers. The public proclamation of the Word may be the limited sphere of a few but every believer is qualified to go out and in an informal manner visit the homes of neighbours and tell the words of life. Entertainments, rallies or movies are no substitute for this divinely ordered work of visiting men to talk to them about their souls. To such a believer there is a promise — "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

4. Literature

Another method in New Testament evangelism was the use of literature. Fifteen hundred years before the printing press was invented and the world was flooded with its production, the servants of God made use of letters to carry on the work of God.

The New Testament epistles themselves are choice exhibits of this method of evangelism and teaching. Paul's epistle to the Romans, in addition to being a weighty theological treatise for believers, is an illustrious example of gospel literature that has influenced multitudes for Christ.

The churches would do well to emulate this apostolic example and to make more use of the printed page. The great Methodist circuit rider Peter Cartwright, who was used to lead multitudes to Christ left this testimony:—

"It has been a question that I shall never be able to answer on earth whether I have done the most good by preaching or by distributing religious literature. For more than fifty years I have firmly believed it was part and parcel of a Christian's sacred duty to circulate religious literature . . . The religious press is destined, under the order of Providence, to minister salvation's grace to the perishing millions of the earth."

The teachers of error, such as the Roman Catholics and the Jehovah Witnesses are fully aware of the value

of the printed page. Surely New Testament churches should grasp this weapon more readily when they realize that it has the divine sanction and that it has been mightily used in days gone by.

5. Singing

Although there is actually little mention of singing in the early churches, there are nevertheless enough references to justify the conclusion that this was a practice in them. The Lord Jesus and His disciples, after the institution of the Lord's Supper sang a hymn prior to their departure to the Mount of Olives (Matt. 26:30). Then, too, Paul twice mentions the practice of singing songs of praise (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16), indicating that the apostolic churches followed the example of their Lord.

The singing of God's praises thus occupied a definite place in the meetings of the primitive assemblies. There is thus a precedent that may be emulated in the churches of all time, although, especially today, there is a need to sound a note of caution that the singing have as its purpose the praise of the Lord rather than the entertainment of men.

(Continued next week)

MISSIONS NOT OPTIONAL

Christianity is essentially and fundamentally missionary. He who reads God's Word aright sees that the missionary idea is the very essence of divine revelation. It proclaims this truth with ten thousand tongues of fire. If you could but banish from the Gospel the missionary idea it would never give forth another sound. No sinner would ever again be invited to Christ. No Bible would ever again be printed or circulated except as a money venture. And the whole scheme of Christianity would collapse under the superincumbent weight of an inordinate and all-prevalent selfishness.

Missions is not simply an organ of the church, but the church itself is the organ for missions. To this end the church was made — for this cause Christ brought it into the world. The work of missions therefore is not a little optional annex to a church, but it is as essential to the true work of the church as is the heart essential to the human body.

—G. W. TRUETT

SUPERNATURAL FINANCING

In recognizing the duty of tithe-giving, when one's income is limited and one's personal and family needs are great, it is essential to recognize the supernatural element in God's providential care of His children.

If a Christian man has an income large enough to supply all his needs without difficulty, there is neither shadow of excuse nor show of decency in his failure to pay over one-tenth of it to the Lord. But when one feels the pinch of poverty every day of his life, then it is important that he should bear in mind that 9 cents will go farther than 10 cents would go, and that \$9.00 will go farther than \$10.00 would go, in providing for himself and his loved ones, when that other cent or that other dollar has been paid to the Lord, who claims it as His own.

There is no mistake about this to him who has faith. Every child of God who has rested on this truth has found it to be a source of unfailing dependence. Only those disbelieve it who have never trusted God enough to try it even as an experiment. It is with individuals as it is with churches in this matter. Neither their troubles nor their doubts ever come from their giving too freely of their substance to the Lord.

—HENRY CLAY TRUMBULL

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A SEARCHING WORD

By C. H. Spurgeon

THOU sayest, "I have faith." I will ask thee a second question. Does that faith make thee obedient? Jesus said to the nobleman, "Go thy way," and he went without a word; however much he might have wished to stay and listen to the Master, he obeyed. Does your faith make you obedient? In these days we have specimens of Christians of the most sorry, sorry kind; men who have not common honesty. I have heard it observed by tradesmen, that they know many men who have not the fear of God before their eyes, and yet are most just and upright men in their dealings; and on the other hand, they know some professing Christians who are not positively dishonest, but they can back and hedge a little; they are not altogether lame horses, but every now and then they jib; they do not keep up to time if they have a bill to pay; they are not regular, prompt, scrupulous and exact; in fact, sometimes — and who shall hide what is true? — you catch Christians doing dirty actions, and professors of religion defiling themselves with acts which merely worldly men would scorn. Now, sirs, I bear my testimony as God's minister, too honest to alter a word to please any man that lives, you are no Christian if you can act in business beneath the dignity of an honest man. If God has not made you honest, he has not saved your soul. Rest assured that if you can live in disobedience to the moral laws of God, if you are inconsistent and lascivious, if your conversation is mixed up with things which even a worldling might reject, the love of God is not within you. I do not plead for perfection, but I do plead for honesty; and if your religion has not made you careful and prayerful in common life; if you are not, in fact, made a new creature in Christ Jesus, your faith is but an empty name, as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

I will ask you one more searching question about your faith, and I pray you answer it. Thou sayest, "I have faith." Has thy faith led thee to bless thy household? Good Rowland Hill once said, in his own quaint way, that when a man became a Christian, his dog and his cat would be the better for it; and I think it was Mr. Jay who said that a man, when he became a Christian, was better in every relation. He was a better husband, a better master, a better father, than he was before, or else his religion was not genuine. Now, have you ever thought, my dear Christian brethren and sisters, about blessing your household? Do I hear one saying, "I keep my religion to myself?" Do not be very anxious about its ever being stolen, then; you need not put it under lock and key; there is not enough to tempt the devil himself to come and take it from you. A man who can keep his godliness to himself has so small a proportion of it, that it will be no credit to himself, and no blessing to other people. But you do sometimes, strange to say, meet with fathers who do not interest themselves in their children's salvation any more than they do about poor children in the back slums of St. Giles's. They would like to see the boy put out well, and they would like to see the girl married comfortably; but as to their being converted, it does not seem to trouble their heads. It is true the father occupies his seat in a place of worship, and sits down with a community of Christians; and he *hopes* his chil-

dren may turn out well. They have the benefit of his hopes — certainly a very large legacy: he will no doubt when he dies leave them his best wishes, and may they grow rich upon them! He has never made it a matter of anxiety of soul, as to whether they shall be saved or not. Out upon such religion as that! Cast it on the dunghill; hurl it to the dogs; let it be buried like Koniah, with the burial of an ass; cast it without the camp, like an unclean thing. It is not the religion of God. He that careth not for his own household, is worse than a heathen man and a publican.

Never be content, my brethren in Christ, till all your children are saved. Lay the promise before your God. The promise is unto you and unto your children. The word does not refer to infants, but to children, grand-children, and any descendants you may have, whether grown up or not. Do not cease to plead, till not only your children but your great grand-children, if you have such, are saved. I stand here to-day a proof that God is not untrue to his promise. I can cast my eye back through four generations, and see that God has been pleased to hear the prayers of our grandfather's father, who used to supplicate with God that his children might live before him to the last generation, and God has never deserted the house, but has been pleased to bring first one and then another to fear and love his name. So be it with you and yours. In asking this you are not asking more than God has promised to give you. He cannot run back from his promise. He cannot refuse to give you both your own and your children's souls as an answer to the prayer of your faith. "Ah," says one, "but you do not know what children mine are." No, my dear friend, but I know that if you are a Christian, they are children whom God has promised to bless. "But they are such unruly ones, they break my heart". Then pray God to break their hearts, and they will not break your heart any more. "But they will bring my grey hairs with sorrow to the grave." Pray God then that he may bring their eyes with sorrow to prayer, and to supplication, and to the cross, and then they will not bring you to the grave. "But," you say, "my children have such hard hearts." Look at your own. You think they cannot be saved: look at yourselves; he who saved you can save them. Go to him in prayer, and say, "Lord, I will not let thee go except thou bless me;" and if thy child be at the point of death, and, as you think, at the point of damnation on account of sin, still plead like the nobleman, "Lord, come down ere my child perish, and save him for thy mercy's sake." O thou that dwellest in the highest heavens, thou wilt ne'er refuse thy people. Be it far from us to dream that thou wilt forget thy promise. In the name of all thy people we put our hand upon thy Word most solemnly, and pledge thee to thy covenant. Thou hast said thy mercy is unto children's children of them that fear thee and that keep thy commandments. Thou hast said the promise is unto us and unto our children; Lord, thou wilt not run back from thine own covenant; we challenge thy word by holy faith at this time, and plead with thee, saying, "Do as thou hast said."

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S.S. Lesson and Exchanges

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Address Correspondence:

THE GOSPEL WITNESS

130 Gerrard Street East, Toronto 2 - Canada

Telephone WAInut 1-7415

Registered Cable Address: Jarwitsem, Canada

THIS END OF THE STREETS OF GLORY

An old writer says, "*The streets of glory have their beginnings on earth.*" This witness is true. What is heaven but eternal life; and this is life eternal, that we know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent. This we already know, and have believed. Heaven is rest, and in taking Christ's yoke upon us and bearing his yoke we have already found rest unto our souls. Heaven is communion with saints, and with their Lord, and this we also have the privilege of enjoying in a delightful measure. Heaven is holiness, and the Spirit hath wrought in us the beginnings and elements of perfection. Heaven is victory, and in him that hath loved us we are more than conquerors even now. Heaven is hallowed service, and this day "he hath made us unto our God kings and priests." Heaven is glory, and when we suffer for righteousness' sake "the Spirit of glory doth rest upon us."

Truly the old preacher spake as an oracle, and the light of prophecy gleamed from his eye when he said, "The streets of glory have their beginnings on earth." Let us walk as far down those streets as we may.

—C. H. SPURGEON

TRUE PRAYER

The truest prayer is that which bases itself on God's uttered will, and the desires which are born of our own fancies or heated enthusiasms have no power with Him. The prayer that prevails is a reflected promise. Our office in prayer is but to receive on our hearts the bright rays of His Word, and to flash them back from the polished surface to the heaven from whence they came.

—ALEXANDER MACLAREN

TRIALS OF CHRIST IN SEEKING LOST SOULS

No one cares for your soul! Have you heard how Christ feels about it? I know it was only five or six miles from Bethlehem to Calvary — the birthplace and the deathplace of Christ — but who can tell how many miles it was from the throne to the manger? How many miles down, how many miles back again? The place of his departure was the focus of all splendor and pomp. All the thrones facing His throne. His name the chorus in every song and the inscription on every banner. His landing-place a cattle-pen, malodorous with unwashed brutes, and dogs growling in and out of the stable. Born of a weary mother who had journeyed eighty miles in severe indispotion that she might find the right place for the Lord's nativity — born, not as other princes, under the flash of a chandelier, but under a lantern swung by a rope to the roof of the barn. In that place Christ started to save you. Your name, your face, your time, your eternity, in Christ's mind. Sometimes traveling on mule's back to escape King Herod's massacre, sometimes attempting nervous sleep on the chilly hillside, sometimes earning his breakfast by the carpentry of a plow. In Quarantania the stones of the field by their shape and color, looking like the loaves of bread, tantalizing His hunger. Yet all the time keeping on after you. With drenched coat treading the surf of Gennesaret. Howled after by a bloodthirsty mob. Denounced as a drunkard. Mourning over a doomed city, while others shouted at the sight of the resplendent towers. All the time coming on to save you. Indicted as a traitor against government, perjured witnesses swearing their souls away to insure his butchery. Flogged, spit on, slapped in the face, and then hoisted on rough lumber, in the sight of earth and heaven and hell, to purchase your eternal emancipation. From the first infant step to the last step of manhood on the sharp spike of Calvary a journey for you. Oh, how He cared for your soul! By dolorous arithmetic add up the stable, the wintry tempest, the midnight dampness, the abstinence of forty days from food, the brutal Sanhedrin, the heights of Golgotha, across which all the hatreds of earth and all the furies of hell charged with their bayonets, and then dare to say again that no one cares for your soul.

—T. DEWITT TALMAGE

For Younger Readers

WHAT A CHINESE BOY DID

A boy was admitted into a missionary school in China. His mother had died. He remained several years, and not only learned the truth, but received Jesus into his heart. When he was fourteen years of age, he went to his friends during the Christmas holidays. One afternoon he went into a village temple. As he looked at the idols, an old man, sixty-five years of age, came in with tottering steps, and laying a few incense sticks before an idol, knelt down and began to pray; then he passed to the next idol, and so on the whole round of them.

The little boy thought to himself, "Here's an old man who has not long to live, and he does not know the true way to Heaven. But I'm only a boy; I can't tell him." The young people in China are taught to treat the aged with very great respect, and it would have been very im-

pertinent for the little boy to attempt to teach the old man.

"What is to be done? He has no one to teach him," thought the boy, as he saw him pass from idol to idol. As the boy thought, the tears ran down his cheeks. These tears were eloquent, and the boy felt forced to go to the aged man and say: "Would you mind a boy speaking to you? I am young; you are very old."

"What are you crying for?" said the old man, "Can I help you?"

"Sir, I am crying because I am so very sorry for you."

"Sorry for me! What about?"

"Because you are aged and cannot live long, and you do not know the way to Heaven."

"What! Do you know the way to Heaven?"

"I know that Jesus has saved me, and He will save you."

"Who is Jesus?" asked the old man.

The boy told him the story of God's love, and the man's heart melted as he listened.

"Boy," he said, "I am over sixty years of age, and I never heard such words. Have you had dinner?"

"No, Sir, not yet."

"Come home with me then, and you shall tell my wife the story you have told me."

The boy went home with the old man, and told the story of the love of God, while the aged couple listened with great interest. He was invited again, and stayed in their house, nearly the whole of his holiday; and the result was that through this youthful servant of Christ, they were both led to the Saviour before they ever saw or heard of a missionary.

Four years after, Mr. J. Hudson Taylor, who related this story, accompanied the youth to the home of this aged couple, and found them truly devoted Christians, and naturally, warmly attached to the lad. Said the old man: "But for this boy, my wife and I would have died in darkness."

Such an incident is full of promise for the future service of China's young Christians.

—The Baptist Examiner

Bible School Lesson Outline

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

Vol. 20 Second Quarter Lesson 12 June 17, 1956

JESUS CRUCIFIED

Lesson Text: Luke 23:33-49.

Golden Text: "When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost."—John 19:30.

I. "The Place of the Skull": verses 33-38.

Parallel Passages: Matt. 27:33-38; Mark 15:22-28; John 19:17-19.

While it must ever be remembered that the death of Christ was unique, and that He died as no one else would die, the Just for the unjust (Rom. 8:1-4; 1 Pet. 3:18); yet, He was not alone on that hill called Calvary ("Place of the Skull", Latin name for Golgotha). According to the prophetic word, for our sakes He was numbered among the transgressors and made His grave with the wicked (Isa. 53:9, 12). Jesus was crucified "in the midst" between two thieves (John 19:18).

The words of Christ on the cross were few, but how sig-

nificant! They were words of love and forgiveness, which extended even unto His enemies (Rom. 5:6-10). Forgiveness is now possible for all who will believe, because Christ paid in full the penalty for sin (Isa. 53:4-10; Acts 13:39; Col. 2:13-15; 1 John 2:2).

The people were divided into two classes on the basis of their attitude to Him. They stood beholding Him: some, like the repentant thief, the centurion and His friends, believed on Him; others, like the unrepentant thief and the soldiers, derided Him. The Gospel is still the savor of life unto life or of death unto death (2 Cor. 2:16).

The superscription upon the cross was written in Greek, Latin and Hebrew, the languages of culture, power and religion, respectively. The cross of Christ occupies the central place in human history; all peoples must one day acknowledge His supremacy (Isa. 45:23, 24; Rev. 5:13). The four records of the crucifixion must be read before the complete text of the superscription is seen: THIS IS JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS.

II. Mercy for the Repentant: verses 39-43.

The two thieves belonged to the same environment; they were in the same situation, as far as their physical situation was concerned. Yet, how unlike their attitudes, and how diverse their destinies! One saw Christ as the powerful, but selfish man; the other saw Him as a Prophet and a sinless Man. One was lost, the other was saved. Man has in his possession the faculty of will, so that it is in his power either to receive or to reject the word and the will of God.

Like the soldiers (verse 37), the unrepentant thief could not understand why Christ should remain on the cross, if He were really God. The amazing condescension of the Son of God is utterly beyond human comprehension. "Save thyself" is the motto of the world; "Lose thyself" is the watchword of Christ and His followers (Matt. 10:39).

The repentant thief confessed his sin and acknowledged the justice of the punishment. Moreover, he looked to Christ, owned Him as Lord, and prayed to Him for mercy, believing (Isa. 45:22; Luke 18:13; Rom. 10:9, 10); Christ honoured his faith (John 17:24).

III. Death of the Saviour: verses 44-49.

Parallel Passages: Matt. 27:45-56; Mark 15:33-41; John 19:28-30.

The darkness which covered the earth for three hours was symbolic of the powers of evil, the strength of which was displayed at the cross (Luke 22:53; Eph. 6:12; Col. 1:13). Such darkness was fitting in a time when Christ, upon whom the sin of the world was laid, died a spiritual death for us (Isa. 53:6; John 1:29), and in a manner which the human mind cannot fathom. He who was spotless and pure was so identified with sin that He was separated for a time even from God Himself (Psa. 22:1; 2 Cor. 5:21).

The rending of the veil of the temple which separated the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place (Exod. 26:31-33; Heb. 9:1-10) symbolized the rending of the flesh of Christ. By His death He gained freedom of access into the very presence of God for all who would believe (Eph. 2:14-18; Heb. 10:19-22).

Christ did not die in weakness, but in triumph. He shouted with a loud voice, "It is finished" (John 19:30). As a Victor, he voluntarily dismissed His Spirit (Psa. 31:5; John 10:18; 17:4).

Daily Bible Readings

June 11—On the Way to the Cross..... Luke 23:26-31
June 12—The Saviour's Distress Psa. 22:1-18
June 13—The Saviour's Prayer Psa. 22:19-31
June 14—His Pierced Side John 19:31-37
June 15—The Cruel Mockery Matt. 27:39-49
June 16—"It is finished" John 19:25-30
June 17—The Burial of Christ Luke 23:50-56

Suggested Hymns

There is a green hill far away.
On Calvary's brow my Saviour died.
When I survey the wondrous cross.
Look away to the cross of the Crucified One.
Blessed be the fountain of blood.
Alas! and did my Saviour bleed?