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"Whatsoever Is Not of Faith Is Sin"

IN THE Fourteenth Chapter of Romans Paul discusses the propriety of taking doubtful courses in respect to the observance of days, and the eating of meat. He insists that, *per se*, "The kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men." Notwithstanding, though certain courses may not be intrinsically wrong, if they are so regarded by others, he says, "If thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died."

And then he asks, "Hast thou faith? Have it to thyself before God." In these words he does not refer to the faith in Christ by which the soul is justified and saved: he means, rather, confidence. Are you convinced in your own mind that the course you are taking is the right course? Are you taking it because you believe it to be right? Then, of course, he assumes that some others may not share such confidence. They may entertain a contrary opinion in respect to the course in contemplation. Hence he says, "Hast thou faith? Have it to thyself before God. Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth."

Of course, that is perfectly plain. If conscience is in agreement with Revelation and reason, and the man is sure that he is doing what is right in the sight of God, and he feels no inner condemnation by reason of the course he is taking, then such a man is happy, indeed.

But then Paul views the opposite: "He that doubteth, is condemned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith." If he is not sure of the course he is taking, then he must feel a sense of self-condemnation for taking it. Then he adds, "For whatsoever is not of faith is sin"; which, being interpreted, means that the man who is not sure of a given course of action, and yet pursues it, deliberately incurs the risk of doing wrong, for he is not sure whether his course is right or wrong; and if he takes the course without being sure, he risks taking the wrong course, and taking it deliberately; therefore the doubtful course becomes to him sin.

If this principle were generally recognized it would revolutionize many a life. For example, the little mem-

ber called the tongue is capable of taking a wrong course by saying the wrong thing. How ready people are to repeat whatever is told them! It may be but an idle tale. It may be that the repetition will do neither good nor evil. But very often the report has to deal with questions of fact, another person's character as displayed in his conduct, his speech, his general demeanour. Before such a report is repeated, and thus spread abroad, it is incumbent upon the one who has thus heard it, to make absolutely sure that the report is true, that it is in accord with indisputable fact; and then in the light of that certitude one should consider whether it is right or wrong to repeat it, to spread the report any further. But, alas, too often when such a report is heard, the hearer is at no pains to verify it, or correct it. He or she carelessly assumes that it is true, or it may be true; and then takes the doubtful course of repeating a report, of the accuracy of which he is not sure. Whoever does so deliberately incurs the risk of disseminating falsehoods: in other words, of telling a lie. In such case it is no defence to say, "I thought it was true. I intended no harm." The fact is, the person wilfully assumed the risk of serious wrong-doing, by spreading the report without knowing whether it was true or false.

The principle admits of almost endless applications. In respect to ordinances for example, a person may assume that infant baptism is scriptural. Their assumption is born of the practice of others, and of what they have heard others say. They are not sure; but still they practise it. We may have the utmost respect for the good intentions of paedo-Baptists, though little respect for their biblical intelligence. But the person who practises it merely because he or she thinks it is very "nice", or that it can "do no harm" all because merely it is in agreement with a very general practice, is taking an attitude that is entirely wrong. If you feel positive it is right, however much we may disagree, we can at least respect your conviction, and believe you are not guilty of deliberate wrong-doing. But if you are doubtful about it, and really indifferent as to whether it is right or wrong, whether actually it be right or wrong, your doubtful course is a sinful one, for you take it without troubling to ascertain whether it is right or no.

We must leave our readers to make application of this principle to all the affairs of life. Right living is not a science: it is an art, born of a free spirit within; and whether in the domestic sphere, in business, in education, in recreation, and especially in religious matters, for if your religion be Christian it relates to all these things, take no course without being sure.

If one should ask, "What then ought I to do?" The answer is, "It were better to do nothing than to do the wrong thing." Patiently, prayerfully, inquiringly, studiously, wait until you know. When in doubt, don't do it!

—DR. T. T. SHIELDS

THE WEEK-END SERVICES IN JARVIS STREET

THE services on the Lord's Day, April 28th, were filled with blessing for all who had the privilege of attending, and for those who participated in the evening service by means of the radio. Two responded to the Gospel invitation in the morning, and as the Word of the Lord is the incorruptible seed, the salvation of these two precious souls, although each one in God's estimation is counted more valuable than the whole world, would not begin to represent the full effect of this one day's faithful sowing.

In the morning Dr. Slade preached a message which was appropriate to the spring season and suited also to the spiritual needs of growing souls: "How to Avoid Spiritual Calamity" was the theme, based on 2 Peter 3:18. To grow in grace does not mean that we can grow in God's favour: we cannot grow in the grace of justification, election or sonship. Nor does it mean that we can grow into grace, in the sense of attaining eternal life by our own efforts. Life must precede growth. To grow in grace is to continue to develop, to make progress in the Christian life. The Christian is to be like a tree of righteousness, a figure which suggests growth, fruitfulness and development. The Lord desires that we grow in the extent of our knowledge, as the Apostle Paul states: "that I may know him" (Phil. 3:10). We are to grow in the certainty of this knowledge of Christ. We shall grow in grace as we increase in the knowledge of Christ. We need more love, more faith, and the means of this growth will be the Word of God, as it dwells in us richly. By thus growing in grace and in the knowledge of our Saviour we shall avoid spiritual calamity, for there is a danger of our falling from our steadfastness. This was a timely message, delivered with sincerity, firmness and power.

The evening service commenced at 7 o'clock in the auditorium, but from 7.30 - 8.30 many thousands would be participating by radio as the broadcast went out over station CHWO, Oakville (dial 1250). The message was one of gracious invitation to the unsaved, and at the same time it brought refreshment to the hearts of the Lord's own. Speaking from the text John 7:37-39, Dr. Slade preached on the theme "A Flowing Stream for Thirsty Souls." The Scripture Reading was Isaiah 55:1-7. The one supreme aim of the Lord Jesus Christ while on earth was the salvation of men; nothing could divert Him from that aim and purpose. The very officers who had come to arrest Him were panting for His blood, but He longed for their salvation and included them in this loving invitation as they stood on the outskirts of the crowd. If our Lord had this consuming passion for the souls of men, should there not be in our hearts a burden and a love for souls?

The Gospel Witness

and

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This invitation was extended on the last, the great day of the Feast of Tabernacles, celebrated yearly by the Jews to commemorate the Lord's care of them during the wilderness wanderings. Christ spoke to a large multitude, and lifted up His voice that the message might be carried to every ear and heart, but He did not overlook the individuals. He still stands and addresses large assemblies of men, congregated in churches and halls, or by the radio through the appointed means of preaching, to many thousands or millions this very day. That was doubtless the last time that many of them heard Him preach. Perhaps some in this audience are hearing the Gospel to-night for the last time. We are still in the age of grace, and Christ longs to embrace you, longs to make you one of His own.

Christ represented Himself as the Great Rock, the Smitten Rock: "He was wounded for our transgressions" (Isa. 53:5). There is a fountain that is opened for sin and uncleanness, and sinner, you can come to this fountain. The Lord Jesus was here addressing the thirsty, thirst expressing the idea of the most pressing necessity, the most urgent need. Do you thirst? Do you long for satisfaction, for victory? If so, the Lord Jesus addresses you; come to Him. But you must drink. If a cup of water be placed before you, what do you do with it? Analyze the water; discuss it, talk against it? If you want the benefits of it, you must drink of it, partake of it. Anyone can drink. The way of salvation is easy, although it cost the Lord His life. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. By partaking of the water of life, offered so freely to us, our lives are transformed, our souls brought to rest. The blessing of the Gospel which we have received we share with others. Believers become a fountain, a channel of blessing to others.

Thus once again did the Gospel message go forth in the power of the Spirit in all its fulness and simplicity from the pulpit of the historic Jarvis Street Baptist Church.

The Jarvis Street Pulpit

The Ministry of the Holy Spirit

A Sermon by Dr. T. T. Shields

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Morning, January 9th, 1927

(Stenographically Reported)

"Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?"—Acts 2:37.

I SPOKE to you last Sunday morning in a very simple fashion of the privilege of the individual believer to receive the Holy Spirit; and we shall continue our study of the ministry of the Spirit in the individual believer for some Sundays. This morning I shall speak of the ministry of the Spirit as exercised through the collective ministry of the church; for it is divinely ordained that believers should assemble, that they should come together for worship, for cooperation in the work of the Lord.

The church is a collection of regenerated people, people who are themselves filled with the Spirit. Here we are told what happened when, in such a church, a sermon was preached. People were "pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?" They disturbed the meeting, they actually spoke out in the meeting! The preaching was of such a character that it brought some response from the audience! There is no parallel between this pentecostal service and the kind of service ordinarily held in the modern church where the preacher does all the speaking, and the people listen — when they don't go to sleep! These people not only heard what the preacher had to say, but they answered; and forthwith they held an enquiry-meeting — and the preacher had to preach another sermon, he had to go on preaching, because the people enquired what they should do.

I.

First of all, then, WHAT PRECEDED THIS PREACHING? What made this preaching different from much preaching we hear to-day? Here people were "pricked in their heart". How did that come about? What happened before the preacher preached?

In the first place, *there was much prayer for that service*. Has it occurred to you that when the great multitude came together it is not recorded that anyone prayed? There was no public prayer after the great company had come together. Prayer was offered before the service was held, they had been praying for ten days, they had been waiting for Power from on high. Many a preacher in our day has to preach with the knowledge that there has been no prayer preceding the preaching, so far as the church is concerned. There may have been many clubs, there may have been many entertainments, there may have been very much activity — but there has been no prayer. If we are to have this pentecostal power it must be preceded by pentecostal praying, by prayer beforehand. I rejoice that many have prayed here, we were much in prayer last night; but let us have more prayer, let us learn the art of praying without ceasing.

In the next place, there was a *very definite appropri-*

tion of the divine promise. They were not praying all around the world, they were not praying for anything and everything; they were praying for just one thing, that the promise which had been given to them that the Holy Ghost would come, might there and then be fulfilled. There was not only definiteness in their prayer, but there was a direct and immediate appropriation of the promise, a definite committal of themselves to that which was written — they believed that the Holy Ghost would really come.

We have the same promise with this difference only, they had to wait until the Holy Ghost was sent: "Tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high"; "Wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me." They were to wait until the Holy Spirit was given; but, having been given, He is with the church once for all, and we have not now to wait for His coming; there is no reason why we should not immediately appropriate Him. Somebody said once that those people did not pray ten days to be filled — but that they had to pray ten days to be emptied! There may be a place for long prayer, there may be a long controversy between you and God that needs to be settled; but if that be not so, there is no reason why we should not immediately appropriate the promise.

I remember some years ago going to a bank in London to cash a cheque, and it happened to be a cheque given to me by Spurgeon's Tabernacle, it was a Metropolitan Tabernacle cheque. When I presented it, the teller looked at me and said, "Have you any connection with the Metropolitan Tabernacle?" I said, "I am preaching there for a couple of months, that is all." "Let me shake hands with you," he said. I shook hands with him, and he told me he was a Christian man, what they call a 'local preacher' in England; that he had long been a student of Spurgeon's sermons, and of all that Spurgeon had ever written; and that it had been his privilege often to hear that great preacher preach. And he said one thing to me that I have not forgotten. He said that someone once talked to Mr. Spurgeon about spending whole nights in prayer, to which Spurgeon replied, "I have no criticism of my brethren who do so, but I never did it in my life; and have never found any necessity for it." This friend said, "Why is that?" "Because," he said, "I have the promise of God. If I take a signed cheque to the bank, and I endorse it and present it, and the bank hands out the money — do I stand there with folded hands and say, Please pay my cheque, please pay my cheque? We have God's promise, that is the paid cheque; and why should I not take my Lord at His word in-

stantly? Why should I not claim the promise as being fulfilled this moment, and receive the promise?"

Now I feel very much like that. I believe, however, there are times when we need to spend all night in prayer, for the reason that we have so much to pray about. We may have to plead a hundred promises, we may have to pray for China, and for India, and for Africa, we may have to pray for so many things; but I do believe that it is not honouring to God when we keep asking Him for the same thing all night. There is no necessity for it; we are not heard for our much speaking; we ought to learn to come face to face with God's promise, and to lay hold of it, and reckon it to be fulfilled here and now. Then we shall have the blessing.

Now understand, I am not speaking against the habit of long-continued prayer. Blessed be God, there is a place for communion, there is a place for rapturous fellowship with the Lord; and sometimes prayer is not petition: prayer is also worship. I have told you about a lady who had been on her back for nearly twenty years at the time of which I speak. One day some man came in and sat down beside her and said, "Well, sister, what shall we pray for?" And she said, "I don't know; I have about everything!" — they say of children sometimes after Christmas that you could not give them anything else, they have so many things they have no want that is not supplied — and this dear sister, although bedridden, had had so much from the Father's hand that she said, "I cannot think of anything; but I wish you would just tell Him for me how I love Him, and how thankful I am"! Well, prayer is more than petition: prayer is just worship; prayer is fellowship, prayer is a tryst which the soul holds with its divine Lover; and if you feel like telling Him all night long that you love Him, then do so by all means. But as for the appropriation of His promise, I believe He would be honoured if we would take His promise to the bank and present it and say, "Lord, I claim its fulfilment here and now, I believe I have. Praise the Lord." Shall we not do that this morning?

There was a divine appropriation of the promise after this much prayer, and then they were all filled with the Holy Ghost. I need not go over the ground I covered this morning, how the place was filled with the Holy Ghost — He ought to be the very atmosphere of the place where God's people assemble, it ought to be charged with the presence of God, it ought to be impossible for an unbeliever to come within its doors and go out without being made aware that God is here — something ought to happen; there ought to be a bit of heaven let down to earth where God's people really meet in His name. And I believe it is so in this place, I believe the place is filled with the presence of the Lord. And then all the people were filled. I want to lay this on your hearts, my Christian brothers and sisters; it is necessary that the preacher should be filled with the Holy Spirit, that he should speak in the power of the Holy Spirit; but I remind you that before this great miracle of Pentecost took place, there was a company of believers gathered together, and there was not one of them that was not filled with the Holy Ghost, not one.

Have you come here this morning having in your heart enmity against someone, an unforgiving spirit, malice, jealousy, envy, something alien to the Spirit of God in your heart and mind? Then you make it difficult, even impossible, for the Holy Spirit to work. If there is anything of that sort, will you say here and now, "Lord, I

will forgive him until seventy times seven, it shall be blotted out this minute; I will let the Spirit of God come in and fill my heart"? I say that positively to every man and woman here, there is nothing more grievous to God than an unforgiving spirit. Our Lord said, "If ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses." We may have to contend, we may have to differ from people, but that is no reason why we should not freely and frankly and joyously forgive them, even as we hope to be forgiven. God help us that our hearts in this respect may be clean before Him, and that the spirit of love may possess us.

"They were all filled with the Holy Ghost." I have told you a story, I think I will repeat it to illustrate my thought. I was one time helping a brother pastor in some special services, and there was a good deal of opposition to his ministry, and just as much to mine. One night I gave an invitation, and there was no response. I pleaded with the people, but there was no response at all. I was conscious of a great conflict, and I did what I had never done before, and what I think I have never done since, I said, "There are some of you who are not filled with the Holy Spirit; there are some of you who are professed followers of Christ and yet are filled with a spirit alien to Christ, you are in opposition to the Word of the Lord, "stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears" resisting the Holy Ghost; and you have yielded yourselves to another spirit than the Spirit of the Lord. Now we are going to sing a hymn, and I am going to give an earnest invitation to any man or woman in this company this evening who is conscious that he has denied the sovereignty of the Holy Spirit, and has opened his heart to a spirit not from above, that has yielded to the devil" — I put it as strongly as that — "I want you to go out" — I put it so strongly it seemed as though it was scarcely probable that anyone would accept that challenge. We began to sing — at least one or two did, but it was very strained. At last one man stooped down and picked up his overcoat from under the seat — it was wintertime — and in a spirit of bravado he pushed his way out. And, do you know, at least seventy-five people followed him almost gnashing their teeth. I went down to the door, and I met one man who was furiously angry. He said, "How dare you come here to turn people out of church?" I said, "I did not turn you out; my friend, I left it to your conscience — you know, I don't. But," I said, "we will give you permission to go." And he went out of the door. When they had all gone, I went back to the front of the church, and without another appeal at all I said, "Are there any here who will now accept Christ?" and instantly fifteen people stood to their feet, and walked down the aisles and yielded themselves to Christ.

"They were all filled with the Holy Ghost." Let us pray for a membership like that, a membership that will be filled with the Spirit. Oh, let it be so in this morning's service: before I go any further, you church members, whether members of this church or any other church, sitting in your pew, will you not now say, "I will not be the man, or woman, who shall prevent the blessing coming into this place this morning; I will yield to Jesus Christ, I will claim the promise, I will receive the Holy Spirit"?

And then another thing: *they all spoke*. They spoke with other tongues. There are some people who are very anxious to have other tongues — and I do not say that the Lord will not give them other tongues if, in His wis-

dom, it is necessary, although I think there is a clear distinction between apostolic and succeeding days — but the point I make just now is this: why in the name of common sense should we ask to be permitted to speak the praises of God in other tongues until we have learned to speak in plain English! What about the tongue you have? How many believers are there here this morning who are speaking with the tongue they have of "the wonderful works of God"? But I believe that when the Holy Ghost comes, He does teach people to speak. I am not going to insist that every church member should be a preacher — I don't believe they should — but I believe every true Christian ought to be a witness for Christ; and I never can understand why any man or woman should excuse himself or herself from speaking with the tongue for Christ. You may not always speak in a public assembly, but with the tongue we ought to speak; and we ought to speak as the Spirit gives us utterance. How many people I have met who have said, "But, Pastor, I cannot speak" — and sometimes I have said in my heart, "I wish you could not"; for some of the folks that cannot speak for the Lord, can speak most eloquently, words that do infinite damage to the cause of Christ.

Now, sister, let me talk to you; and, brother, let me talk to you: don't you dare tell God that you cannot speak — you can speak. And there is not a man or a woman here this morning who does not know that we often speak when we ought to keep silent, and these tongues of ours speak that which is not glorifying to God very often. You can speak! Pray this morning for a sanctified tongue that will be made eloquent by the power of the Holy Ghost; for that is the true eloquence that lays hold of heart and conscience.

We have in our text a church — and that is the main principle after all — we have before us a church that, when it was filled with the Holy Ghost, became a *witnessing church*, every man and woman in it witnessing for the Lord. Have you been witnessing? I have a feeling that some of our brethren and sisters must have been losing a bit of their blessing, they must have been withholding their testimony. Are you going everywhere preaching the Word? Are you preaching it in the office? I was so happy last night when a brother and sister came to see me wanting to be baptized. The wife had been a Christian for a number of years, and the man about six weeks; and it happened in a house where two other people had been converted. The religion of the Lord Jesus ought to be catching, it ought to be contagious. When it gets into a family, it ought to go all through the family; when it gets into a house, it ought to go all through the house. And here were two whom I baptized last Sunday night — or the Sunday before — and then to-night two more out of the same house. Then a young girl of fourteen came to see me last night, and she told me how she was converted right down there in the pew before the sermon was over. She did not need anyone to talk to her at all; but while the Word of God was being preached, a light from heaven shone in her heart, "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ," and she then and there was saved, and was only awaiting the opportunity to walk down the aisle, and make confession of her faith — and I want to say that she came from a family where others have been converted, and where blessing had come.

If we are witnessing in the office, and about our work, and in the home, then we ought to have fruit from these

places; and the people will be following you after a while. You will not have to ask them to come to church: by your witness and by the testimony of your life, they will begin to enquire, "Where do you go to church? Take me where you go." I remember there was a man in Chicago who worked for a certain other man who did not know where his employee went to church at all, but he worked for him every day. He was converted through the testimony of that man's life. He asked where that man went to church, he said, "I want to go to the place where they have that man's sort of religion, for I want the same kind of religion that he has"! And he went and heard the gospel, and was saved.

"They were all filled with the Holy Ghost." And you members of Jarvis Street, and Christian friends who come from other churches — I apply it first to ourselves, but let me apply it to you — if you are going to have a revival in the church to which you belong, you must seek a revival not only in the pulpit but in the pew. This church was entirely separated from the world, a company of people separated unto God. It was an *ecclesia* in the truest sense: they were gathered out, separated unto God, filled with the Holy Ghost, bearing testimony against the world, and not keeping company with the world. And we shall have revival when we have churches that are separated unto God, that wherever their members go, everyone will know that they are God's men and God's women.

"They began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." And the people heard them, and understood them, in their own language speaking "the wonderful works of God". That is the subject of conversation, that is the thing that ought to be engaging you and me all the time. But if we have not a personal experience of "the wonderful works of God," we cannot tell others about it. There is no use saying, "I will go home and study a book to find something to say." No, my friends; you have to have this thing in your heart and life, so that you can "tell to all around what a dear Saviour you have found"; and when you have that, you will have blessing wherever you go.

II.

That preceded the preaching — what about the preaching? WHAT WAS THE PREACHER'S MESSAGE?

Well, in the first place, he declared that *his preaching grew out of the experience of the people*. The people came together and they said, "What is the matter here? What is the matter? Something has happened in the church — there is a fire." There is nothing in the world that will attract people like a fire. When you hear the fire-bells ring, and you see the hose reels hastening to the fire, you will find that everyone turns their steps in that direction — and if it is a great fire, then the greater the crowd. And here was a fire, fire came down from heaven, and set the church on fire for God — and when the church was on fire, all Jerusalem heard about it. I believe we should have such a revival here if we look for it, and expect it, and appropriate it, that all Toronto would hear that Jarvis Street was on fire — some people would like to hear that in another sense, I dare say — but, my friends, what we need is a spiritual conflagration, a fire kindled from the skies, until everyone talks about it, and they will see the very light of it in the heavens, and in the workshop, and the reflection of it

everywhere, and will say, "There is a fire somewhere, let us go and see."

And when the people come together, what a blessed thing it is to be able to say, "We know where it is, we know what it is all about"! Peter said, "This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; and it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: and on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy: and I will shew wonders in the heavens above, and signs in the earth beneath."

That is the way to prove the Scriptures. I believe there is a place for polemical discussion, I believe that we should earnestly contend for the faith; but I believe the mightiest apologetic that has been produced by the Holy Spirit is a man or woman in whom the Scripture has become incarnate. I could give you a list of books that would be helpful to you if you read them, but I know some men and women — and I have given God thanks for the remembrance of them — and if all these books were burned, and I were shut up merely to the testimony of some of God's people, I should have to bear witness that I have known men and women whose lives absolutely demonstrated the truth of the Scriptures. I have read it in the Book, and then I have come upon a woman suffering upon her bed — that woman to whom I referred a few minutes ago. She has gone home to be with God now, but when I think of her I always say, "Praise God, this is that which was spoken." We ought to say Hallelujah when the Word of the Lord becomes incarnate in a human life, and the Holy Spirit makes real the things of God.

And you Baptists, I tell you that the best defence of this ordinance, being buried with Christ and rising again to walk in newness of life, is to really walk in newness of life, to show that you are a new man or new woman, show that "old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new," that between you and the old life is the grave of Jesus, and that you have been made entirely different since you came to know Him — then they will say, "Now I understand baptism, now I know what it means. It is not a mere ordinance, but it is a going down into the grave with Christ, and coming up to live in the power of His resurrection." Then it will have a meaning, a significance, that God ordained it should have.

Peter caught the central truth. I wish you could put yourself back into that company of people gathered in Jerusalem. Why, there is the woman sitting down there — or standing, the servant girl who said to Peter, "Thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee"! There is the very man who drove the spear to his heart; down there is the man who has the seamless robe which once He wore; the servant of the high priest is there; there are spies there to carry the news back to the Sanhedrin, to all the religious leaders. And they are full of consternation when they hear of what has happened in this company of disciples of the despised Nazarene. And Peter rose to speak — he did not preach a sermon, he just told them something, he just proclaimed a bit of news, he said, "Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know" — and they said, "Yes, we know all about Jesus of Nazareth. We were there, we saw

Him die, we were among those who gathered about the cross, we joined with the rest of them in saying, 'Crucify Him'." And Peter went on, and I fancy every word was just as a sledge hammer, as a fire that burned up every bit of pride and prejudice before it — "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it." He proclaimed the truth of the resurrection, and then he declared how Christ had ascended on high, and he turned back the roll of Scripture and showed them how that in His resurrection, as in His death, the Scripture had been fulfilled, and He had gone back to heaven and received the promise of the Holy Ghost, and "hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear." And then he proclaimed the Lordship of Jesus Christ: "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ."

Oh, my brethren, let me proclaim that message to you today — old as it is, it is ever new — Jesus did actually die for our sins "according to the scriptures". The cross of Christ was no accident. Men slew Him with wicked hands, but He was "delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God; He was made "an offering for sin"; He died "the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God." And He is not in the grave, it was not possible that such an One should be holden of death. He brake the bands of death, He ascended on high, and "when he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men."

And "he hath shed forth this", the Holy Ghost has come. Oh, that is a glorious message!

And you had part in His crucifixion as well as I. We were among those who slew Him; ours were the wicked hands that nailed Him to the cross; it was our sins for which He died. And then when Peter had thus spoken, as simple as that, just as simple as that — and you young men, oh, I am so glad that God is raising up preachers here. I believe He will raise up hundreds of preachers to preach in Canada, and in the United States, and India, and Africa, and China, and even to the uttermost parts of the earth. And when you preach, remember that great preaching is simple preaching. When these people spoke as they were given utterance by the Holy Ghost, they spoke in such a way that even the common people understood; and when Peter preached, filled with the Holy Ghost, it was profound and yet it was simple; and every one of them understood that the crucified Christ was now enthroned as Lord of all, that men are subject to His sovereign sway, and that they must — and shall — bow before Him sooner or later.

My brother, I am not come to entreat you this morning: I sound another note, God "commandeth all men everywhere to repent". I bring to you this declaration that the crucified Saviour is Lord of all: "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth"; "Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker! Let the potsherd strive with the potsherd of the earth. Shall the clay say to him that fashioneth it, What makest thou? or thy work, He hath no hands?" — you will have to obey Him. Take His name in vain if you will, mock at Him if you dare; but "God hath also highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name" — what for? — "that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven,

and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." These university professors will have to do it; these university presidents will have to do it; these infidels that have destroyed the faith of men — blessed be God! they will have to lick the dust some day, and bow to my Sovereign Lord and King, for He is exalted.

III.

WHAT RESULTS FOLLOWED THE PREACHER'S MESSAGE? When they heard that, "they were pricked in their heart." Oh, I think they said, "What fools we were not to know Him, not to recognize Him, to put a crown of thorns on His brow when He is the Maker of heaven and earth, when He is the universal Monarch — and we crowned Him with thorns, the fruit of the sins which we had committed! What fools we were to put a reed in His hand, when He wields the sceptre of omnipotence! The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ — and we thought we could do away with Him by nailing Him to the cross!" "Oh," said that soldier, "can there be any forgiveness for me? This hand drove the spear into His heart, and now He is on the right hand of God — what shall I do? How dare I face Him? What shall I do?" Is it any wonder "they were pricked in their hearts", and cried out? They could not help it! "Men and brethren, tell us — tell us, what shall we do?"

Is there someone here saying that this morning? Let me give you Peter's answer, "Repent! Repent!" They already believed, they would not have cried out if they had not yielded their hearts to that great truth that Jesus was exalted, and they said, "Oh, tell us how we shall get into right relationship with Him. What shall we do? What can we do?" And Peter said, "Repent, repent, change your mind, right about face."

Repentance meant something to them. There were Pharisees there looking on, and repentance to them meant surrender of their pride, the surrender of their prejudice. Perhaps there is someone here this morning who said, "I will just go down and see what those 'crazy people' in Jarvis Street are doing this morning." You feel altogether superior! Well, my friend, before you can get right with God, you have to get right down in the dust before Him; and in His name, as you shall answer before the judgment seat, I say unto you, Repent of your rebellion against God, and His Word, and against the Holy Ghost, lest you be shut out for ever from His presence. Don't trust in your church membership, or anything of the kind: repent, be sorry for your sin, turn your back upon it, and your face toward God.

And then, here is a passage that even a lot of Baptists pass over — and I never can understand why they do — "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins" — and men go to work to see if they cannot find some mistake in the translation — "he baptized every one of you . . . for the remission of sins" — or, "unto the remission of sins" if you like, it is not greatly different. What does it mean? I will tell you what it means. Certain officials of a certain Board went to the officials of a certain church recently and said, "We have come to ask you what you mean by that resolution you passed the other night?" One of the deacons said, "Did you read that resolution?" And he said, "Yes, sir." "Very well then, it means exactly what it says." That is the way to talk! "Repent, and

be baptized every one of you . . . for the remission of sins." That is what it means! "Well but," you say, "sins are not remitted by water, are they?" No; "the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin"; He hath "made peace through the blood of his cross"; "Ye are made nigh" — not by water but — "by the blood of Christ." It is through the blood we are saved, yet here is this passage; and we read of Paul's saying how he rehearsed in making his own defense before his judges what Ananias had said to him, "Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins."

Now you orthodox brethren, that is in the Book! I am quoting Scripture to you this morning, I am just quoting Scripture! You have no patience with the Higher Critics when they cut out part of Jonah — but don't you cut out part of the New Testament. You Methodists that are here, or Presbyterians, or Anglicans, or whatever you are, you say, "I believe the Lord Jesus, and I love him" — well then, take the whole Book, don't you dare to play fast and loose with God's Word, "Be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins."

What does baptism mean? We know what it means, we are taught what it means. What had Peter now been proclaiming? He had been proclaiming that great fact that Christ died for our sins, and that He rose again. And I believe this, that the man who really sees the crucified, buried, and risen Christ, and appropriates that, will be willing to go with Him through the grave. It is not baptism apart from faith, but baptism is a confession of faith, as an outward sign of appropriation of the cleansing blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, as an act of obedience — and there is no true faith without obedience. Let us draw the line where the Scripture draws it. There is a "faith that worketh by love"; and when we believe, we must obey. And Peter said to them, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins." Claim all there is in the death and resurrection of Christ. Water cannot cleanse the soul, "It is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul"; but I give you these passages — whether I have explained them or not, there they are. And I tell you frankly that if I had any doubt about it, I would obey the Lord's command, and wait for His day to understand it a little more fully — but I will not be on the wrong side of this business. There is the Scripture, just take it as it is. That is what Peter said on the day of Pentecost, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."

"Then they that gladly received his word were baptized." There is a great difference in the way people receive the Word. I have known people who received the Word reluctantly. Oh yes, they yield the assent of the mind to Him, but they are not glad about it. But I have seen people gladly receive the Word when their hearts are opened, as the Lord opened the heart of Lydia, saying, "I will put my Methodism, or Presbyterianism, or Anglicanism, or every other 'ism' under my feet, and I will do what God tells me. If He says, 'Be baptized', I will do it." There are some of you here who got a great blessing when you did it, did you not? We would have a revival right away if we could only put Christ before church, and business, and family, and every other consideration. And

it was for that this apostle in the power of the Holy Ghost appealed. Oh, may we yield obedience to the Lord this morning.

Are there any "pricked in their heart"? Are there any saying, "What shall I do?" Have you repented? Are you ready to go all the way with Him? to be baptized in His name? Are you ready to open your heart and say, "Lord, I want to have everything, I want everything that the Lord Jesus has for me. I am going to travel first-class to heaven." A lady said to me one day on the street, "We are all going the same way, are we, not?" — she was of another denomination. I have no doubt she was a sincere believer, and she said — "we are all going the same way, and it does not matter what your denomination, it is not what you believe." And I said, "We are, if we love the Lord Jesus. But I have travelled on many a train, and there are usually three classes, first, second, and third; but they are all carried by the same engine. If you do not care to travel first-class, if you want to travel in the baggage car, that is your affair; but I want to go first-class." Shall we not say, "I am going to travel first-class, I am going to have all that Jesus has for me"? That is the way to receive the Word of God. Let us thus receive it this morning.

Let us bow in prayer:

O Lord, we believe that Thou hast heard us, and we rest in Thy promise. We believe to see Thy power in the sanctuary to-day. Call out Thine own people, we beseech Thee; and those who have never known Thee until to-day. We believe some have been converted while we have been speaking, and we believe some opened their hearts to Thee while we were singing that hymn, and we believe that Thy blessing is upon the people. Now as we sing, may the power of the Holy Spirit just expel every other power, that He may have full control of this service, and of every heart in this house, that Thy name may be glorified. For Jesus' sake, Amen.

SOWING AND REAPING

It is not an open question at all whether I shall sow or not to-day; the only question to be decided is: Shall I sow good seed or bad? Every man always is sowing for his own harvest in eternity either tares or wheat. According as a man soweth, so shall he also reap: he that sows the wind of vanity shall reap the whirlwind of wrath. Suppose a man should collect a quantity of small gravel and dye it carefully, so that it should resemble wheat, and sow it in his fields in spring, expecting that he would reap a crop of wheat like his neighbour's in the harvest. The man is mad: he is a fool to think that by his silly trick he can evade the laws of nature, and mock nature's God. Yet equally foolish is the conduct, and far heavier the punishment, of the man who sows wickedness now, and expects to reap safety at last. Sin is not only profitless and disastrous: it is eminently a deceitful work. Men do not of set purpose cast themselves away; sin cheats a sinner out of his soul.

But sowing righteousness is never, and nowhere, lost labour. Every act done by God's grace, and at His bidding, is living and fruitful. It may appear to go out of sight, like seed beneath the furrow: but it will rise again. Sow on, Christians! Sight will not follow the seed far; but when sight fails, sow in faith, and you will reap in joy soon.

—WILLIAM ARNOT

JOHN A. KENSIT

One of the most prominent and honoured leaders of the Protestant cause in England passed away on March 9th in the person of John A. Kensit of Finchley, leader of the Wickliffe Preachers and Secretary of the Protestant Truth Society. He was a noted and fearless champion of truth and liberty. At the time of the death of his father, martyred after addressing a meeting at Birkenhead in 1902, Mr. Kensit was himself serving a six months' term in jail for daring to preach the doctrines of the Reformation in the open air. For fifty-five years Mr. Kensit continued to teach and preach the glorious Gospel of salvation by grace through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. At the time of his death he was Principal of the Kensit Memorial College, Finchley; Governor of Newton House School, Finchley; Joint-Secretary of the United Protestant Council, London; Vice-President of the Bible Testimony Fellowship, and Editor of *The Churchman's Magazine*, published monthly, the last issue edited by him, for March, being numbered 1329. His life-long motto was "No compromise; no surrender."

Friends of THE GOSPEL WITNESS, and those who believe in the authority and integrity of the Word of God will extend sincere Christian sympathy to the family, and all will join in prayer that the Lord will enable His valiant soldiers in the Old Land to uphold the doctrines of His Word and to continue the fight of faith against error in every form, the battle so nobly carried on by His beloved servant, now called home to rest.

SPECIAL BROADCAST SERVICE

On Sunday afternoon, May 5th, from 4.30 to 5.00 o'clock, there will be a special service in Jarvis Street Church, and it will be broadcast over the Dominion Network of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation from coast to coast in the Church of the Air Series. The choir will be in attendance, and Dr. H. C. Slade will preach. Please make this service known as widely as possible. All the friends within reach of Toronto are cordially invited to be present in person, or if that is not possible, to listen to the broadcast and invite others to do the same. This broadcast is in addition to the regular Sunday evening broadcast from 7.30 - 8.30 p.m. over station CHWO, Oakville (dial 1250). Pray that the Lord will prepare hearts for the Word as it goes forth.

DATES TO REMEMBER

May 2—

Toronto Baptist Seminary Graduation Exercises with Dr. C. D. Cole as speaker.

May 5—

11 a.m. Dr. C. D. Cole, "The Day of Salvation."
4.30-5 p.m.

Jarvis Street Church with Dr. Slade, choir and congregation in coast to coast broadcast in the Church of the Air series, Dominion network.

7 p.m. Dr. C. D. Cole, "The Day of Judgment."
7.30-8.30 p.m. Broadcast over CHWO, Oakville (1250).

November 3—

Mr. James Armstrong, Irish evangelist, will conduct evangelistic services in Jarvis Street Church for two weeks.

INSTRUCTIONS IN SOUL-WINNING

By Charles H. Spurgeon

(Part 1)

"And he saith unto them, Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men."
—Matthew 4:19.

WHEN Christ calls us by His grace, we ought not only to remember what we are, but we ought also to think of what He can make us. It is, "Follow Me, and I will make you." We should repent of what we have been, but rejoice in what we may be. It is not, "Follow Me, because of what you are already." It is not, "Follow Me, because you may make something of yourselves"; but "Follow Me, because of what I will make you." Verily, I might say of each one of us as soon as we are converted, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be." It did not seem a likely thing that lowly fishermen would develop into apostles, that men so handy with the net would be quite as much at home in preaching sermons and in instructing converts. One would have said, "How can these things be? You cannot make founders of churches out of peasants of Galilee." That is exactly what Christ did; and when we are brought low in the sight of God by a sense of our own unworthiness, we may feel encouraged to follow Jesus because of what He can make us. What said the woman of a sorrowful spirit when she lifted up her song? "He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes." We cannot tell what God may make of us in the new creation, since it would have been quite impossible to have foretold what He made of chaos in the old creation. Who could have imagined all the beautiful things that came forth from darkness and disorder by that one fiat, "Let there be light"? And who can tell what lovely displays of everything that is divinely fair may yet appear in a man's formerly dark life, when God's grace has said to him, "Let there be light"? O, you who see in yourselves at present nothing that is desirable, come you and follow Christ for the sake of what He can make out of you! Do you not hear His sweet voice calling to you, and saying, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men"?

Note, next, that *we are not made all that we shall be*, nor all that we ought to desire to be, when we are ourselves fished for and caught. This is what the grace of God does for us at first; but it is not all. We are like the fishes, making sin to be our element, as they live in the sea; and the good Lord comes, and with the gospel net He takes us, and He delivers us from the life and love of sin. But He has not wrought for us all that He can do, nor all that we should wish Him to do, when He has done this; for it is another and a higher miracle to make us who were fish to become fishers — to make the saved ones saviours — to make the convert into a converter — the receiver of the gospel into an impartor of that same gospel to other people. I think I may say to every person whom I am addressing — if you are yourself saved, the work is but half done until you are employed to bring others to Christ. You are as yet but half formed in the image of your Lord. You have not attained to the full development of the Christ-life in you unless you have commenced in some feeble way to tell others of the grace of God; and I trust that you will find no rest to the sole

of your foot till you have been the means of leading many to that blessed Saviour who is your confidence and your hope. His word is, "Follow Me, not merely that you may be saved, nor even that you may be sanctified; but 'Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.'" Be following Christ with that intent and aim; and fear that you are not perfectly following Him unless in some degree He is making use of you to be fishers of men. The fact is, that every one of us must take to the business of a man-catcher. If Christ has caught us, we must catch others. If we have been apprehended of Him, we must be His constables, to apprehend rebels for Him. Let us ask Him to give us grace to go a-fishing, and so cast our nets that we may take a great multitude of fishes. Oh, that the Holy Ghost may raise up from among us some master-fishermen, who shall sail their boats in many a sea, and surround great shoals of fish!

My teaching at this time will be very simple, but I hope it will be eminently practical; for my longing is that not one of you that love the Lord may be backward in His service. What says the Song of Solomon concerning certain sheep that come up from the washing? It says, "Every one beareth twins, and there is not one barren among them." May that be so with all the members of this church, and all the Christian people who hear or read this sermon! The fact is, the day is very dark. The heavens are lowering with heavy thunder clouds. Men little dream of what tempests may soon shake this city, and the whole social fabric of this land, even to a general breaking up of society. So dark may the night become that the stars may seem to fall like blighted fruit from the tree. The times are evil. Now, if never before, every glow-worm must show its spark. You with the tiniest farthing candle must take it from under the bushel, and set it on a candlestick. There is need of you all. Lot was a poor creature. He was a very, very wretched kind of believer; but still he might have been a great blessing to Sodom had he but pleaded for it as he should have done. And poor, poor Christians, as I fear many are, one begins to value every converted soul in these evil days, and to pray that each one may glorify the Lord. I pray that every righteous man, vexed as he is with the conversation of the wicked, may be more importunate in prayer than he has ever been, and return unto his God, and get more spiritual life, that he may be a blessing to the perishing people around him. I address you, therefore, at this time first of all upon this thought. Oh, that the Spirit of God may make each of you feel his personal responsibility!

Here is for believers in Christ, in order to their usefulness, *something for them to do*: "Follow Me." But, secondly, here is something to be done by their great Lord and Master: "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men." You will not of yourselves grow into fishers, but that is what Jesus will do for you if you will but follow Him. And then, lastly, here is a good illustration, used according to our great Master's wont; for

scarcely without a parable did He speak unto the people. He presents us with an illustration of what Christian men should be — fishers of men. We may get some useful hints out of it, and I pray the Holy Spirit to bless them to us.

First, then, I will take it for granted that every believer here wants to be useful. If he does not, I take leave to question whether he can be a true believer in Christ. Well, then, if you want to be really useful, here is **SOMETHING FOR YOU TO DO TO THAT END: "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men."**

What is the way to become an efficient preacher? "Young man," says one, "go to college." "Young man," says Christ, "follow Me, and I will make you a fisher of men." How is a person to be useful? "Attend a training class," says one. Quite right; but there is a surer answer than that — Follow Jesus, and He will make you fishers of men. The great training school for Christian workers has Christ at its head; and He is at its head, not only as a Tutor, but as a Leader: we are not only to learn of Him in study, but to follow Him in action. "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men." The direction is very distinct and plain, and I believe that it is exclusive, so that no man can become a fisherman by any other process. This process may appear to be very simple; but assuredly it is most efficient. The Lord Jesus Christ, who knew all about fishing for men, was Himself the Dictator of the rule, "Follow Me, if you want to be fishers of men. If you would be useful, keep in My track."

I understand this, first in this sense: *be separate unto Christ*. These men were to leave their pursuits; they were to leave their companions; they were, in fact, to quit the world, that their one business might be, in their Master's name, to be fishers of men. We are not called to leave our daily business, or to quit our families. That might be rather running away from the fishery than working at it in God's name; but we are called most distinctly to come out from among the ungodly, and to be separate, and not to touch the unclean thing. We cannot be fishers of men if we remain among men in the same element with them. Fish will not be fishers. The sinner will not convert the sinner. The ungodly man will not convert the ungodly man; and what is more to the point, the worldly Christian will not convert the world. If you are of the world, no doubt the world will love its own; but you cannot save the world. If you are dark, and belong to the kingdom of darkness, you cannot remove the darkness. If you march with the armies of the wicked one, you cannot defeat them. I believe that one reason why the Church of God at this present moment has so little influence over the world is because the world has so much influence over the Church. Nowadays, we hear Nonconformists pleading that they may do this, and they may do that — things which their Puritan forefathers would rather have died at the stake than tolerated. They plead that they may live like worldlings, and my sad answer to them, when they crave for liberty is, "Do it if you dare. It may not do you much hurt, for you are so bad already. Your cravings show how rotten your hearts are. If you have a hungering after such dog's meat, go, dogs, and eat the garbage! Worldly amusements are fit food for mere pretenders and hypocrites. If you were God's children, you would loathe the very thought of the world's evil joys, and your question would not be, 'How far may we be like the world?' but your one cry

would be, 'How far can we get away from the world? How much can we come out of it?' Your temptation would be rather to become sternly severe, and ultra-Puritanical in your separation from sin, in such a time as this, than to ask, 'How can I make myself like other men, and act as they do?'"

Brethren, the use of the Church in the world is that it should be like salt in the midst of putrefaction; but if the salt has lost its savour, what is the good of it? If it were possible for salt itself to putrefy, it could but be an increase and a heightening of the general putridity. The worst day the world ever saw was when the sons of God were joined with the daughters of men. Then came the flood; for the only barrier against a flood of vengeance on this world is the separation of the saint from the sinner. Your duty as a Christian is to stand fast in your own place, and to stand out for God, hating even the garment spotted by the flesh, resolving like one of old that, let others do as they will, as for you and your house, you will serve the Lord.

Come, ye children of God, you must stand with your Lord outside the camp. Jesus calls you today, and says, "Follow Me." Was Jesus found at the theatre? Did He frequent the sports of the race-course? Was Jesus seen, think you, in any of the amusements of the Herodian court? Not He. He was "holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners." In one sense, no one mixed with sinners so completely as He did when, like a physician, He went among them healing His patients; but, in another sense, there was a gulf fixed between the men of the world and the Saviour, which He never essayed to cross, and which they could not cross to defile Him.

The first lesson which the Church has to learn is this: Follow Jesus into the separated state, and He will make you fishers of men. Unless you take up cross, and protest against an ungodly world, you cannot hope that the holy Jesus will make you fishers of men.

A second meaning of our text is very obviously this: *abide with Christ*, and then you will be made fishers of men. These disciples whom Christ called were to come and live with Him. They were every day to be associated with Him. They were to hear Him teach publicly, the everlasting gospel, and in addition they were to receive choice explanations in private of the Word which He had spoken. They were to be His body-servants and His familiar friends. They were to see His miracles and hear His prayers; and, better still, they were to be with Himself, and become one with Him in His holy labour. It was given to them to sit at the table with Him, and even to have their feet washed by Him. Many of them fulfilled that word, "Where thou dwellest, I will dwell": they were with Him in His afflictions and persecutions. They witnessed His secret agonies, they saw His many tears, they marked the passion and the compassion of His soul, and thus, after their measure, they caught His spirit, and so they learned to be fishers of men.

At Jesus' feet we must learn the art and mystery of soul-winning: to live with Christ is the best education for usefulness. It is a great boon to any man to be associated with a Christian minister whose heart is on fire. The best training for a young man is that which the Vaudois pastors were wont to give, when each old man had a young man with him who walked with him whenever he went up the mountain-side to preach, and lived in the house with him, and marked his prayers, and

saw his daily piety. This was a fine course of instruction, was it not? But it will not compare with that of the apostles who lived with Jesus Himself, and were His daily companions. Matchless was the training of the twelve. No wonder that they became what they were with such a heavenly Tutor to saturate them with His own spirit. His bodily presence is not now among us; but His spiritual power is perhaps more fully known to us than it was to the apostles in those two or three years of the Lord's corporeal presence. There be some of us to whom He is intimately near. We know more about Him than we do about our dearest earthly friend. We have never been able quite to read our friend's heart in all its twistings and windings, but we know the heart of the Well-beloved. We have leaned our head upon His bosom, and have enjoyed fellowship with Him such as we could not have with any of our own kith and kin. This is the surest method of learning how to do good. Live with Jesus, follow Jesus, and He will make you fishers of men. See how He does the work, and so learn how to do it yourself. A Christian man should be bound apprentice to Jesus to learn the trade of a Saviour. We can never save men by offering a redemption, for we have none to present; but we can learn how to save men by warning them to flee from the wrath to come, and setting before them the one great effectual remedy. See how Jesus saves, and you will learn how the thing is done: there is no learning it anyhow else. Live in fellowship with Christ, and there shall be about you an air and a manner as of one who has been made in heart and mind apt to teach, and wise to win souls.

A third meaning, however, must be given to this "Follow Me," and it is this: "Obey Me, and then you shall know what to do to save men." We must not talk about our fellowship with Christ, or our being separated from the world unto Him, unless we make Him our Master and Lord in everything. Some public teachers are not true at all points to their convictions; how can they look for a blessing? A Christian man, anxious to be useful, ought to be very particular as to every point of obedience to his Master. I have no doubt whatever that God blesses our churches even when they are very faulty, for His mercy endureth for ever. When there is a measure of error in the teaching, and a measure of mistake in the practice, He may still vouchsafe to use the ministry, for He is very gracious; but a large measure of blessing must necessarily be withheld from all teaching which is knowingly or glaringly faulty. God can set His seal upon the truth that is in it, but He cannot set His seal upon the error that is in it. Out of mistakes about Christian ordinances and other things, especially errors in heart and spirit, there may come evils which we never looked for. Such evils may even now be telling upon the present age, and may work worse mischief upon future generations.

If we desire, as fishers of men, to be largely used of God, we must copy our Lord Jesus in everything and obey Him in every point. Failure in obedience may lead to failure in success. Each one of us, if he would wish to see his child saved, or his Sunday-school class blessed, or his congregation converted, must take care that, bearing the vessels of the Lord, he is himself clean. Anything we do that grieves the Spirit of God must take away from us some part of our power for good. The Lord is very gracious and pitiful; but yet He is a jealous God. He is sometimes sternly, jealous towards His people who are living in neglect of known duty, or in associations which

are not clean in His sight. He will wither their work, weaken their strength, and humble them until at last they each one say, "My Lord, I will take Thy way after all. I will do what Thou biddest me to do, for else Thou wilt not accept me." The Lord said to His disciples, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature: he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved"; and He promised them that signs should follow, and so they did follow, and so they will. But we must get back to apostolic practice and apostolic teaching; we must lay aside the commandments of men and the whimses of our own brains, and we must do what Christ tells us, as Christ tells us, and because Christ tells us. Definitely and distinctly, we must take the place of servants; and if we will not do that, we cannot expect our Lord to work with us and by us. Let us be determined that, as true as the needle is to the pole, so true will we be, as far as our light goes, to the command of our Lord and Master. Jesus says, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men." By this teaching He seems to say, "Go beyond Me, or fall back away from Me, and you may cast the net; but it shall be night with you, and that night you shall take nothing. When you shall do as I bid you, you shall cast your net on the right side of the ship, and you shall find."

Again, I think that there is a great lesson in my text to those who preach their own thoughts instead of preaching the thoughts of Christ. These disciples were to follow Christ that they might listen to Him, hear what He had to say, drink in His teaching, and then go and teach what He had taught them. Their Lord said, "What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops." If they will be faithful reporters of Christ's message, He will make them "fishers of men". But you know the boastful method, nowadays, is this: "I am not going to preach this old, old gospel, this musty Puritan doctrine. I will sit down in my study, and burn the midnight oil, and invent a new theory; then I will come out with my brand-new thought, and blaze away with it." Many are not following Christ, but following themselves, and of them the Lord may well say, "Thou shalt see whose word shall stand, Mine or theirs." Others are wickedly prudent, and judge that certain truths which are evidently God's Word had better be kept back. You must not be rough, but must prophesy smooth things. To talk about the punishment of sin, to speak of eternal punishment, why, these are unfashionable doctrines. It may be that they are taught in the Word of God; but they do not suit the genius of the age; we must pare them down! Brothers in Christ, I will have no share in this. Will you? O my soul, come not thou into their secret! Certain things not taught in the Bible our enlightened age has discovered. Evolution may be clean contrary to the teaching of Genesis, but that does not matter. We are not going to be believers of Scripture, but original thinkers. This is the vain-glorious ambition of the period.

Mark you, in proportion as the modern theology is preached, the vice of this generation increases. To a great degree, I attribute this looseness of the age to the laxity of the doctrine preached by its teachers. From the pulpit they have taught the people that sin is a trifle. From the pulpit these traitors to God and to His Christ have taught the people that there is no hell to be feared. A little, little hell, perhaps, there may be; but just punishment for sin is made nothing of. The precious

atonement sacrifice of Christ has been derided and misrepresented by those who were pledged to preach it. They have given the people the name of the gospel, but the gospel itself has evaporated in their hands. From hundreds of pulpits the gospel is as clean gone as the dodo from its old haunts; and still the preachers take the position and name of Christ's ministers. Well, and what comes of it? Why, their congregations grow thinner and thinner; and so it must be. Jesus says, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men"; but if you go in your own way, you will make nothing of it, and the Lord promises you no help in it. The Lord's directions make Himself our Leader and Example. It is "Follow Me; follow Me. Preach My Gospel. Preach what I preached. Teach what I taught, and keep to that." With that blessed servility which becomes the one whose ambition it is to be a copyist, and never to be an original, copy Christ even in jots and tittles. Do this, and He will make you fishers of men; but if you do not do this, you will fish in vain.

I close this part of my discourse by saying that we shall not be fishers of men unless we follow Christ in one other respect; and that is, by endeavouring in all points orthodoxy, but we must also live orthodoxy. God forbid to imitate His holiness. Holiness is the most real power that can be possessed by men or women. We may preach that we should preach anything else; but it will all be in vain, unless there is a life at the back of the testimony. An unholy preacher may even render truth contemptible. In proportion as any of us draw back from a living and zealous sanctification, we shall draw back from the place of power. Our power lies in this word, "Follow Me." Be Jesus-like. In all things endeavour to think, and speak, and act as Jesus did, and He will make you fishers of men. This will require self-denial. We must daily take up the cross. This may require willingness to give up our reputation — readiness to be thought fools, idiots and the like, as men are apt to call those who are keeping close to their Master. There must be the cheerful resigning of everything that looks like honour and personal glory, in order that we may be wholly Christ's, and glorify His name. We must live His life, and be ready to die His death, if need be. O brothers, sisters, if we do this, and follow Jesus, putting our feet into the footprints of His pierced feet, He will make us fishers of men! If it should so please Him that we should even die without having gathered many souls to the cross, we shall speak from our graves. In some way or other, the Lord will make a holy life to be an influential life. It is not possible that a life which can be described as a following of Christ should be an unsuccessful one in the sight of the Most High. "Follow Me," and there is an "I will" such as God can never draw back from.

Thus much on the first point. There is something for us to do; we are graciously called to follow Jesus. Holy Spirit, lead us to do it!

WHITHER BOUND?

Passing onward, quickly passing;
 Yes, but whither, whither bound?
 Is it to the many mansions,
 Where eternal rest is found?
 Passing onward —
 Yes, but whither, whither bound?

For Younger Readers

THE INVITATION

Margaret came in excitedly from the door. In her hand she held a letter addressed to herself. After spending some time talking about who might have sent it, her mother said, "Open it and see." Margaret did so and shouted in delight, "It's an invitation, a real printed one." "Who sent it?" asked mother. "It is to an evening party in honour of the newly-married pair. Oh mother! Think of them asking me!" And Margaret hugged herself in delight.

Her mother sat down to study the invitation card. Being a sensible mother, the first thing she wanted to know was who had sent the invitation. When she was satisfied that it was all right for Margaret to go to that home, and had seen the date and hour of the party, she said, "I'm afraid you can't go, my dear. Look at this written in the corner . . . 'Dress Formal' . . . You have no clothes to go in." — The poor Margaret began to persuade her mother that it didn't matter about what kind of clothes she went in. "Look how nice my Sunday dress is, and you would lend me your necklace. I'm sure I could have Auntie's bracelet, and I would look as well as any one else there." But mother said, "You haven't got the kind of clothes that are necessary, and if you tried to go in any other kind, you would be insulting your hosts."

In the end, Margaret did get to the party, because her cousin kindly lent her a dress, and she went happily, knowing that she had fulfilled the required conditions.

The next evening, Margaret went to the children's meeting she always attended. When she came back she said, "Mother, I didn't know the speaker, but she talked about an invitation, and she seemed to know all about me. She had a little card, and she said it was a Royal invitation, and that means you can't refuse to go if you are asked. The invitation was from God, and it was to ask us to the marriage supper of the Lamb. She said it would be in heaven. Lots of people want to go to this supper, but you can't be there without the proper kind of clothes. Wasn't that just like me? I wanted to go to the party in the wrong kind of dress. Even if I had gone like that I wouldn't have been happy there. There was a man who went to the King's party, in his own clothes, and the King put him out. All the other guests had lovely robes that the King had given them, and this man could have had one too, only he thought his own clothes were good enough. He wasn't allowed to be in heaven. It was terrible."

Margaret's mother got out her Bible and read Matt. 22:2-14 to Margaret. Will you read the story too? Remember that without being clothed in the goodness of Christ you can't be in heaven. Your own best righteousness is called "filthy rags" in the Bible. When you feel you are not good enough to enter heaven, just ask God to clothe you in the goodness of Christ, and then you will be fit to go there. You can then look forward with joy because you are ready for "the marriage supper of the Lamb."
 —The Irish Evangelical

"The map of the world hung in William Carey's work-room; but it only hung on his wall, because it already hung in his heart."

—F. W. BOREHAM

The Blasphemies of Nels Ferre

David Otis Fuller, D.D. Grand Rapids, Michigan

(Spoken of highly by officials of the National and World Council of Churches)

"And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies . . . And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His Name, and His tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven."—Rev. 13:5, 6.

NEVER in 1900 years, since the days of the vile blasphemies of Celsus, Porphyry, and Lucien against the early church, has such a vicious attack been launched against God's Holy Word the Bible, and the Person of Jesus Christ, His Lovely Son.

Nels F. S. Ferre is Professor of Philosophical Theology at Vanderbilt University School of Religion. He is in much demand as a speaker in churches and denominational schools.

He has lectured at the Southern Baptist Seminary in Louisville. He has been scheduled to speak for youth groups in the Southern Baptist Convention. *He is highly recommended by practically every high official in both the National and World Council of Churches.*

The following vicious and blasphemous attack upon the Lord Jesus Christ is taken from Ferre's book "The Christian Understanding of God" published by Harper & Brothers.

PAGE 186, "We have no way of knowing, even, that Jesus was sinless, but such a claim is irrelevant to the reality of the incarnation. Such a proposition would, for that matter, depend mostly on some literal claim in the Bible. Such claims there are, but the Bible used in this external manner becomes a distinct danger to living faith.

Such letters kill while the Spirit gives life. Even though Jesus' life was peculiarly subject to myth, behind the myth is the reality which gave rise to it."

PAGE 191, "Strange, however, is the hold which this doctrine (the Virgin Birth) in its more literal form has on countless people. Reference to the Virgin Birth is not found in Paul's letters, the earliest writings we have. It is not found in Mark, the original Gospel. It is not found in the various epistles of the New Testament. It is not found in the Johannine tradition.

As a matter of fact, the reference in John to the claim by the Jews to the effect that they were not born in adultery, could give external-credence to a Nazi claim that Jesus was German.

Mary, we remember, was found pregnant before her engagement to mild Joseph. Nazareth was hard by a Roman garrison where the soldiers were German mercenaries. Jesus is also reported throughout a continuous part of the history of art, it is claimed, to have been blonde.

This is supposedly unnatural for the Mediterranean countries where this same tradition started and was continued. Hence Jesus must have been the child of a German soldier!

After all, the claim develops, such is the experience of many girls near military camps. His great genius, spiritual agony, and serene victory would thus be accounted for, as far as the unusual conditions go which gave Him the chance to respond in an exceptional manner in the fullness of time.

Such an interpretation has been made of His life, AND WHO CAN DENY THAT SUCH A CONJECTURE COULD BE TRUE?" (caps ours)

May we add this right here — in God's Holy Name how much longer are Christians going to maintain a cowardly silence and traitorous neutrality concerning such blasphemers?

Ferre has written another book "The Sun and the Umbrella". A review of this book appeared in the Sword of the Lord, edited by Dr. John R. Rice of Wheaton, Illinois, and from which the following extracts are taken.

PURPOSE OF BOOK. "The Christian church has no significant future till it puts away traditionalistic orthodoxy . . . (p. 87) This kind of theology "has to be challenged, fought and slain". (p. 79).

THE PERSON OF CHRIST. "He is at best a vague figure" and has been mythologized (p. 115) "Jesus never was nor became God" (p. 112). He was not preexistent, Ferre says "Such is the nature of the grand myth which at its heart is idolatry" (p. 83).

Mystery religions got sucked into the resurrection story (p. 32) "It seems appropriate that He (Jesus) . . . was allowed to return to earthly life . . . to encourage His followers . . . But we know neither that this event actually happened nor exactly what took place" (pp. 115, 116).

AS TO THE SECOND COMING, "It seems doubtful Jesus ever taught such a doctrine" (p. 33).

THE BIBLE. "The use of the Bible as the final authority for Christian truth is idolatry" (p. 39).

There can also be "the Hindu branch of the Church of the living God" (p. 122). "Hinduism is good and wise" (p. 117). "What a spiritual people this religion has produced!" (p. 119).

FOR COMMUNISTS Ferre has an approach. "They are too sharply aware of the imperfect parts of the Bible and too honest with the truth" (p. 129). "We shall witness to the Communists because whatever truth is theirs we accept wholeheartedly, and beyond their truth lies God's truth" (p. 156).

There is one passage of Scripture, among others that fits Ferre and others of his kind. II Thess. 2:10, 11.

" . . . because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie (Pseudei in the Greek, THE LIE, one of the names of Antichrist), That they all might be damned who believed not the truth."

You have read thus far? How do you feel? Like many? "We must be positive and objective in our thinking. We must not condemn others, for the Bible says 'Judge not that ye be not judged'."

THAT — is the attitude among thousands of professing Christians today. THAT — is what our Lord speaks

about in Rev. 3:16, "SO THEN BECAUSE THOU ART LUKEWARM, AND NEITHER COLD NOR HOT, I WILL SPUE THEE OUT OF MY MOUTH."

Is your church of which you are a member, linked up in any way with the apostate National or World Council of Churches? If so — then you are supporting and giving aid and comfort to just such blasphemy and blasphemers.

Better stand up for Jesus Christ and be counted *NOW*, before you are one day *COUNTED OUT BY GOD!*

(Copies of this pamphlet may be secured by writing the Book Table, Wealthy St. Baptist Church, Grand Rapids, Michigan. No charge for as many as you can prayerfully use. We do need funds to "sound the alarm" and we would appreciate any contribution to pay for the printing for as wide a distribution as possible.)

SPIRITUAL SIGHT

"In an Art Gallery I saw a painting representing a prairie covered with scarlet poppies, and standing among them a blind woman. The evidences of God's presence and activity, like those poppies, stare every one in the face all the time, and they are not seen except by those healed of their blindness miraculously by Jesus. Faith in Jesus is the recovery of a lost sense. 'Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.'

"To see God's kingdom is to be fully persuaded of His presence and activity and sovereignty and love. Happy eyes which see the King exercising His rule."

—REV. JAMES HUNTER, M.A.

RADIO MAIL

Bowmanville, Ontario

Dear Sirs:

We were pleased to get the Jarvis Street Sunday evening service on the radio last evening and it came in very well. I hope to be able to send a contribution some time, but at present I am afraid I can't. Hope it will continue to come in well.

* * * *

Trenton, Ont.

Dear Sir:

I was delighted to tune in to your Gospel service to night. The reception was fine and the broadcast came in clearly. Thank you for the heart-warming message and may the Lord bless in the salvation of many souls.

* * * *

Toronto, Ont.

Dear Miss Lindsay:

Enclosed please find cheque for Five Dollars, three for THE GOSPEL WITNESS and two dollars toward the broadcast on the two Sundays. I enjoyed the services so much. Dr. Slade's messages were so uplifting and the choir also was good.

I have been ill, but I am gradually getting better, but not sufficiently to sit through a service yet. I am coming along fine and am thankful to the Lord for His goodness to me.

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Bible School Lesson Outline

Volume 21 Second Quarter Lesson 6 May 12, 1957

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

TRANSGRESSING THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST

Lesson Text: 2 John.

Golden Text: "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son."—2 John 9.

Introduction:

The Second Epistle of John, which resembles the First Epistle in style and thought, was probably written about the same time, 90 A.D. By this time many deceivers and false teachers were abroad, spreading their pernicious doctrines. The Apostle John was inspired to write this message of warning to the believers. The exhortation is peculiarly applicable to our own day, when modern cults are so numerous and prevalent.

Several suggestions have been made concerning the persons addressed in this Epistle. It is thought by some that the message was directed to some church or assembly of Christians under the figure or title of "Lady". However, it is more likely that "the elect lady" is an individual. Although intended originally for a family or group of believers, the general truths stated are applicable to all believers everywhere.

Outline of Second John: The Epistle of Truth

- I. Salutation: verses 1-3.
- II. Exhortation: verses 4-11.
- III. Conclusion: verses 12, 13.

Exposition:

The subject of the Epistle is the truth of the Gospel, described as "the truth" or "the commandment" or "the doctrine". In the introduction of this Epistle (verses 1-3) the Apostle John states the persons addressed and gives his purpose of writing.

Whereas sin separates man from God and man from man (Gen. 3:8; 9; 1 John 1:6, 7), the truth of the Gospel, which produces holiness, is a unifying force (Acts 4:32; 1 Cor. 1:10; Phil. 1:27). Those who love the truth will have sweet fellowship with those who are of like mind. Therefore, a close bond exists between the Apostle and this devoted family to whom he is writing.

The Apostle John had one aim in view, to disseminate the truth as widely as possible. He would that all men might know the truth of the Gospel. Inasmuch as Christ Himself is the Truth of God Incarnate (John 1:17; 14:6), when He came to dwell in the hearts of the saints in the person of the Holy Spirit (Eph. 3:17; Col. 1:27), the Apostle could say that truth was dwelling within them and would abide with them for ever (John 14:17). Those who believe on Christ as Saviour and Lord become His children, and are His for time and for eternity (1 Pet. 1:23).

The benediction, usually found near the beginning of each Epistle, varies in different Epistles according to the circumstances. In this case the blessings of grace, mercy and peace are invoked in the sphere of truth and love. In other words, as the believers abide in the truth of the Gospel and obey its injunction to love one another, grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and God the Son will be their portion (1 Tim. 1:2; 2 Tim. 1:2; Tit. 1:4; 2 John 3).

The Apostle commences his exhortation with a word of commendation. The mother and her family have hitherto walked in the ways of the Lord, obedient to His Word. What joy it gives to us as teachers of the Word to know that those for whose spiritual welfare we are in a sense responsible are walking in the light of the truth (Phil. 1:3-5; 1 Thess. 2:19, 20; Heb. 13:17; 3 John 3, 4).

The two injunctions, to love God and to love our neighbour, together form a summary of the Gospel in its practical application (Luke 10:27; James 2:8). The Apostle John takes every opportunity to emphasize these essential commandments (John 13:34; 1 John 2:7, 10; 3:11; 7, 11).

God's Word should be obeyed at all times and under all circumstances, but it is especially to be our refuge in times

when men would rob us of its vital truths (Acts 20:28-30). A false cult may be identified by its teachings concerning the Lord Jesus Christ (Matt. 22:42). He is the Saviour (Jesus); He is the Anointed of God (the Christ); and He became Incarnate in human flesh (John 1:14; 1 Tim. 3:16). He is at the same time God and Man. Although sinless, our Saviour died on our behalf, rose again and is seated at the right hand of God, interceding for us. One day He will return. Those teaching otherwise are deceivers and antichrists; that is, they are definitely opposed to Christ (1 John 2:18; 4:1-6, 15; 5:1, 10).

The believers were warned to take care lest they should be enticed away from the position of truth and love, brought about by the ministry of the Apostle. The one who has been truly born again will not lose his salvation (John 5:24), but he may lose the full reward which might have been his on the basis of his works after he was saved (Rom. 14:10, 12; 1 Cor. 3:10-15; 4:5; 2 Cor. 5:10).

Those who do not believe or teach the Scriptural truths concerning our Lord Jesus Christ, although they may have a form of religion, mark themselves as sinners, without God (1 John 2:23). They have "gone too far and failed to stay by the teaching of Christ" (verse 9, Williams translation; 1 Tim. 4:1, 2; 1 John 2:22; 4:3). There are many such in our day.

Those who love the truth will be intolerant of error (1 Cor. 13:6). Any teacher or brother who comes to the home, attempting to spread his false teachings, is to be regarded as a dangerous individual and is not to be welcomed, received or encouraged (Rom. 16:17; Gal. 1:8, 9; 2 Thess. 3:6; Tit. 3:10). The one who encourages them compromises with evil and is accounted as guilty as they (1 Tim. 5:22). To illustrate this truth, reference may be made to the civil law, which provides a stiff penalty for those who harbour criminals and thus associate themselves with evil-doers. Preachers and teachers who deny the fundamental doctrines of the faith are not worthy of our confidence, fellowship or support, since they are enemies of the Lord and of His cause (1 Tim. 2:3; Jude 2, 3).

Daily Bible Readings

- May 6—The Importance of Doctrine Psalm 119:129-144
- May 7—The Doctrine of the Virgin Birth Matt. 1-18-25
- May 8—The Doctrine of the Miracles of Christ. John 5:32-47
- May 9—The Doctrine of His Vicarious Death... 2 Cor. 5:1-21
- May 10—The Inspiration of the Bible 2 Tim. 3:14-17
- May 11—The Doctrine of the Resurrection 1 Cor. 15:1-58
- May 12—Doctrine and Our Family Deut. 6:1-9

Suggested Hymns

More about Jesus would I know.
Blest be the tie that binds.
Oh what fellowship!
Blest are the pure in heart.
Abiding, oh so wondrous sweet.
When the heart made pure.

A PRAYER

Let the lowliest task be mine,
Grateful, so the work be Thine;
Let me find the humblest place
In the shadow of Thy grace:
Blest to me were any spot
Where temptation whispers not.
If there be some weaker one,
Give me strength to help him on;
If a blinder soul there be,
Let me guide him nearer Thee.
Make my mortal dreams come true
With the work I fain would do;
Clothe with life the weak intent,
Let me be the thing I meant;
Let me find in Thy employ
Peace that dearer is than joy;
Out of self to love be led
And to heaven acclimated,
Until all things sweet and good
Seem my natural habitude.

—WHITTIER

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