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The Jarvis Street Pulpit The Prince of Preachers

A Sermon by the Pastor, Dr. H. C. Slade

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, November 24th, 1957

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(Electrically Recorded)

"Never man spake like this man."—John 7:46.

FROM eternity the Lord Jesus Christ was designated to be the great and visible agent of the Godhead in all things pertaining to this present world. In other words, He was designated to be the mediator between God and man. Therefore, all things done in earth by heaven are done through God the Son. That makes all human beings of all ages from Adam to the last human being who will be born in this world accountable to this one Person: "So then every one of us shall give an account of himself to God." That is to God the Son. "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son." Again, as declared by the Apostle Paul, "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." Hence a heavy responsibility devolves upon every human soul in relation to the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the One who appeared to men on behalf of the Holy Trinity in Old Testament times. Who was that One with whom Adam had fellowship before the fall? Undoubtedly it was with the Son of God Himself. The One whose voice was heard walking in the cool of the day immediately subsequent to the fatal act of disobedience was none other than He who is the second member of the Godhead, Jesus Christ the righteous. When Joshua was preparing his attack on the city of Jericho, it came to pass when he was by Jericho there appeared a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand. As Joshua looked on him, he asked: "Are you for us or for our adversaries?" He said: "Nay, but as Captain of the hosts of the Lord am I now come." Who was that Person? I believe firmly that Joshua was given a manifestation, in His pre-incarnate state of the One spoken of in the Epistle to the Hebrews as the Captain of our salvation.

The king of Babylon, after he had thrown into the burn-

ing fiery furnace three Hebrew children, was amazed because upon them the fire had no effect. And to his further astonishment as he looked into the furnace, instead of seeing three men, he beheld four loose and walking in the midst of the fire. "The form of the fourth," he exclaimed, "is like the Son of God."

Jesus Christ is spoken of, in Colossians one, a passage read in your hearing to-night as "The image of the invisible God," or, as I understand it, He is the manifest presence of the invisible One. In due time when by His incarnation He took upon Himself human nature, the Holy Spirit speaking through the Apostle Paul refers to this stupendous miracle as a mystery of godliness: "God," he said, "was manifest in the flesh."

Paul goes on to tell us in Colossians one that Christ is Creator of all things. "By him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or My friend, without Him was not anything made that was powers: all things were created by him, and for him." made.

He Is Also the Redeemer of Men

Let us read on in Colossians one: "In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins." Does some one listening to my voice to-night say in his heart of hearts, "Sir, I would like to know how to come to God. I would really like to be saved." If that be the case with anyone I rejoice with you, for you can have no higher desire; it is one which has been placed in your heart by the Spirit of God Himself. The way to God is through Christ: "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." Redemption and salvation are in Jesus Christ alone. You can come to God

and you can be saved, if you will only come by way of His cross. Most of us like to hear about heaven. To say that our departed loved ones have gone to glory to be with Christ is, we feel, the highest and best thing we can say about them. If they are there, and if we who are now on earth will some day be there, it will be because we have received Christ as our Saviour. Listen to the Lord Himself speak: "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." Sinner friend, one mediator has been appointed to stand between God and men. Christ will never share His mediatorial office with another, nor will He ever suffer any other to take His place. Hear it, if you will, from the Apostle Peter: "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

As the supreme Head of the body, the church, the Lord Jesus is in all things to have the preeminence: "For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell." Yea, "in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." The apostle adds: "And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power." Oh fellow Christian, let us give Him the preeminence in our esteem, in our trust, in our devotions, and in our affections.

Not only is the Lord Jesus Christ the Creator of the ends of the earth and came into the world in the respective capacities of Saviour and Head of the church, but when He came, He assumed the office of Preacher. Our text affirms that He spoke. The Lord of glory did not visit this world as a mere observer, or to be just a silent listener. Never was it His intention to pass through unnoticed. When He entered His public ministry following His baptism in the River Jordan, and later the temptation in the wilderness, we read: "And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom." "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us in his Son." That is what our text declares. Jesus Christ came on a preaching mission: "Never man spake like this man." Indeed preaching was considered to be one of His functions as Mediator.

THE PREACHING OF CHRIST WAS A NECESSARY MINISTRY.

I submit that the preaching of Jesus Christ was most essential. First of all, in order to fulfil Scripture. He was pre-named THE PROPHET. That is, He was to take on especially the preaching branch of the prophetic office. We know He came also as Priest and King, but in our consideration this evening He appears before us as Prophet. Numerous prophecies are found in the Old Testament Scriptures respecting the Messiah who was to appear in this particular character. In Deuteronomy 18 Moses said: "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken." The Lord said: "And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him." On the Mount of Transfiguration the Father declares Jesus to be that Person when He speaks from heaven saying: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." Around the time our Lord appeared, the arrival of this Prophet was expected. The question put to John the Baptist while he exercised his tremendously influential ministry, clearly indicates high anticipation on the part of the Jewish leaders. "Who art thou?" they eagerly asked. "Art thou Elias? Art thou that prophet?" And he answered:

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"No, I am not the Christ. I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias." You will recall that when the Lord Jesus Christ came He was recognized as THE PROPHET. Turn in your Bibles to John 6. After he had performed the miracle of feeding the five thousand, we read: "This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world." A short while after when He had finished the eloquent discourse recorded in the seventh chapter of John, many of the people present said: "Of a truth, this is that Prophet." There was one prophecy respecting the preaching ministry of the Messiah which the Lord did apply to Himself. In the synagogue at Nazareth He read for the Scripture lesson that passage found in Isaiah Chapter 61: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." Following the reading He closed the Book, gave it again to the minister, and sat down. With every eye in the synagogue fixed upon Him He said: "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears." Since it was written concerning Him that He was to come into the world as the preaching Prophet, it was indispensable that He should come to fulfil the Scripture.

IT WAS ALSO NECESSARY FOR OUR LORD TO PREACH IN ORDER THAT HE SHOULD GIVE SANCTION TO THE DOCTRINES OF THE GOSPEL.

It seems to me even though prophets and apostles preached the gospel, the infidels and hard-hearted unbelievers would have scored a great victory, had not the Lord Himself, who is the Author of the gospel, preached it. The interpretation they would delight to put upon His silence would be consent to their rejection of God's Word. It would have given occasion to the enemy to say: "This

gospel is most certainly not His, neither is it of God. If it were, He would not only have owned it as such, but boldly proclaimed it." How the modernists of our day, who deny nearly every doctrine of the faith, would rejoice to be furnished with an argument of that kind! But, thank God, He did preach the gospel and by so doing gave His imprimatur to the whole body of Christian truth found both in the Old Testament and in the New. His preaching was a sort of sealing of the truth. It demonstrated the fact that this gospel, beyond all shadow of doubt, emanated from God. My friends, this blessed gospel of salvation which we preach is none other than God's gospel, and the Lord Jesus Christ by Himself preaching it owns it as His gospel. This, of course, places a very heavy responsibility upon every person who hears this gospel proclaimed, because it is now proved to be the very gospel of the Son of God. Unbelievers who reject the gospel are now guilty of refusing to hear the Son of God. In open defiance they reject both the message of the Lord and the Lord Himself. "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him?" By this passage from God's Word you can readily see the absolute hopelessness of escape.

The Character of Christ's Preaching Ministry

Our text bears testimony to the unrivalled excellency of the Saviour's preaching: "Never man spake like this man." What a convincing testimony this is! It comes from officers of the Sanhedrin Council. The occasion was the Feast of Tabernacles. Shortly after they had begun to celebrate this Feast at Jerusalem, suddenly the Lord Jesus Christ appeared in their midst. His preaching in the temple — which took place about the middle of the Feast — soon attracted the crowds. The great Preacher did not lack for an audience. The large numbers which assembled from time to time to hear Him greatly troubled the Pharisees. "Behold, the world has gone after Him," they said once in amazement. As they listened to Him, the multitude became divided in their opinion. There was a current in His favour, but not without a contrary one. Some said: "He is a good man." Others said: "Nay, but He deceiveth the people." To the Pharisees this sharp division among the people meant that the day of opportunity had arrived for them to execute their murderous design. So the officers from the Sanhedrin Council are sent to arrest Him. They feel that if they can silence Christ they will be able to arrest the gospel. But these, in turn, fall under the spell of His speech. On their return they are questioned by the Sanhedrin in the words preceding our text: "Why have ye not brought Him?" They have one answer: "We could not. Never man spake like this man." I cannot conceive of a more convincing testimony. These men were servants of the Sanhedrin Council, the Saviour's most bitter enemies. When they were commissioned to seize Him for trial they were under the strongest of motives to take Him. To refuse to carry out such orders could have meant, for them, extreme danger and punishment. What do all these facts teach us? Simply this: The preaching of Jesus was so singularly excellent and impressive as to move men to the very depths. So much so as to induce these Jews to allege it as the only reason why they had not performed their official duty. What is the explana-

tion of this tremendous power of speech? Why was our Lord's speech so unrivalled, unparalleled in its impressiveness?

I.

ONE EXPLANATION IS FOUND IN OUR LORD'S PERSON

In order to fully explain this incomparable ministry you would have to explain the Lord Jesus Christ. It is personality that gives power and prestige to speech. The weight of any speech depends largely on the particular person who utters it. In the experience of many of you, I am sure, you have listened to someone give very excellent advice. But you were not in the least impressed. You felt no inclination whatever to put into practice the good counsel so freely offered. Why? Because the person speaking lacked either personality or character or probably both. The same applies to the importance of letters. Everything, in this respect, depends upon the one whose signature is affixed. You can only know the secret of Christ's power in speech by knowing Him. He, of course, was the very personification of the truth He spoke. He was the Word: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God . . . And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." He was the Holy One. In fact, He is the only Teacher ever found in this world whose life and character exactly and perfectly corresponded with the instructions. Furthermore, He was the Eternal One. When man listened to Him speak, as these officers did, they were soon made conscious of the fact that they were listening to the voice of the Eternal God, God manifest in the flesh. To Him it was not a thing to be grasped at to be equal with God, for He *was* equal with God. In the light of the revelation of His unquestioned deity, is it correct, my friends, to refer to Him as "the child of His time"? Dr. Donald Soper, the widely advertised evangelist from the Old Land who is, at present, in the city on a speaking mission under the auspices of the United Church of Canada, is reported in last Tuesday's *Globe and Mail*, in referring to Jesus Christ, to have used this designation. This, together with other similar statements he reportedly has made during the past week, brands him, whatever be his titles or educational standing, a blatant heretic. What! a so-called Christian minister speaking of the "Ancient of Days" as a child of His time? My friends, the very majesty with which our Lord's messages were delivered ought to be sufficient to convince anyone that the One speaking was none other than the Lord God Almighty Himself. When He spoke with His voice the thing He ordered was done. He rebuked the boisterous wind. And when He said unto the sea, "Peace be still," there was a great calm. With a loud voice He called into the tomb where the body of Lazarus had lain for four days, saying: "Lazarus, come forth," and he that was dead came forth. To the paralytic He said: "Rise up and walk," and the man who was sick took up his bed and walked.

Dr. Soper goes on further to assert that the knowledge of Jesus was not absolute and that He was sometimes in error, because He thought the earth was flat. About whom is this so-called evangelist talking? Certainly not about the Jesus of the Bible, or the Christ of the truly born again Christian. Why, Jesus Christ is THE OMNISCIENT ONE. The testimony of Peter, when questioned three times concerning his love to the Saviour, is the true one. He said: "Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee." One observing remark of those who heard the Lord was, "He speaks as one with authority, and not as the

Scribes." How true! He always spoke with certainty. There was never any wavering in His voice. Never did He, at any time, make an assertion with a doubt expressed. No question of any kind ever puzzled or perplexed Him. You can be absolutely sure, dear hearer, you have in Jesus Christ an infallible Teacher. He knows all things. When He spoke, He spoke with authority which was His own. For my authority I must declare with all other faithful ministers of the gospel: "Thus saith the Lord." Jesus Christ was able to speak as we humans cannot — in His own name. He prefaced His pronouncements with the words: "Verily, verily I say unto you." Because of the dignity of His person it can be truly said of Him, "Never man so spake." Oh, I might as well be frank. What, I ask, are some of the religious leaders of our day talking about when they reduce our blessed Lord and Saviour to the status of a mere fallible man? Do they know anything about the real Christ of God, I wonder? I fear it cannot be. If they did, they would not make such derogatory statements concerning Him. Surely the great apostasy is with us. In the light of it, what is a faithful servant of Jesus Christ to do? There is only one course for us to take, it is the God-given course, with a holy zeal, to stand firmly in defence of the gospel and earnestly contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints.

II.

It seems that one just gets started on a theme like this and the time is gone. However, suffer me to briefly mention one or two more things. The preaching of Jesus Christ was incomparable because of THE MANNER IN WHICH HE SPOKE. I shall have to ask you to study and think through this aspect of His ministry for yourself. But no one ever spoke so simply as He. The parading of rhetoric is not to be found in any of His discourses. Highly technical terms were never employed. Simple parables are used by Him to illustrate the great truths of His kingdom. Little children delighted to gather around Him; they were interested in what He said because they could understand Him. "The common people heard Him gladly." His was always plainness of speech. Did you ever attend a church where the preacher, after his sermon, left you so utterly confused you were obliged to say to a friend who accompanied you, "Can you tell me what on earth the preacher was talking about?" Do you know why you could not understand him? I do. It was because the preacher himself did not clearly understand what he was talking about. May we, who teach and preach, aim in this to follow His example. Instead of beclouding the gospel when we preach, may God ever help us to illuminate it. It is to be so simply presented that "the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein."

Never man spake so boldly as Christ. This characteristic of His ministry stands out very conspicuously in His attacks on the Scribes and Pharisees. All His strong language was reserved for religious hypocrites. "Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! . . . how can ye escape the damnation of hell? You claim to be children of God but you are, in fact, the children of the devil." That, my friend, is bold talk, and it ought to serve as a stern rebuke to all whose aim it is, in the ministry, to be popular or who in any respect compromise the truth. Think of the love, kindness and sympathy with which our Lord spoke. I shall but cite a few instances. Peter once denied Him and what was our Lord's reaction? He just looked at Peter, that was all. Jerusalem had slain many of the prophets of God. How did He address the guilty people of that city? "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them

which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" Here was a woman taken in adultery. The religious leaders said: "Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou?" He said: "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her." He looked down for a moment and wrote something on the sand. When He looked up He said: "Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee? She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more." Oh, how His great heart of love beamed forth as He preached the gospel to sinners. None ever loved as He loved. It was a love that led Him ultimately to the cross of Calvary and made possible the salvation of our souls.

As for the substance of His preaching He talked about God, His holiness and perfection. He talked about man in his state of sin and the condemnation. But He also declared forgiveness of sins and the offer of eternal life which He freely offered to all who would believe on His name.

Then again, "Never man spake like this man" with respect to the effectiveness of His ministry. Some were astonished. We who have been brought up in the Word of God marvel that such could be the case with any. Yet some are still astonished at His teaching. His ministry, by some, was met with bitter opposition. These were not satisfied until they at last saw Him nailed to the tree. We hope no one here, or in radio land, is possessed with such hatred and hardness of heart. Among His hearers there were many who believed on Him. The numbers in this class grew rapidly. First there were the eleven, which grew to seventy, then we read of five hundred who accepted Him as the only Christ of God. O my friend, will you to-night behold in the man Christ Jesus your Prophet! Behold your King! Behold the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world! Behold the One who spoke as never man spake! Make Him your Saviour and Guide forever.

In closing I give you two samples of His wonderful utterances: "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." "If any man thirst let Him come unto me and drink." Anybody can drink. A baby knows how to drink. Anybody, by the grace of God, can come and believe on His name. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life."

"I heard the voice of Jesus say,
Come unto Me and rest;
Lay down, thou weary one, lay down
Thy head upon My breast:
"I came to Jesus as I was,
Weary, and worn, and sad;
I found in Him a resting-place,
And He has made me glad."

Will you, my friend, wherever you are, travelling on the highway, in your home, or in the church, find your rest in Jesus Christ tonight? We again urge you to come to the One about whom it is said: "Never man spake like this man."

BOOKS WANTED

The Toronto Baptist Seminary Library has been made possible through the generosity of friends in the gifts of books and money. Books are acceptable at all times. We major in theological works but also welcome literature in such departments as English, Church History, Homiletics, Missions, etc.

The Bible Doctrine of Salvation

By Dr. C. D. Cole

Dean Emeritus of Toronto Baptist Seminary

II. THE GOSPEL — WHAT IT IS AND WHAT IT DOES

PAUL was called by the Lord to be a foreign missionary, and is known as the Apostle to the Gentiles. As he lay on the ground on the Damascus road, Christ said to him, Get up, for I am sending thee to the Gentiles: "To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me" (Acts 26:18). After his conversion, commission, and baptism, Paul preached Christ in the synagogues of Damascus, proving Jesus to be the very Christ to the discomfiting of the Jews. Because of a plot to kill him, the Apostle goes to Arabia for a season, returning to Damascus, and three years later going to Jerusalem. For the second time, Paul is told that he is to go far hence to the Gentiles; that the people in Jerusalem will not receive his testimony. In obedience to this call, Paul blazes a trail deeper and deeper into heathen territory. He wants to preach the gospel where Christ was not named; so that he might not build upon another man's foundation. In this spirit of a pioneer he wants to go to Rome and then to Spain. He wants converts at Rome as well as among other Gentiles. He is not ashamed to preach the Gospel anywhere, although he knew it would be met with scorn and contempt. However, he did not expect to preach in vain, and so he says, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; . . ."

To understand the audacity of these words we must listen to them with the ears of a Roman. Here was a little insignificant Jew with his head full of notions about another Jew whom the Roman governor had delivered to be crucified in order to satisfy other Jews and keep order in the province. This was what the natural Roman would think about Paul and his message. But Paul knew that he had good news which would bring salvation to every one who would believe it.

I.

What the Gospel Is

We are fortunate to have a direct Scriptural statement of what the gospel is, but for the sake of clarity, and by way of amplification, we shall treat the question both negatively and positively.

NEGATIVELY,

1. *The Bible* is not the gospel. This is entirely too vague and general as a definition of the gospel. The Bible does indeed contain the gospel, but it contains other truths also. All Bible truth is not gospel truth. In the Bible there is truth about law and sin and death and judgment and numerous other things that are not the gospel. One may preach the Bible and nothing but the Bible, and yet never preach the gospel. Many think the Old Testament is the law and the New Testament is the gospel. But the truth is that both law and gospel are found in both Testaments. Some of the finest gospel texts are in the Old Testament, while some of the strongest law texts are in the New Testament. The fifty-third chapter of Isaiah is full of the gospel; from this chapter Philip preached Jesus to the eunuch

and he was saved. Paul and others had only the Old Testament from which to preach the gospel.

The law should be preached, just as all the Bible should be preached. The law, properly preached, will reveal to men that they are sinners and slay their self-righteousness. For this purpose Christ preached the law to the rich young man (Matt. 19:16), and to a certain lawyer (Luke 10:25). By the law is the knowledge of sin. Paul did not know that he was a lost sinner until he saw what the law required (Rom. 7:9). The law tells man what he ought to do; the gospel tells the sinner what Christ has done. The law condemns the best man; the gospel justifies the worst man. The law makes demands; the gospel bestows blessings. The law deals in justice; the gospel deals in mercy. The law belongs to the covenant of works; the gospel belongs to the covenant of grace.

2. *Baptism* is not the gospel. Paul clearly differentiated between baptism and the gospel when he said, "For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel" (1 Cor. 1:17). He reminded the Corinthians of the few he had baptized, and then to the church as a whole he said, "I have begotten you through the gospel" (1 Cor. 4:15).

Baptism and the Lord's Supper are not saving sacraments, but preaching symbols. They do not procure salvation, but proclaim salvation through Christ. They are not saving acts, but contain a saving message in symbol or picture. Baptism does indeed wash away sin symbolically or figuratively; but the blood of Christ washes it away actually. Baptism has its place in the Christian life, but it must not become a substitute for the blood of Christ as an object of faith or trust.

3. *The Church* is not the gospel. Joining the church is not the same as believing the gospel. One should believe the gospel before joining the church.

4. *The new birth* is not the gospel. The new birth is an experience — a work wrought in us; the gospel is the good news of something done for us. The gospel is objective light (2 Cor. 4:4); the new birth gives subjective light so that the gospel can be savingly understood (2 Cor. 4:6; Jno. 3:3). The gospel is the story of what Christ did on the cross; the new birth is what the Holy Spirit does in us when He imparts life to us. Justification is the result of Christ's death for us (Rom. 4:24); regeneration is the effect of the Holy Spirit's work in us. Justification is life imputed; regeneration is life imparted.

5. *Repentance* is not the gospel. Repentance is what the sinner must do to be saved; the gospel is what Christ has already done for our salvation. "Repent ye and believe the gospel." Here repentance and the gospel are differentiated. No man is saved by faith in his repentance; he is saved by faith in the gospel.

6. *Faith* is not the gospel. The gospel is the object of faith. Saving faith is in the gospel. Faith does not save; it is faith in the gospel that saves. We do not have to have a perfect faith to be saved, but there must be a perfect gospel.

POSITIVELY

1. The gospel is good news. The acid-test of a gospel message: is it good news to bad men? The gospel is for sinners; it is the revelation of the righteousness God has provided through Christ for the unrighteous (Rom. 1:17).

2. The gospel is good news about a person, the Lord Jesus Christ, "For there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). Men are not saved by doing this and that, or going here and there; they are saved by coming to the Lord Jesus Christ, who has so graciously said, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (Jno. 6:37b). Salvation is not a matter of geography. There is not a safe spot from the wrath of God anywhere. Salvation is not in bodily flight; it is in heart trust in Him Who is our passover, sacrificed for us.

3. The gospel consists of certain historical facts with a certain and particular theory or explanation of those facts. The facts are given us in 1 Cor. 15:3, 4: "... Christ died for our sins...; was buried, and... rose again..." Or as Paul puts it in Rom. 4:25: "Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification."

The least part of a fact is the visible part of it, and has no meaning without an explanation, and so Paul not only gives the facts but also explains them. The mere fact that Jesus of Nazareth was crucified is no more the gospel than that the two criminals were crucified beside Him. It is the explanation of the facts that makes His death the gospel rather than their deaths. His death was the death of the Christ, the Son of God, and it was for our sins.

Christ, the Son of God, died for our sins. What does that mean? Some claim that it merely means that Christ died on our behalf, but not as our Substitute. They insist that we should have no theory of the atonement, but with a little investigation we find that such people have a theory of the atonement. Let them tell us how Christ could die on our behalf — how His death could save us — unless He died as our Substitute to render satisfaction to Divine justice for our sins. For His death to save us, it must cancel our guilt before the law of God, and how could it cancel our guilt, unless He suffered for the guilt that was ours? He suffered, the Just for the unjust, and how could this be unless He suffered in our room and stead? Christ dying as a martyr for a good cause, or as a mere example of faithfulness unto death, or as a gesture of love to conquer the human heart, would in no sense redeem sinners from the curse of the law. Divine justice calls for Divine punishment, and the only way the sinner can escape judgment is for Christ to bear the punishment due the sinner. Those who deny blood atonement worship a god different to that of the Bible, and practise a religion different to that of the Bible.

II.

What the Gospel Does

In a word, it saves all who trust it. And the gospel to be trusted is what Christ, the Son of God, did in laying down His life for our sins and taking it up again for our justification. Romans one sixteen is usually made to mean that the preaching of the gospel has power to convert sinners, that is, to make believers. But this is not what the verse says. It is the power of God to or for believers. It presupposes a believer. The gospel saves believers, but it has no power to make believers. The preaching of the gospel is the *means* of making believers, for faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. We repeat, that the preaching of the gospel is the necessary means to faith,

for "how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?" If sinners are saved, the gospel must be preached to them as the *means* to faith and resultant salvation. However, there is a difference between *means* to faith and the *power* for faith. The power to make believers is in the effectual call of the Holy Spirit. Paul preached Christ crucified indiscriminately to Jew and Greek. To the natural Jew such a gospel was a stumblingblock, and to the natural Greek it was foolishness; but the *called*, both Jews and Greeks, saw the wisdom and power of God in the plan of salvation through a crucified Christ.

The apostle is not writing about the power of his preaching, but of the power of what he preached. What he preached, Christ crucified, had power to cancel the sin-debt. We sing, "There is power in the blood," by which we mean that the blood of Christ has the power to expiate sin. John says that the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from all sin. That which is shameful and foolish to the masses is the very thing God uses to save sinners. What Christ did in death and resurrection has power to cancel the sin-debt. The gospel was provided by God; it was not a human expedient. God put His Son to death; He laid on Christ our iniquity. We are not saved because men killed Jesus: that was murder. We are saved because He was stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. God sacrificed His own Son for our safety. Amazing and sensational? — yes! But we must remember that sin is terrible in its nature and effects, and nothing but a sensational remedy will avail.

Illustration

Here is a man who has committed murder for which the penalty is death by hanging. The murderer was acting as the tool of another man who, himself, was under sentence of death, with no provision for pardon. But the law allows a substitute for the murderer. The substitute is found and is hanged in the murderer's place out of love for the doomed man. Now the death of the substitute cancels the guilt of the murderer and sets him free. It is the power of the court and also power with the court. The court is satisfied with the death of the substitute and the guilty man goes free. To interpret this parable: man became a sinner against God as a dupe of the devil, who was already a sinner under sentence with no provision for pardon. The Divine law allowed a substitute for the human sinner. The Son of God gladly gave Himself as the sinner's substitute, suffering, the Just for the unjust, that the sinner might not perish in his sins.

III.

Beneficiaries of the Gospel

Paul says, "To every one that believeth." The death of Christ does nobody any good who scorns it and refuses to trust it. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (Jno. 3:36).

A fuller discussion of saving faith must be reserved for a later article, the Lord enabling. However, there is space for a few words here and now. There is so much that passes for faith, that we must be on our guard lest we mistake what saving faith is. Saving faith is something more than the mere assent of the mind to a proposition, however true; it is heart trust in the Lord Jesus Christ. Saving faith is not being satisfied with self; it is being satisfied with what Christ did on the cross for our salvation. One who is once satisfied with Christ will never be satisfied with anything else.

The value of faith depends upon the worth of its object. If I trust an object or a person that cannot or is not willing to save me, then my faith has no value — it is vain faith, however strong. Faith itself may be dangerous, as well as saving. It is safe to trust the Lord Jesus Christ, because He is both willing and able to save. He is able to save because He is alive. No dead person can be a real Saviour; and must not be an object of faith. It is the office of a priest to make sinners right with God. Old Testament priests could not make sinners right with God because of two things; they could not continue as priests, and they did not have saving sacrifices to offer — the blood of bulls and goats could not take away sin. But Christ continues forever, and hath an unchangeable priesthood: "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Heb. 7:25). Here is ground for saving faith, and a challenge to strong faith. *Hallelujah! What a Saviour!*

"HALLELUJAH! Jesus saves me;
Oh, the sweet and precious story!
I will give Him all the glory,
And adore His love to me.

"HALLELUJAH! Jesus hears me;
When in prayer His throne addressing,
While in faith I seek His blessing,
Then His smile revealed I see.

"HALLELUJAH! Jesus leads me;
I will doubt His promise never;
But believing, followed ever
Him Who gave His life for me.

"HALLELUJAH! Jesus keeps me;
In the Rock He safely hides me,
Every comfort He provides me,
Never friend so dear as He."

THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD IN JARVIS STREET

THERE were two fine preaching services in Jarvis Street Church on Sunday, November 24th. The people of God rejoiced in the strong presentation of Scriptural truth by Dr. Slade, two responded to the Gospel invitation, and doubtless conviction was wrought in the hearts of the unsaved. The Lord Jesus Christ was magnified in our midst. Blessing is always the portion of those who obey the Master's injunction and assemble in His house to praise Him.

In the morning Dr. Slade preached an inspiring message on "Christian Zeal and Confidence", taking as his text the word of Nehemiah, "The God of heaven, he will prosper us; therefore we his servants will arise and build" (Neh. 2:20). Whenever and wherever God's people begin to build His church, when they become active in the Lord's work and take their stand on the Lord's side, Sanballat will not be silent, and Tobiah with his bitterness will be present. These things tend to discourage us, which is the desire of the enemy. We are not to let our hearts fail, but rather follow the example of David, who encouraged himself in the Lord. The church will be repaired and the work of the Lord will progress when the people have "a mind to work", as did the children of Israel in Nehemiah's time.

The adversaries use typical methods to obstruct the work of God. As in that day, so now, they use craftiness, cunning and guile. We need to be on our guard, for there are those who would lead us astray, just as the many advisers of Pilgrim attempted to do when he decided to leave the City

of Destruction. The adversaries of Israel used the weapon of ridicule and intimidation: "Even that which they build, if a fox go up, he shall even break down their stone wall" (Neh. 4:3). Nehemiah baffles their every attempt to hinder the work; his policy is "No Surrender", and he stands as an example of firmness and faith. The Apostle Paul said, "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable; always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Cor. 15:58).

Notice the unquenchable zeal of the people: "We will arise and build." After Nehemiah, who was in Babylon, heard of the desolation and ruin of Jerusalem, he returned to the ancient city, inspected it and saw the great need of restoration. Does this not speak to us of the church and the conditions about us? The church to-day is in a condition of decay, decline and disintegration. Jerusalem had no protecting walls; the city offered no safety to anybody. Similarly, the enemy is ruling the human soul, and he tries to keep people in that condition. "The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it" (Isa. 1:5, 6). "They are altogether become filthy" (Psa. 53:3). Have you ever slipped out at night to see the sin and wickedness about us? to see the devil at work? In view of the tremendous need, Nehemiah and the people said, "We will arise and build." Billy Sunday tells the story of the evils of drink. The mother lay in her coffin, and the father was in prison. Four children were left motherless. The oldest child, with leg off at the knee, hobbled up to the coffin, leading the other children, and said to Mr. Sunday, "Daddy wasn't a bad man except when he got drunk. Under the influence of this accursed liquor daddy murdered mother." Billy Sunday vowed that he would fight the liquor traffic as long as the Lord gave him strength.

The character of the work which the children of Israel did in Nehemiah's day is a picture of our task to-day. His was a work of construction, of upbuilding. The Lord has given us a commission to preach the Gospel; His program is a work of regeneration, to call out a people for His name. Nehemiah was encouraged by others to whom he spoke and the people also had a mind to work. The sheep-gate was to be rebuilt, the gate through which the lambs for sacrifice came into the city. We need to preach Christ and Him crucified, for "without shedding of blood is no remission" (Heb. 9:22). We need to turn sinners to the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world. The women, too, had a part; there is a place for them in the Lord's work.

The early apostles could not be silent in the face of conditions: "We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard" (Acts 4:20). We must not be silent; we must bear our testimony for the Lord, and we must not let the work cease. Our encouragement is this: "The God of heaven will prosper us." We have His own word of promise: "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him" ((Psa. 126:6). As we work, He will protect and bless us.

In the evening Dr. Slade gave a fine message concerning Christ, "The Prince of Preachers" (John 7:46). Even His enemies were obliged to testify concerning the excellency of His preaching. The tremendous power of His speech was due to His Personality, to the manner in which He spoke, to the substance of His message and to the effectiveness of His ministry. Truly, "Never man spake like this man."—The sermon is printed in this issue.—O.L.C.

The Sermons of Dr. T. T. Shields

The Powers of Evil May Be Overcome

(Stenographically Reported)

"When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace:
"But when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh
from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils."—Luke 11:21, 22.

THE people who lived in the days when our Lord walked this earth, and in the region in which He ministered, evidently believed, not only in the possibility of demon possession, but believed that they actually witnessed examples of it. Of course, the psychiatrists of our day would explain all that away. A missionary, who had spent a lifetime face to face with heathendom and paganism in its blackest form, said to me once: "Those of us who have been called to minister in regions where the gospel has not been preached find no difficulty whatever in believing the Scriptural doctrine of demon possession."

Our Lord had cast out devils. Even the disciples returned, when He had sent them out, giving them power over unclean spirits, with joy, saying, "Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name." And then skeptics of that day had to explain this phenomenon — the power which Jesus exercised to make evil men good, and, manifestly, to dispossess the evil spirits of the hearts of men. They did not do it as modern skeptics would, by denying the actuality of the demon possession, but they said, "He casteth out devils through Beelzebub the chief of the devils." They recognized the power which Jesus exercised, but attributed it to Satan rather than to God. And it was at that point that our Lord uttered that terrible warning concerning the things which might be forgiven men: "All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men."

Into that I shall not go this morning, but content myself by calling attention to the background of this parable. Our Lord said, "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and a house divided against a house falleth." Then He said: "If I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your sons cast them out? therefore shall they be your judges. But if I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you." Our Lord announced that in His Person, through the medium of His ministry there was made available to men a power adequate to overcome the powers of evil. And then He spoke this parable of the strong man armed, keeping his palace, and holding his goods in peace, unafraid of anyone who should attack him, until there came one who was stronger than he, who overcame him, and took from him his armour wherein he trusted, and divided his spoils.

I.

I want you to look at that picture for a few minutes this morning. You have here a picture of THE EVIL POSSESSION AND DOMINANCE OF A HUMAN LIFE. However you may explain it, the fact that evil is here is beyond dispute. And here it is represented as "a strong man armed", established impregably in his own palace.

Is not that, after all, a picture of the condition of human nature everywhere? First of all, evil is here *personified*. It is not represented as an abstract principle, but as a person, "a strong man armed". There are principles of evil; there are evil influences. Sometimes evil has a material expression, as for instance in alcohol, narcotics of various sorts. And there are evil practices illustrated in the lives of men inviting emulation. But evil in the abstract, though essentially evil, is very much like poison in a bottle. There are potentialities of poison there, but while it so remains it is not dangerous. It is when it becomes personalized, when it finds some personification, when it is embodied in a personality, when it becomes aggressive, and is propagated through some personality: then evil really becomes dangerous.

There are philosophies wrapped up between the covers of a book, the philosophy of a Nietzsche or a Trotski. Oh, who cares anything about that! Or a Carl Marx, for instance! A book! People are not afraid of that. But when these principles become incarnated, walking on two feet, having two hands, and speaking with a human tongue; they let loose the World War and the Russian Revolution. We may not fear governmental troubles as represented by Fascism, or Nazism. But by and by these principles become active in a personality, and while no one cares anything about the principles for which they stand, as a mere abstraction, people have to take cognizance of bad men like Mussolini, Hitler, Stalin, and a good many others.

That is the way evil is propagated. Hence the power of example over precept; hence the importance of young people considering their companionships. It is important that they should be considered. People should be careful of the books they read. But still more important is it that they should be careful to select the right kind of companions with whom they consort. And so, when evil thus becomes regnant in the human life, it becomes a power to be dealt with.

This principle, of course, finds its supreme exemplification in Satan himself. It is rather old-fashioned to believe in the existence of such an one. But if, indeed, one could have persuaded himself of the untruthfulness of such a doctrine, and abandoned belief in a personal devil, surely in our day we should have had to invent another one. How else can you explain the present world situation? I noticed that a political speaker, addressing one of our clubs, speaking of the progress of these things in Europe — and I do not know that he is a religious man — said that a study of the developments of this situation would almost convince one that a Satanic hand was upon it all. And it is! Our Lord said so. There is behind all evil a malignant personality, the adversary of the souls of men, described in this parable as "a strong man armed". And no one can wisely

afford to under-estimate that adversary when he is here described as "a strong man".

I suppose we have all had experience with matters that seemed to us to be comparatively trifling, an error of some sort, an apparently slight deviation from the truth of Scripture. Somebody is guilty, not of a crime, but of a misdemeanor, or perhaps we soften it down a little, and say that he was guilty of an indiscretion, just some slight departure from the strictest principles of righteousness. And we have been disposed to treat the matter as a physician does with regard to a minor ailment, saying, "Oh, well, it is just a little cold. I will give you something that will soon correct that." And the person thought that that little cough was just a little cold, but soon he discovered that what seemed to be a trifling matter, was but the outward symptom of a deadly malady that defied the power of science to correct. And so very often when we do battle with these apparently lesser evils, we find that they are but the advance guard of the army of the "strong man". Such little evils are not to be trifled with; such comparatively slight powers are reinforced by a spirit that is antagonistic to the Word of God itself.

I say, we all have had experience in discovering that evil in any form, anywhere, has behind it a *superhuman strength* that will tax our combative powers to the utmost.

And this evil which has its centre in this malignant personality, is described as "a strong man armed". To-day the majority of our criminals seem to be men of few years, mere youths. Sometimes you may see a photograph of some bandit, insignificant as a man, a physical dwarf, a mere midgit. And as you look at it, you say, "Well, surely no full grown man would be afraid of him!" No; he would not. But if he holds a loaded revolver to your head, that is another thing. Even the most insignificant criminal, the weakest of mortals, if he comes to you armed, becomes a terror, and one to be reckoned with. The devil is not only strong, but he is armed, thoroughly armed in his dealing with men.

How interesting it would be to make an inventory of his weapons! We read this morning about the fiery darts of the wicked. That, perhaps, is sufficiently comprehensive. It is enough to say that almost all human institutions in our day are, in some respects, like unto munition factories, manufacturing arms for the devil. I have already referred this morning to the beer parlours. Yes; and I might refer to a great many other things, to the moving picture theatres, and the dance halls, and the magazines and books of to-day. Oh, how truly this world has become a great arsenal for the devil in which new weapons of warfare are continually being produced for the destruction of the souls of men! Verily, he is a "strong man armed". And he is represented as being *established in his palace*. I doubt not that our Lord, by that figure, intended what Bunyan calls "Mansoul", the human personality, the heart, the soul, the mind, with all its faculties. There is evil resident within, and he "keepeth his palace". The Psalmist said: "I am fearfully and wonderfully made". We are not immodest when we recognize that man stands at the crown and apex of the divine creation, and that when God made man, He said: "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." He endowed us with qualities, with capacities which are divine. This palace of Mansoul was made to be the palace of the King, the dwelling-place of Deity. And oh, how marvellous a house it is when we think of all the faculties of the mind, of all the powers of a human personality! Man, in a sense, is the likeliest thing to God on earth. And yet, instead of be-

ing a divine dwelling-place, this palace has become a citadel of the "strong man armed", the possession of satanic evil. Napoleon said, on one occasion, "The lives of a million men are nothing to me." Ordinary mortals, perhaps, wondered how a human being such as we see in our day could deliberately plan the murder of millions, could deliberately plan to set the world on fire. How do you explain such principles as are the curse of earth to-day? On this principle: that men are yielded to the devil, and that all their powers become the possession of a satanic personality, to be used for his purposes. And when these men are in the grip of the power of evil, the picture is complete: "When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace."

II.

Now let us look at the brighter side of the picture: THE DIVINE METHOD OF THE DISPOSSESSION OF EVIL. How is evil to be dealt with? In the first place, *it can never be placated*. It will never, in the last analysis, yield to moral suasion. It cannot be enticed. There is no use putting a ribbon around the neck of a tiger, and patting it, and calling it "pretty pussy". It is still a tiger. The League of Nations has been trying that for a long time. I am not a prophet, nor the son of a prophet, but I can show you references which I made regarding the League of Nations years ago, predicting exactly what we have to-day. Why? Because anyone who looks at the world through the medium of this Book would recognize that evil is not a thing that can be placated. We have had preachers going abroad in England and here, philosophical pacifists who believe that evil can be dealt with in some other way than the way in which the Scriptures speak of it. But you cannot entice evil, you cannot persuade it, you cannot argue with it at all. You might just as well stop before you begin. No use thinking you are going to overcome evil by making friends with it! We are to "abhor that which is evil". Our only safety is an attitude of antagonism, of opposition, always, to the thing in the abstract, and to the thing that becomes personal. We must recognize evil as an element that is never to be treated by any effort at diplomacy. Our Lord said the only way of dealing with a strong man armed was to overcome him; in other words, a superior power must be brought to bear upon him.

I once heard Dr. Jowett preach in New York, when he was Pastor of the Fifth Avenue Church. I was in New York at the time, and having no Sunday afternoon engagement, I went to hear him preach. And he preached from this text: "My sword shall be bathed in heaven." And in the course of his sermon he referred to Watts' famous picture of Mammon, in which Mammon is represented as a bestial personality, a horrible-looking creature, sitting in a chair that looks like a throne. At his feet lies a beautiful maiden, and he has his ugly foot upon her neck. Jowett described the picture, and said, "How are you going to deal with a thing like that? Are you going to quote poetry to him? Are you going to whisper mere platitudes in his ear? How are you going to deliver that prostrate form from under his murderous heel? There is only one remedy, and that is a sword." And it is true. *Evil will submit only to a superior power.*

And where are we to find this superior power? Evil was not dispossessed by the reconstruction of the palace, by just cleansing it and redecorating it, and making it uncomfortable for his satanic majesty, à la the Oxford Group. That is what Oxford Groupism is, largely, — reconstructionism, the expulsion of evil by powers resident within the

man himself. That is Christian Science in another form — all based on the assumption that by rethinking, and rearranging, and reorganizing life we shall get the mastery of this power that is within. But that is not the gospel. The gospel is this; that that evil that is established within will yield only to superior power from without. You and I need something that we have not got in ourselves. A man can fight evil as much as he likes, but of himself, and in his own strength at last he will go down. He will find that the goods of the strong man armed will still be at peace.

And that is the distinctive thing about the Christian religion. It comes to reinforce us, to give us a power which is not our own, which works for righteousness. You and I need something that by a natural birth we have not got. We need a new nature, and a new power, if we are to be delivered from the evil that is natural to us all.

And that overcoming power is also resident in a Person. Oh, you cannot fight the devil with abstract principles of righteousness. I remember years ago going into a business man's office, and he showed me the code of ethics of the Rotary Club, hanging over his desk. He said, "Read that." I read it. Then he said: "Is not that fine?" — as though the devil would be afraid of the Rotary Club's code of ethics! You set up a code, and say, "I am going to follow that," and the devil grins at your folly. No, no; a man comes to me and tells me of his trouble. What shall I do? Give him a book? Well, there are many good books. Shall I give him The Book? Yes; that is of value. But it is of value only because the Author of the Book still lives. I came upon an article only yesterday which I have not read, I saw only the title of it. It was to the effect that we might have Christianity without Christ. But there can be no Christianity without Christ. Even the Bible would have no value at all, if He were not living. This is the living Word, but it is the Word of the living God.

We are not asked to trust an absentee Saviour. I do not wonder that when the Lord spoke to His disciples of going away, sorrow filled their hearts. They said, "What shall we do?" They had learned to lean upon Him while He had been with them. He said of His disciples: "While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name." And now He is going away. But He said: "Do not be afraid. I will not leave you orphans. I will send Someone, the Comforter, to stand by." We speak of that word "Comforter" and think of comfort in its modern sense. Well, there is all that in the gospel, and there is an infinite tenderness in the touch of God upon our spirits. The idea here is one of strength: "I will send Someone to stand by you."

What did He say about casting out devils? "If I with the finger of God cast out devils" — "the finger of God"! not even the arm of God, not even the clenched fist of Deity.

When I was a boy I was not much of a fighter — I am not now! I never fight unless I have to. But I used to know a good many boys who liked fighting, and they were very proud of their fistic prowess. I have heard a boy say more than once to another boy, putting up his fist: "I could beat you with one hand tied behind my back." Listen: "If I with the finger of God"! At the slightest touch of Deity Satan is disarmed and subdued. There is a stronger than he. How much stronger? I do not know. Were I to call on the mathematicians, and physicists and astronomers, anyone who knows anything about measurements in any way, and say to them, "Measure me the surface of 'stronger than he'," they would be utterly unable to do so. Satan has a terrible power, but I proclaim to you the salvation of One Who is "stronger than he". How much stronger we

do not know, but He is equal to every emergency. And the teaching of Scripture is that He comes to aid you.

There is only one way of expelling evil from the human life, and that is by *receiving the Lord Jesus*, and *receiving the Holy Ghost*. Oh, I have known of men who in great crises have been silenced. Somebody has come to them and said, "Now, you know what I know about you, don't you?" "Yes." "Well the secret will remain with me, if you hold your peace. But do not dare to speak." And the man is dumb. But the One stronger than the armed man knows all about us; He knows all our secrets, the record of the past. But when He comes to us, He comes with a receipted bill. The obligation is all cancelled, our sin blotted out, and He says to the poor sinner, "You need not be afraid of your past. I have taken account of that."

And then *He comes to dwell within us*. The mighty Spirit of God takes from the "strong man armed . . . all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils." And the very tendencies that under the power of evil were making for destruction are turned to good purposes. Saul is an outstanding example, with his zeal, and all his personal qualities which made him such a deadly foe of Christianity, so that when the disciples of Damascus heard of his coming, they trembled. They feared him as a man possessed with a devil. He said of himself, "I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth." When instructed to go to him, Ananias said, "Do not send me to him. I have heard from many of this man." "It is all right," said the "Stronger than he", "I have disarmed him; I have taken the strong man's armour away from him, and divided his spoils. Go and see him. You will be all right." And very soon it was spread abroad everywhere that "he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed." The very qualities of that marvellous personality which were so powerful in the way of evil became instruments in the divine hand for the accomplishment of His purposes.

My dear friends, there is no victory apart from Christ, but there is overcoming power in Him. To receive Him means to receive One Who is stronger than the strong man armed. Will you trust Him? Will you believe in Him? "As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God"; "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." May the Lord help us to believe, for His name's sake, Amen.

Let us pray:

O Lord, in ourselves we are all defeated men and women. There is not a hero among us. There is not a valiant warrior here. We are cowards, every one. The strong man armed has taken full advantage of us, and beaten us to the ground. Our only hope of conquest, of real abiding victory is in Thee. If there are any tempted, troubled, and tried souls here this morning, who have long sought to save themselves, help them to recognize that in the living Saviour, the ever-present power of the Holy Ghost, there is the assurance of victory.

Bless us every one for Thy name's sake, Amen.

September 12, 1937.

CHRISTIAN CALM

Down beneath the surface of the sea there is a part that is never stirred, and the peace of God is that eternal calm which, like the cushion of the sea, lies far too deep down to be reached by any external trouble and disturbance; and he who enters into the presence of God becomes partaker of that undisturbed and undisturbable calm.

—DR. A. T. PIERSON

How Can a Man Be Born?

By MR. JAMES ARMSTRONG
Of Armagh, Northern Ireland

"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."—John 3:3.

THE first sermon that ever George Whitefield preached was on the text, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3). Thirteen souls were saved after hearing that message. During the course of his ministry, Whitefield preached on that same text more than a thousand times. I often wish that modern preachers would take a leaf out of George Whitefield's book and preach more than they do on this all important subject. I have attended a great many meetings, and I can only remember hearing one sermon on this text:

In John 3:2 we read that Nicodemus "came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him." He acknowledged Christ as "from God", and His miracles as Divine. In verse 25 of the previous chapter we are told that Jesus "needed not that any man should testify of man: for he knew what was in man." The Lord Jesus could read the thoughts that Nicodemus was thinking; He knew that he was concerned about the Messiah and the kingdom of God; so He went straight to the point and said, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

What did the Lord Jesus Christ mean when He said, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God"?

I.

Let us look at the *negative* side of this question first.

He did *not* say, "Except a man be EDUCATED, he cannot see the kingdom of God." We are living in an age when great emphasis is being put on education. I have nothing to say against education, for we could all profit with more. But most emphatically I declare that EDUCATION is not REGENERATION! Education may improve a person's head, but it will never change his heart.

A great American preacher once pictured a boy appearing before a Court of Justice for stealing coal. He was found guilty. The preacher fancied the Judge looking very wise over his glasses, and saying, "Now, gentlemen, here is a case for the Educational Authorities." "Well," commented the preacher, "take the boy away, put him through the schools, polish him off at a University and bring him back again. Will he steal coal? Not at all. Why, he will steal the truck, the train and the railway siding into the bargain." It is true that education often makes a man or a woman a hundred times more "the child of hell" than ever they were before. The crime wave that is sweeping Great Britain to-day is not due to the inefficiency of the Police, for they are more efficient than ever they were. It is due, undoubtedly, to the fact that they are dealing to-day, as never before, with educated criminals.

Nicodemus was *the* master of Israel and he knew absolutely nothing about the New Birth (verse 10, Revised Version). You could be educated to the very highest degree, and yet know nothing about Regeneration. On the other

hand, many people who are quite uneducated know everything that it is necessary to know about Regeneration — the New Birth.

The Lord Jesus did *not* say, "Except a man be RELIGIOUS, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Nicodemus was not only a highly educated man, but he was one of the most religious men of his day. He was a Jewish Rabbi. He was the very last thing as far as education and religion were concerned. But RELIGION IS NOT REGENERATION!

When Summerfield, the famous boy preacher, arrived in America, a well-known Doctor of Divinity asked him where he was born.

He replied, "In Dublin and in Liverpool." He meant, of course, that he was born of the flesh in Dublin, and of the Spirit in Liverpool.

"How did that happen?" enquired the D.D.

Summerfield looked at him for a moment and then said, "Art thou a master in Israel and knowest not these things?"

Yes, you can be a fully fledged Doctor of Divinity and yet be totally ignorant of the New Birth.

The word "religion" is only mentioned five times in the New Testament; on four occasions, it is referred to as an evil thing. Religion without regeneration is the Devil's business; for your soul's sake BEWARE of it!

He did *not* say, "Except a man be BAPTIZED, he cannot see the kingdom of God." It is very foolish to think that a few drops of water will turn a sinner into a saint. I was sprinkled as an infant, baptized as an adult, and I have had "holy water" thrown over me again and again; but I am not depending on either infant sprinkling, adult baptism, or "holy water" to take me to Heaven. Whether you were sprinkled as a baby, or baptized as an adult, if you die without having a spiritual birth you will be a LOST SOUL, because the Lord Jesus said, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

Let me add, the Lord did *not* say, "Except a man be CONFIRMED, he cannot see the kingdom of God." I asked a Dublin lady recently if she were a Christian. She said, "Of course I am." When I asked her when she accepted Christ as Saviour, she replied, "I accepted Him at my Confirmation."

Her reply puzzled me, for she looked like a Christian, she acted like a Christian, and she talked like a Christian. She attended a Mission I was conducting on the outskirts of Belfast. I had almost concluded that she was a genuine Christian, when, one night, to my surprise, she came to the Enquiry Room and with a rather troubled face, said, "Mr. Armstrong, I want to have a second birthday, I want to be converted." She confessed to one of the lady workers in the Church that all along she had confused Confirmation and Conversion. She was soundly saved that night, and is now living for Christ in New Zealand.

The Lord Jesus Christ did not mention anything to Nicodemus about Education, Religion, Infant Sprinkling,

Adult Baptism, Holy Water or Confirmation. He said, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

II.

Now for the *positive* side of the question. What did the Saviour mean when He repeatedly and emphatically declared, "YE MUST BE BORN AGAIN!"?

The fact that the Lord Jesus Christ used the word "BORN" indicates conclusively to me that there must be a similarity between the natural birth and the spiritual birth. He never spake an idle word. When He used the word "born" He certainly had a reason for doing so.

I am going to suggest to you that there are some very striking similarities between the state of an UNBORN BABE and an UNSAVED man or woman.

What do we know about an unborn babe?

1. *In a sense an unborn child has life, yet in another sense it has not life — it has no independent life.* The Law of the Realm considers that a baby is not alive until it is born. The same can be said about an unsaved person; in a sense they have life — natural life, but they have no spiritual life; they are said to be "dead in trespasses and sins" (Ephesians 2:1, 5). They need to be born, quickened, made alive by the Spirit of God.

2. *An unborn child is in darkness.* This is true of the unconverted. In John 3:19 they are said to love the "darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil." In Colossians 1:13 Christians are said to have been "delivered from the power of darkness," and in 1 Peter 2:9 they are exhorted to "shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light." So the unsaved are in darkness, they love the darkness, and they need to be delivered from its power by the One Who said, "I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

3. *A child unborn has eyes, but it cannot see; it has ears, but it cannot hear; it has a tongue, but it cannot speak.* So it is with the unregenerate. They have eyes, but they are spiritually blind; they have ears, but they are spiritually deaf, they cannot hear the voice of God; they have a tongue, but they are spiritually dumb, they cannot use it to praise God.

4. *An unborn babe has a mind, but it cannot understand.* That is true of the unsaved: "There is none that understandeth" (Romans 3:11).

One evening, after a Mission service in County Down, a University student waited behind for a conversation. I asked him his trouble. He said, "There were things you said during the meeting that perplex me." He went on to say that there were many things about the Bible and about the Christian life that he could not understand.

I said, "Tell me, have you been 'born again'?"

He replied, "No. I don't know anything about that."

I said, "What did you know about this world six months before you were born?"

He looked surprised, and answered, "Nothing!"

"What did you know about it six hours before you were born?"

"Nothing."

"Well," I continued, "don't you see, it is the very same in the spiritual realm, you cannot possibly know anything about the Bible, the Christian life, or spiritual things until you are born of the Spirit. Then I referred him to this

verse, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Corinthians 2:14).

As a baby can know nothing of the physical world before it is born, so the unsaved can know nothing of the spiritual world, or of spiritual things until they become children of God by the New Birth. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I say unto thee, *Ye must be born again!*"

5. *An unborn child has feet, but it cannot walk; it has hands, but it cannot use them.* The unconverted have feet, but they cannot walk with God; they have hands, but they cannot work for God.

Unconverted people amuse us when they tell me about doing church work. Did you ever hear of a child running messages for its father before it was born? No! Neither can the unsaved run messages for the Heavenly Father before they become members of His family by a spiritual birth.

6. *A baby is born through suffering.*

In order to give physical life, a mother has to go down to the Valley of Death. In order to give spiritual life, Jesus Christ had to go through the Valley of Death. He referred to this in John 3:14: "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up. When the Israelites were dying in the wilderness after being bitten of the fiery serpents, Moses was instructed to spike a brazen serpent to a pole, and raise it up in the Camp of Israel; and those who looked in faith to that serpent were healed. Jesus said, "In like manner I must be spiked to a pole and lifted up, and whosoever believeth in Me shall not perish, but have eternal life" (John 3:14, 15).

Yes, praise God, Jesus Christ by His death and resurrection conquered death, and sin, and hell, so, that we, fallen sons of Adam's race, might have spiritual life.

7. *How do we become children of God? How are we "born again"?* On our part, it is a matter of receiving Jesus Christ as Saviour. On God's part, it is a matter of imparting Divine Life.

Years ago, while in conversation with a friend on the streets of Armagh City, I realized that I was a sinner and that I needed to be saved. When he asked me if I would accept Christ as my Saviour, with all my heart I said, "I will!" and

"As soon as my all I rested
Upon the atoning blood;
The Holy Spirit entered
And I was born of God."

Here is my "Second Birth Certificate." Remember it is the Word of God: "As many as received him, to them gave he the power to become the children of God, even to them that believe on his name: *which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God*" (John 1:12, 13).

We become children of God, we are born of God, the moment we receive the Lord Jesus Christ to be our personal Saviour.

Friend, have you received Him? If you haven't, you are not a child of God, your sins are not forgiven, and if you die in the condition in which you are, you will find yourself in a LOST ETERNITY! "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

III.

What Do We Know About a New-Born Baby?

1. *If it is alive, it cries.* The first part of the body it uses is the vocal organs. It is the same with a new-born babe in Christ. I have dealt with hundreds of anxious souls. After they receive Christ as Saviour, I usually read a few appropriate verses of Scripture; and then I ask,

"Are you saved?"

In nine cases out of ten, the unhesitating reply is: "I am."

"How do you make that out?"

"Well, I have received Jesus Christ as my Saviour, and God's Word says I am His child."

Romans 10:10 reads, "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

2. *A new-born baby is washed.* The moment the sinner receives Christ as Saviour he is washed in the "soul-cleansing blood of the Lamb," and is made whiter than snow.

3. *After the baby is washed, it is dressed.* O the trouble women go to, in order to have a beautiful little garment ready for the new baby! When the sinner is born of God, through receiving Christ, he is not only washed white in the blood of the Lamb, but is dressed in what is known as the garment of Christ's Righteousness. What a wonderful garment it is! The Holiness of God can find no flaw in it; it is the only garment that will fit us for God's presence. It, and it alone will gain us admittance into the Heavenly Home (Romans 3:22; Philippians 3:9).

4. *A new-born babe has NO PAST.* Some of you are troubled about the past. It haunts you; you would be rid of it, if you could. Listen! If you receive Christ now as Saviour, you can leave this place a new-born babe in His family, assured of the fact that your past has been blotted out. This will be the beginning of days for you. With the past forgiven and forgotten, you will have nothing to be concerned about but the glorious future that lies before you.

5. *A baby needs milk, and has a real appetite for it.* In 1 Peter 2:2 we read; "As new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby." I tried repeatedly to read the Word of God in my unconverted days; but as often as I tried I failed. I could never make anything out of all the disjointed stories and parables; the more I read, the more puzzled and perplexed I became. But after I accepted Christ as my Saviour, the Bible became a new Book to me. Every time I pondered over its pages, I received light, and life, and comfort. I found that I had a real appetite for it. Now I find that I cannot live without it. Sometimes I find myself out of sorts, and things seem to go all wrong. Then I suddenly remember that I have neglected to feast my soul upon the sincere milk of the Word of God. "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:4). "Desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby" (1 Peter 2:2).

6. When a new baby arrives, there is one question that is asked, perhaps more than any other — "Who is it like?" There is nearly always a likeness to the parents. If you are genuinely born of God to-night, and you do not tell your friends about it, before long they will ask, "Have you become a Christian?" What will prompt that question? Ah, they will see a likeness to the One who begat you, they will see a likeness to Jesus Christ in everything you do and say.

IV.

In closing, let me say that there is only one way into an earthly family, and that is by natural birth; and there is only one way into the Heavenly Family, and that is by spiritual birth. God's Incarnate Son said, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he CANNOT see the kingdom of God." Unless you are born of the Spirit, by accepting Jesus Christ as your Saviour, the golden streets of Heaven you will never see. All you have to do, *to be saved*, is to acknowledge that you are a sinner and receive Christ as Saviour. All you have to do, *to be lost*, is just — nothing; only keep on neglecting God's salvation, in the Person of His Son, and I can guarantee, on the authority of the Book of God, that the moment you close your eyes in death you will be a LOST SOUL! Not because you were a great sinner, but because, in time, you neglected the only way into God's family — the New Birth!

"Marvel not that I say unto thee, *ye must be born again.*"

"A ruler once came to Jesus by night,
To ask Him the way of salvation and life;
The Master made answer, in words true and plain
"Ye must be born again!"

"Ye children of men, attend to the Word
So solemnly uttered by Jesus the Lord;
And let not this message to you be in vain —
"Ye must be born again!"

(By kind permission of the author the above fine sermon has been reproduced from a tract distributed by the Drummond Tract Depot, Stirling, Scotland. Copies may be obtained by writing the Drummond Tract Depot.)

MR. JAMES ARMSTRONG

Mr. James Armstrong of Belfast, North Ireland, whose ministry was such a blessing in Jarvis Street Church, November 3-17, is presently conducting an evangelistic mission in Tilbury. From there he and Mrs. Armstrong travel to Lanark, in Eastern Ontario, and then to Detroit, Michigan. Let us continue to pray for our friends as they seek to turn men and women to the Lord.

"REPROVE, REBUKE, EXHORT"

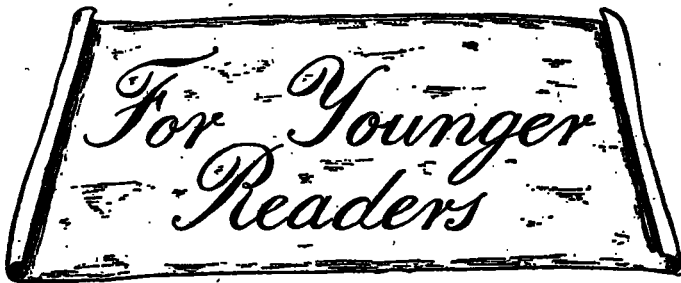
Dr. H. C. Slade's sermon, entitled, "The Prince of Preachers", appearing in this issue deals with the blasphemous infidelity of Dr. D. Soper, missionary of the United Church of Canada, presently holding meetings in Toronto. Will you help us give this issue wide circulation? People need to be warned and awakened. Christians must arise and continue to contend for the faith. Send for extra copies to distribute among those who might be influenced by such infidelity.

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THE POLICEMAN'S BRAINWAVE

A London policeman is a hard nut to crack, and silly indeed is the fellow who tries to make a fool of the man in blue. One of the finest Christian gentlemen I ever knew was the late Frederick Dawes, who served twenty-five years in the London police force. When this great-hearted man retired, he decided to accompany the Pilgrim Preachers on their annual tours throughout the British Isles; and on innumerable occasions I marvelled as he preached the Gospel from our open-air platform. The most memorable story ever told me by this gracious officer of the law concerned a little child lost in London.

The child was only a toddler, but, like many others, he had developed a love for wandering. It was true that he had only gone round a few corners, but at his time of life that represented a journey to the end of the world! The strange buildings, the hurrying people, the increasing noise frightened the boy; and suddenly sitting on the curb stone, he placed his grubby hands to his eyes, and yelled! When people paused to ask the cause of his discomfort, the urchin screamed, "I'm lost, I'm lost, I'm lost." A kindly lady asked his name, and was told, "I'm Tommy, and I'm lost." The onlookers were at a loss what to do, when a policeman strolled toward the scene. His gruff voice asked, "What's wrong?" and immediately someone supplied the information that the little boy was lost. The man-in-blue said, "Out of the way," and instantly the crowd separated. When the policeman looked at the boy and asked, "Son, what's your name?" the lad raised his tear-stained face and answered, "I'm Tommy, and I'm lost, I'm lost." "Where do you live?" asked the policeman, and again the boy replied, "I don't know; I'm Tommy, and I'm lost."

The fatherly officer grasped the boy's hand, and in a soothing whisper said, "Come with me, my lad." The people began to disperse, but some lingered, for this was a fascinating sight. The towering policeman and the diminutive child were strange companions; they seemed like old friends. Slowly the officer of the law led the boy to a monument in a nearby street, and as they stood before it he asked, "Son, did you ever see anything like that?" The whimpering boy removed a fist from his eye, and staring before him replied, "Mmm. But not like that." Pulling his other hand from the grasp of his big friend, he spread wide his arms and repeated, "Not like that, but a cross." A delightful grin spread across the face of the listening policeman. He knew every monument for miles around, and remembered that only two streets away a huge cross stood outside the door of a church. Taking a new grip of the boy's hand, he said, "Come on," and they went off together. Soon the officer was pointing to the large crucifix and enquiring, "Is that it, my boy?" The youngster beamed and shouted, "Yes; I live over there," and his little hand indicated a home across the street.

I remember Frederick Dawes telling his story. At its conclusion he said, "Men and women, you may be lost amid the highways of sin. You may not know what to do or where to turn; but I assure you that if you find your way to the Cross, (not to a crucifix, but to Christ, who died on the Cross. Ed.) everything will be all right afterwards. Reach the Cross, and your Father's home will be just across the street."

"I must needs go home by the way of the Cross
There's no other way but this:
I shall ne'er get sight of the gates of light,
If the way of the Cross I miss.

"The way of the Cross leads home,
The way of the Cross leads home,
It is sweet to know, as I onward go,
The way of the Cross leads home."

—Ivor Powell in *Bible Windows* —

A Michigan Pastor Writes...

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Bible School Lesson Outline

Volume 21 Fourth Quarter Lesson 10 December 8, 1957

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

READING THE LAW

Golden Text: "So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading."—Nehemiah 8:8.

I. The Holy Exercise: verses 1-8.

A good leader is a gift from God. Nehemiah's personal experience of God's providential dealings (Neh. 1, 2), his unflinching courage and trust in God, combined with practical good sense, inspired the people to complete the rebuilding of the walls in 52 days, in spite of intense opposition (Neh. 6:15). Even his enemies were compelled to admit that the work was of God (Neh. 6:16; Prov. 16:7; 1 Pet. 2:12), and if his enemies acknowledged the Divine hand, so also did his friends and followers.

Thus, having seen the hand of the Lord laid bare in their midst (Psa. 126:2; Luke 1:49), the Jews requested to hear the Word of the Lord (Luke 5:1; Acts 13:7). In these days it is rare to see people with keen appetites for the commands of God (Amos 8:11). Men seek for pleasure and amusement, rather than for the will and Word of God (Psa. 1:2; 2 Tim. 3:1-5). These Jews, however, gathered as one man in one place (Acts 13:44), united in their common desire to know what God had said and what He would say to His people (Psa. 85:8; Habb. 2:1; Acts 10:33). How readily Nehemiah would accede to their request!

Desires and resolutions, be they ever so noble, will do no good, unless put into practice; it is deeds, not words, that count in eternal matters (Jas. 2:2). These Jews were in attendance where the Word of the Lord was to be proclaimed. They did not forsake the assembling of themselves together (Acts 2:42; Heb. 10:25), but came one and all to the appointed place of meeting, all who could hear with understanding.

We must take heed what we hear (Mark 4:24), and how we hear (Luke 8:18). It is one thing to be present in a service, but quite another to be attentive to the Word (Matt. 13:13-15; Acts 16:14; 20:7-9; Heb. 4:1, 2). The human mind is a great vagrant; we must learn to keep it at home (2 Cor. 10:5). One may hear the words and sounds with the outward ear, yet not really hear the truth, or heed it. In the parable of the sower, the superficial hearer apparently hears the word, but only the one whose heart has been Divinely prepared welcomes and embraces the truth (Matt. 13:19-23). We are to receive the truth in the love of it (2 Thess. 2:10).

The audience stood in reverence as the Word of God was read. We need more reverence in the house of God in these days. The index of the one who listens to the message of God is an index of his attitude to God Himself. As Ezra the scribe, Nehemiah and their associates blessed and praised God before the reading, the people bowed in humble, reverent worship.

So much for the audience. Notice the actions and attitude of the leaders. Ezra stood in a conspicuous place, that all might hear the message. In other words, he made every provision to satisfy the spiritual desires of the people. Again, he was not alone, but was accompanied by trusted leaders and teachers. Fellowship in the ministry of the Word is of great value (1 Kings 19:14, 18; 1 John 1:3).

Ezra opened the book of the law in the sight of all the people (Luke 4:16, 17). This was a testimony in itself. He did not open a book of essays, a commentary, a Teacher's Quarterly, or a book of poetry, history or biography, but he opened the Book of God. We are commanded to preach the Word and to teach it (Acts 4:31; 16:32; 2 Tim. 2:2; 4:2; Heb. 13:7). Other books have their place, but the Book of books must be supreme.

Ezra read the law distinctly, clearly, emphatically. A man, when asked about his conversion, said that he was saved while listening to a man of God reading 1 Kings 17:1: "And Elijah the Tishbite . . . said unto Ahab, As the Lord God liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these-years, but according to my word." Said the man, "As the minister read that passage, I felt as though I myself were standing in the presence of God, a sinner in the hands

of a holy God." Let us exercise every care to read the Word of God in an appropriate manner.

After the law had been read, it was carefully expounded and explained by Ezra and his associates, who gave the sense and caused the people to understand the reading (2 Chron. 35:3; Luke 24:27, 45; Acts 8:30-35). To expound the Word of God is our glorious task in church and Bible School, to translate the letter of the law into living truth, to take the syllables written on paper and so enforce and apply them, that they are impressed upon heart and conscience of the hearers (2 Cor. 3:3, 6). As a musician transforms notes on a printed page of music into glorious harmony, so are we to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour, making the truth real and beautiful to others (Tit. 2:10).

II. The Happy Results: verses 9-13.

The Word of God is living and powerful (Heb. 4:12); it is a hammer which breaks things into pieces (Jer. 23:29). Spoken in the power of the Holy Spirit, it brings conviction of sin (Acts 2:37; 1 Thess. 1:5; 2:13; 2 Thess. 3:1; 1 Pet. 1:23). The audience shed tears of repentance, as they realized how far short of the will of God they had come (2 Tim. 3:14-17). These were indeed holy tears (2 Cor. 7:10).

Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning (Psa. 30:5). The sorrow of the repentant Israelites was changed into the joy of faith and hope (Rom. 10:17). The Word of God is described as a two-edged sword (Eph. 6:17; Heb. 4:12). With one edge it wounds, as it were, but with the other it heals. It is like the surgeon's scalpel, causing first bleeding, then blessing. When we allow the holy Word of God to do its intended work, and do not shrink from the pain of conviction, it will ultimately strengthen the soul.

The members of this congregation would not be satisfied with scanty fare. Having partaken of the bread of life the first day, they returned the second day for more spiritual food (Luke 4:4). Ordinarily, Christians do not remain in the house of God with the Word of God long enough to receive the blessing which accompanies such healthy exercises of the soul. The Bible creates an appetite for itself, and the more we read it, the greater will become our longing to read it and to study its holy pages (Jer. 15:16; Rev. 1:3).

Daily Bible Readings

Dec. 2—Reading the Law for Conviction	Jas. 2
Dec. 3—For Salvation	Rom. 10:1-17
Dec. 4—For Sanctification	John 17:1-9
Dec. 5—For Guidance	Psa. 119:105-112
Dec. 6—For Food	Deut. 8
Dec. 7—For Service	Neh. 10:28-39
Dec. 8—For Instruction	2 Tim. 3

Suggested Hymns

More about Jesus would I know.
The Spirit breathes upon the Word.
Break Thou the bread of life.
Sing them over again to me.
Lord, I have made Thy Word my choice.
Father of mercies! in Thy Word.

O SPIRIT OF THE LIVING GOD

O Spirit of the living God

In all Thy plenitude of grace,
Where'er the foot of man hath trod,
Descend on our apostate race.

Give tongues of fire and hearts of love,
To preach the reconciling word;
Give power and unction from above,
Where'er the joyful sound is heard.

O Spirit of the Lord, prepare

All the round earth her God to meet;
Breathe Thou abroad like morning air,
Till hearts of stone begin to beat.

—JAMES MONTGOMERY.

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