

The Canadian Evangelist.

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"GO . . . SPEAK . . . TO THE PEOPLE ALL THE WORDS OF THIS LIFE."

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THE Canadian Evangelist

is devoted to the furtherance of the Gospel of Christ; and pleads for the union of all believers in the Lord Jesus in harmony with his own prayer recorded in the seventeenth chapter of John, and on the basis set forth by the Apostle Paul in the following terms: "I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beseech you to walk worthily of the calling wherewith ye were called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long suffering, forbearing one another in love; giving diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, even as also ye were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all."—Eph. iv. 1-6.

The Order of Confirmation.

To the Editor of THE CANADIAN EVANGELIST:
DEAR SIR,—My friend Mr. Sheppard has asked a question in such a way, in his last communication, as to suggest that I should answer it clearly, which with your kind permission I will proceed to do: "Can a bishop of the Episcopal church impart the Holy Ghost (or spiritual gifts) by the laying on of hands, as Peter and John did at Samaria, or Paul at Ephesus?" My answer is: A bishop can do exactly what the Apostles did, and no more or less. As the bishop can and does lay his hands on the candidate with prayer, NO MAN ever could or can impart the Holy Spirit or His gifts; that is the office of God only, and has always been—the very action "the laying on of hands" is significant. The hands uplifted in prayer, and then laid on the head, suggest a calling down of the Gift from God. Our Lord alone "breathed" out from His Divine Person the glorious Gift He alone "imparts." The Apostles were MEN, and therefore laid on their hands, and what they did our bishops have done from the days of the Apostles down to the present moment. With the Lord Almighty rests and has ALWAYS rested the bestowal of the Gifts, and the mode and time of their manifestation. I am just as concerned to vindicate the Divine honour in regard to the Apostles as to our present bishops. The early church rightly esteemed "old things" to have become "new." For them within the kingdom of grace every ability, excellence and utility, even of ordinary life, were aglow with new life, and came from the Holy Spirit. What the world would esteem natural they believed supernatural. Examine the Apostolic list of the *Charismata* (or gifts) and this is clear. What we require is to return to the primitive, Apostolic stand point, which is the acknowledgment of a great truth. Within the kingdom of grace every gift is referred to its proper source; it is the kingdom within which the natural becomes the supernatural. The laying on of hands should be viewed in this light. I am still of the same opinion as to the meaning of the word "nations" in the great commission. This word with the article as in St. Matthew occurs one hundred and

thirty-two times in the New Testament. It is translated "Gentiles" ninety-two times; "the nations" ten times; "the heathen" five times, and "nations" twenty-five times, and in every place it means just what I said, viz: the heathen world outside Judaism. "To bear my name before Gentiles and Kings and the sons of Israel" (Acts ix. 15). "Seeing that ye (Jews) thrust it (the Gospel) from you, . . . to I we turn to the Gentiles" (Acts xiii. 46) etc., etc. (See New Testament.) The proclamation of the Gospel to the Jews was clearly the duty of the Apostles; this was clear from our Lord's life; but what was by no means clear—to go forth to the heathens—was made so by the great commission. For the Apostolic age, the Word consisted of three distinct classes. "Give none offence neither to the Jews, nor the Gentiles, nor to the Church of God" This distinction runs through the whole New Testament. A Jew, entering the church by accepting Christ as the Divine Messiah, was baptized (so the New Testament says) in the name of the "Lord Jesus." A scholar quite the equal of Alford, viz, Dean Plumptre (among many others), differs from Mr. Sheppard in thinking the writer of the "Acts" meant what he said. A heathen out of all covenant with the Triune God was baptized in the name of the Trinity in accordance with the great commission.

Now we have no direct command as regards the baptism (either as infant or adult) of the children of believing parents, those whom St. Paul says are "holy" (see 1 Cor. vii. 14); they are fruit not of Jews or heathens, but of members of the kingdom of grace, and therefore "holy." St. Paul asserts the same principle as the chief point in his argument for the restoration of the Jews. For if the first-fruits be holy, the lump is also holy, and if the root be holy, so are the branches." (Romans xi. 16.) The Gospel a body of new truth is presented to a heathen; he lets go his old religion and accepts the new and is baptized. Christianity is presented to the Jew; he accepts it; in his case it is an addition to his former faith; he receives Christ as the Divine Messiah.

Neither of these things can happen to one brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, within the Christian religion, and an open New Testament before him. Even by a natural birth he is born within the privileges of the kingdom; holy fruit of holy tree, he is baptized. He may fall, and repent, and be converted, but he cannot have Christianity presented to him as something he has never known and felt, as a foreign element into which he may be born again. In the New Testament "believer's baptism" is the initiation of Pagans or Jews into the Christian church, but the baptism of a young person who has been carefully brought up in the religion of our Lord, and who can never remember a time when he consciously disbelieved in Christ is quite a different matter.

Infant baptism is the acknowledgment of a fact, viz, that the Christianity is the hereditary religion of vast

communities of the human race. This principle is asserted as plainly as words can express it by St. Paul in Romans xi., and again in 1 Cor. vii. 14. The personal element in religion is an element of vast undying importance, but yet it must accommodate itself to this other principle of federal holiness, or it will be untrue to the New Testament. Yours truly,

W. BRVAN.

Let Him That Hearth Say Come.

REV. XXII. 17.

Peter says "Christ suffered for sins that He might bring us unto God." Man was, and still is, at a vast and dreary distance from God. In the Roman letter we have a photo of man in his exceeding sinfulness. It is not very inviting; look at it: "Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity, whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, despisers, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful." Of the few to whom were "committed the oracles of God," he says, "their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips, whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness; their feet are swift to shed blood; destruction and misery are in their ways, and their way of peace have they not known. There is no fear of God before their eyes." This, of course, is a quotation by the Apostle—but quoted because it is a marble-cut, steel-faced photograph of man steeped in sin. I am glad it is written "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish but have eternal life." "He came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance." The restoration of man was the burden of the mission of the Man of sorrows. It was the secret of His life from Bethlehem and Calvary. About some points there are differences and debates; but with reference to the primary object of the atonement and sacrifice of Christ, in order to rescue man from perishing, there can be no question—it is a point in theology upon which all agree. Christ came to "lift the burden of guilt from human hearts." He came to open up a pathway along which weary, wandering feet might walk in safety. He came to rescue man and to bring him into sweet relationship with God that he might be made partaker of the divine nature and thus be brought into correspondence with God and with Jesus Christ His Son whom to know is life eternal. "That he that heareth might say 'come,' and that he that is athirst might come and that whosoever will might come and take of the waters of life freely. The terrible fact that man, by the perverseness of his will, had so completely alienated himself from God that he must inevitably perish, hung like an ominous cloud over the head of Him who alone had the power to redeem; it swept over His otherwise peaceful

mind like a mighty devastating sea until beneath the bloody sweat in the garden He exclaimed: "Let this cup pass from Me, nevertheless not as I will but as Thou wilt." Jesus saw that unless He drank the bitter cup man could not escape the terrible judgment. His pitying eye surveyed the circuit of dying humanity—the rich, the poor, kings and peasants alike were thronging the downward road, yea crowding each other over the fearful precipice into the yawning gulf of God's eternal wrath. And He said "Lo I come, as it is written in the volume of the book, to do thy will, O God." The proposition is accepted and a voice from the Bosom of Eternity exclaims "This is My Son, hear Him." Return, O I wanderer, return. The weary wanderer hears the voice and rising from his guilt sees for the first time his lost condition and cries: "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" "Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God for He will abundantly pardon;" "Come unto Me all you that are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest." Light appears in the darkness; a new era dawns in upon man away from God; Jesus suffers, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God. Man is not lovely, or lovable, yet God loves him graciously—He loves him benevolently—He loves him with all the warmth and ardor of the great infinite heart, and He says come, "and let him that heareth say come." Sometimes in the flights of our poetic imagination we speak of the voice of God in the "murmuring brooks" or in the "softness of the glowing skies" or the beauties of the landscape; and the thunderings of the mighty cataract. And we almost forget that God has spoken to us, in this last age by His Son; Jesus stretches forth His hands and says: "Come, I am the way, the truth and the life; take My yoke upon you and learn of Me." Have you learned of Christ, my dear friend? or are you still away from God? without God and without hope in the world; if you are a Christian it is your duty—a duty you owe to God and to humanity to say come. If you cannot preach the gospel to a dying world, you can give of the abundance that God has given you to assist those who can. The character, method, and spirit of our Lord, in His great undertaking to teach us the most successful way of bringing men to God, is summed up in a few words: "He went about doing good." He did not wait for great occasions. Now, with Him was the accepted time. Hence the conversation with the woman at Jacob's well—and its results, and the talk with that Jewish Rabbi, Nicodemus, on the great question of the new birth, pouring light as a fountain into his soul, by him never to be forgotten. Hence the exhortation of the Apostle: "To do good and to communicate forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." One of the greatest preachers and teachers of the present century said: "If I owe anything to anyone on earth for the little good I have been enabled to do, it is to the example of a young man with whom I roomed kneel-

ing in prayer before retiring for the night." Let your light so shine, said Our Lord, that others seeing your good works may be led to glorify your Father who is in Heaven. It is only through the spirit of Christ actuating us individually, or collectively, to personal application of the great transforming truths and fact of the gospel upon all occasions that we shall be successful in bringing men to the obedience of faith. It requires wisdom coupled with the spirit of Christ to bring men to God. It is wisdom and knowledge combined, mingled with executive force, that enables us to consummate any great scheme. It is this power that constructs the bridges that span the deep gulf below and by which men are able to circumnavigate the mighty seas. It is by this power that every reform, political or religious is pushed forward. And it is wisdom under the constraining love of Christ that fires our zeal for the restoration of humanity. To-day there are about 1,125,000,000 population on the earth—this beautiful world steeped in sin. Of this vast population there are 8,000,000 Jews, 170,000,000 Mahomedans and 856,000,000 Pagans. What are we doing to bring them to God? The Salvation Army, that is so distasteful to many nominal Christians, is doing more to reclaim the fallen than most of our fashionable churches. A certain writer of the present century says: "Most of our churches are like pines—when they begin to grow their branches are low down and the little timid birds may perch in their branches and find shelter and sing their sweet songs—but as they stretch up, year by year, their lower branches fall off until at last their tops are so high that there is only room for the eagles, hawks; and crows. The poor timid groundlings must find shelter elsewhere." General Booth saw this and hence the origin of the Salvation Army. Just a word more. Our people have vindicated their loyalty to primitive Christianity, to reforms, to learning and to missions. Let us, therefore, not be behind in our efforts to bring men to a knowledge of the truth. "You shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." "Let him that heareth say come."

H. BROWN.

Ridgetown, May, 1891.

Christ is still the only true light from whom men can receive their enlightenment.

Love your Bibles. As they are the souvenirs of your earliest childhood, the gift of a mother's love, or the pledge of a father's affection, so let them be your best and fondest treasures, the keepsakes and heirlooms which you are most desirous to transmit to your children's children.

There are souls in the world who have the gift of finding joy everywhere, and of leaving it behind them when they go. Joy gushes from under their fingers like jets of light. Their influence is an inevitable gladdening of the heart. It seems as if a shadow of God's own gift had passed upon them. They give light without meaning to shine. These bright hearts have a great work to do for God.—Faber.