

## Canadian Pulpit.

No. 13.

## Glorying in the Gospel.

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TEXT.—"For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth."

The power of God and the power of Rome are the two powers in the apostle's mind as he writes to the Christians at Rome. Rome was the centre of power. She was mistress of the world; Nero, the tyrant of tyrants, was seated upon the imperial throne. The power of world-wide conquest belonged to Rome, for her eagled legions had been victorious in every land. The power of wealth belonged to Rome. The port of Ostia was crowded with the navies of the world that daily brought the wealth of gold, merchandise, jewels, and precious stuffs to Rome. The power of intellect belonged to Rome. There were the Academicians, the Epicureans, and the Stoics. Seneca now flourished, both tutor and friend of the Emperor. The power of priestcraft belonged to Rome, for still did pagan priests victimize the people with heathen rites and sacrifice. Power there was in the age-long superstitions of the populace, in the corrupt habits of society, voluptuousness, pomp, pleasure, cruelty, games and gladiatorial shows. Rome was full of power; such power as had scarce ever heretofore been known. And all this mighty power of Rome was arrayed against that other power—Christianity. Thus it was that those who dared be followers of the "Christus" were driven to the dens and caves of the earth, if there, perchance, they could escape the iron heel of Roman persecution. "The Christus," said Nero, "who is He?" Who, but a despised Jew whom Pontius Pilate condemned and crucified far off in Palestine! Yet, O Rome! behold in His death a mighty power—a power on which you counted not. It is that power that encourages His most humble follower, even in the midst of fiery persecution, exultingly to cry "Christianus sum." "For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ."

Rome shall decrease but Christ shall increase, till not only from pagan Rome, but also "from every nation and kindred and people and tongue," one grand Doxology shall burst forth—

"All hail the power of Jesus name!  
Let angels prostrate fall!  
Bring forth the royal diadem  
And crown Him lord of all."

Rome has fallen and in her downfall I hear the voices of her atheist Emperor confess—"Thou Galilean, thou hast conquered." Thus did the Gospel of Christ conquer Rome, for it was the power of God.

Here is the secret of the progress and power of Christianity. The Gospel is not the power of man but of God.

## JESUS CHRIST IS DIVINE.

Many novelists of the present day, and others as well, would have us believe otherwise,—that the power of Christianity in the world is due merely to the beautiful story of Christ's life and tragic martyr's death. These would have us believe that while Christ was a good and perfect man, yet he was merely a man. How flimsy and insufficient the argument! Did not Socrates also die a martyr's death, a martyr to truth, yet where is the power of the Socratic teaching as compared with the words of Him who spoke the *Sermon on the Mount*? There is one trenchant point of difference between Christ and every other martyr to truth,—it is that *Christ is Divine*.

Is Christ divine? *Divine*—The Old Testament makes answer holding up to the gaze a portrait of the Messiah before He appeared, so like Him that it was said by those who sought Him "we have found the Messiah which is the Christ." *Divine*—The New Testament replies, "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and our hands have handled of the word of life. That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you." *Divine*—The church of God declares as for nineteen hundred years by her apologists, and councils, and martyrs who has jealously guarded this sacred truth. *Divine*—Science replies, for there is no other explanation of the life of Christ on earth. *Divine*—Common sense replies, for otherwise what is Christian faith but mockery, Christian inspiration an imposture, Christian self-sacrifice vain! *Not Divine*—Then destroy all the churches and cathedrals of Christendom, they indicate a lie. *Not Divine*—Sweep out of existence the paintings of Raphael and Hoffman and Leonardo di Vinci, they perpetuate a lie. *Not Divine*—Then banish to the regions of darkness the sweet strains of Mozart, Beethoven, Handel, and Mendelssohn, their suggestion a base subterfuge. *Not Divine*—Then let the last ray of comforting hope be snatched from the gaze of the dying saint.

The Christian's hope and comfort is gone  
Come darkness, come despair.

It cannot be. The Gospel of Christ is the power of God because Jesus is Divine.

Then read on. Learn what this means. The Gospel of Christ is

the power of God unto salvation. Think of it all this divine power energized for one specific aim—Salvation.

*Salvation*—The one overwhelming necessity of fallen man, for the fall brought mankind into an estate of sin and misery. Here is atonement for sin and reconciliation to God. Here is power to convince men of lives mispent—that they have lived contrary to the very purpose for which they were created. Here is deliverance from the misery of sin, the bondage of sin, the fascination of sin, the practice of sin, the destruction of sin, the death of sin. Instead of being the slaves of every evil desire, you, by the power of God, go free. *Salvation*—The one necessity of the heart, for without this salvation the heart has no enduring peace. It is separated forever from God, the peace and consolation. *Salvation*—The one necessity of the conscience, for without this salvation the conscience is fettered by an eternal chain of remorse. *Salvation*—The one necessity of the mind, for without this salvation the mind has nothing upon which to fix its uncertain speculation; it wanders aimlessly from doubt to doubt. *Salvation*—The one necessity of the soul! In the Gospel of Christ alone is the assurance of life. All other gospels fail. The gospel of art can please the senses and fire the imagination, but can never satisfy the soul. The soul is conscious of sin. Sin must be dealt with. Art speaks of no pardon. This the Divine Christ alone can bring. "There is none other name under Heaven given among men whereby we can be saved." Blessed be the Father, this name is all-sufficient sufficient for every one that believeth.

Heaven is now opened. Hail pardon, purity, and peace streaming forth from the east three gates, the north three gates, the south three gates, the west three gates. "The Spirit and the Bride say come, and let him that heareth say come, and whosoever will let him come and take of the water of life freely."

Immortal man, whosoever you are, this is for you—for you who have broken every good resolution; yes, for you who have even forgotten that solemn vow made to Heaven as you stood around the open grave of your beloved dead. For you in whose ear even now Satan is crying, no pardon, no peace, no heaven.

Believe in Christ. Resist not the Holy Spirit who now would have you declare "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ." Why should you be ashamed? Paul was not. He saw in it the mightiest power in the universe directed towards the most beneficent end. Even the eternal salvation of every one that believeth. Let it but thus appeal to you, transform your will, control your will, consecrate your life, with Paul declare

"I am not ashamed to own my Lord  
Or to defend His cause,  
Maintain the glory of His cross  
And honor all His laws."

"Then will He own His servant's name  
Before His Father's face,  
And in His New Jerusalem  
Appoint my soul a place."

## SHORT SKETCH OF THE PREACHER.

This week's preacher, Rev. J. Archie Morrison, B.A., owes no small debt to the manse for his early training. Deprived by death of a mother's love and influence, he was fortunate in being sent, at an early age, to his uncle's family at Ormstown, Presbytery of Montreal, of which his uncle, Rev. D. W. Morrison, was the pastor. Here he found a home, and inspiration for his studies. After a season spent in the common school, he was sent to Huntingdon Academy, and there prepared for McGill University, reading the classics with his uncle. At the university he was very successful, taking his degree with flying colours. He studied theology at the Presbyterian College, Montreal, afterwards taking a post-graduate course in Edinburgh. While still a student he did excellent mission work in the North-West, in Calgary and Alexander. At the latter place he was largely instrumental in having a church erected.

During his stay in the old country he preached in Edinburgh, Glasgow and London for his kinsman, Rev. Dr. Edmond. Since his settlement at Listowel his work has been prospering very satisfactorily, and being a young minister of energy his future is full of promise.

The old Jewish altar was the centre of the national worship, and as such it was carefully guarded from profanation, both priest and people being equally concerned in its sanctity. The history of the temple altar is the history of the Israelites themselves. Were the altar fires kept brightly burning? Then depend upon it the tide of national piety was at its flood, and all was well with the people. Was the altar broken down and covered with thorns and thistles? Then look for idleness to flourish, the people divided, spiritless and a prey to their enemies. What the altar service was to the Jewish Church of old, that is the pulpit to the Protestant Church of to-day. It focuses all the rays of spiritual light in the congregation, and sends them forth again in living flames of divine power. The pulpit, even more than the prayer-meeting, is the thermometer of the religious life of the Church. There is something about a genuine religious service that transcends intellectual worth and aesthetic culture, which we call spiritual power and unction, which saint and sinner alike recognize and miss when it is absent. A successful religious service is unlike any other kind of meeting; the singing, however excellent, is not for artistic but for devotional purposes, the speaking is never to a muse, often to instruct, and always to edify. Rev. Joseph F. Flint.



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