

# The SCRIPTURE STANDARD

*Pleading for a complete return to Christianity  
as it was in the beginning.*

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## Letters

MANY famous writers of letters have arisen in literary history: Cicero, the Roman orator; Pliny, the Roman Proconsul of Bithynia; Lord Chesterfield, with his "Letters to my son"; the political "Letters of Junius" in the eighteenth century; and other names equally famous, whose letters are still being published, such as Dickens and George III, to name only a few.

Through these letters we know much about the men who wrote them, those to whom they wrote and the time in which they lived. Biographers find them invaluable as original material. Often in the letters the writers reveal themselves as they did not otherwise. They bared their hearts and minds, and indeed their letters often form "confessions" of their innermost thoughts and feelings.

Sometimes letters give deeper insight into times and circumstances than do formal histories. For example, archaeologists and historians are able to piece together social and everyday life of people better through the finding of letters, on clay tablets, brick, papyrus, or parchment, than from the more formal and conventional public and official inscriptions engraved on pillars or columns or monuments in antiquity.

Then again, valuable evidence may be gleaned from letters. Only this week, in the Vassall naval spy case, an attempt has been made to incriminate a former Admiralty official on the ground of his beginning a letter to a subordinate, "My Dear . . ." as though that meant the writer was on closer terms than he should have been with his under-officer. We have read how the official thus accused vowed never again to begin a letter in those terms. I once heard Bro. Crosthwaite tell of a brother in the Lord warning him to be chary of one who begins a letter "My Dear . . ."

### LETTERS IN THE BIBLE

#### The Old Testament

The Bible contains a great deal more of letters and about letters than we might think, even the Old Testament. There seems to have been an official postal system, while secular history reveals that the private businesses had also a postal service between themselves. In Esther 3: 13-15 we read how Ahasuerus, at the instigation of Haman, despatched letters throughout his kingdom containing the decree to annihilate the Jews. In 3: 10-14 of the same book is the record or how, similarly, letters were sent by messengers restoring the liberties and privileges of the Jews. We all know of David's infamous letter to his army general, Joab, to put Uriah in the forefront of the battle, that he might be killed and David take his widow, Bathsheba (2 Sam. 11:14-15); and of Jezebel's wicked instructions to the nobles of Jezreel to get rid of Naboth, that her husband, Ahab, might take his vineyard. Then we have the letter from Benhadad, king of Syria, to Jehoram of Israel, sending Naaman to be healed of his leprosy (2 Kings 5:5-7); and the Assyrian king Sennacherib's boastful and blasphemous letter to the king of Judah, Hezekiah (2 Kings 19: 14). God's letter through Jeremiah (chap. 29) to the Jewish exiles in Babylonia, comes very close in its tenderness, love and passionate appeal to the epistles of the New Testament.



### The New Testament

In Acts we have interesting insights into the practice and purposes of letter-writing. In chap. 9 Paul is furnished with "letters of authority" from the chief priests. The decision, under the Holy Spirit, of the apostles and elders at Jerusalem concerning Gentiles and the law of Moses, was conveyed by letter to various parts of the Gentile world (Acts 15:23-29; 16:4). In the epistles we have letters of recommendation" (2 Cor. 3 : 1; 1 Cor. 16 : 3), and in Rom. 16 : 1 Phoebe is similarly commended to the saints in Rome. Then we have the letters which the glorified Christ commanded to be sent to the churches in Asia (Rev. 2 & 3).

### THE EPISTLES OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

Almost exactly half of the N.T. writings consist of epistles. This is unique among sacred books. Those of Buddhism, Mohammedanism and Confucianism lack any direct or personal address such as we find in the letters of the N.T. for the epistles are letters—written communications, whether personal or official. Of the twenty-seven books in the N.T. at least twenty-one are letters, all written by a spiritually new order of men, like the prophets of the Old Testament.

These letters are full of charm, directness, vitality and power. John's three are full of love; Paul's are to churches, individuals or (like Philemon) intensely personal. Even in his letters to churches Paul is intimate and affectionate, even emotional.

Originally these letters of Paul were to specific assemblies or Christians. Paul had no idea that his letters would be circulated among wider circles than those to whom he wrote. Yet, even in apostolic times, these letters had been widely disseminated, as Peter testifies (2 Peter 3 : 15). And, by the invention of printing, these letters have made their way "to every nation under heaven." This is of God. For, though originally many of these letters were written to deal with local problems and circumstances, principles are laid down which, if acted upon, will resolve whatever besets churches or Christians in all times. Their language is from heart to heart; they deal with eternal issues and reach to the deepest needs of men. They are not merely of historic interest, but are ever new and fresh. They are still the word of God to His people, the apostles' teaching.

### READING THE EPISTLES

We have never appreciated the power and beauty of these letters as we should and must. This is largely due to the way we read them, as, indeed, the whole Bible. Do even Christians read any other book as they do the Bible? Would we dream of dipping into any other book a paragraph at a time, or even a chapter? Reading a book or so, one forgets what has gone before and loses the context. Yet to how many of us are the epistles of the New Testament confined to what is read in our meetings on Lord's Days—a chapter at most? We do not know, often, what has gone before, and have little idea of what follows. We have no general conception of the epistle and what its theme is and what is taught in it.

We would not read a letter from a relative or friend in this way. And it is just as easy, and far more rewarding, to read any New Testament letter in one sitting. Even if we cannot understand the whole, we have a general grasp of its subject. The division of the books of the Bible into chapters and verses has been a great help in many ways. But it can be a hindrance, too. Sometimes a chapter ends just when we should read on. And if we did read on we should discern a meaning which otherwise is hidden from us.

Perhaps our authorised Version, with its divisions into chapters and verses, has ingrained this habit into us. It is recommended, therefore, that for private reading especially, the epistles be read from the Revised Standard Version of the Bible or the New English N.T. I like especially the former. In my view the latter is not to be compared with the R.S.V., except for the epistles, which are vividly rendered. In the N.E.B. you will read what Paul and the others wrote in their letters as though they were addressed to you.

In any case, and in whatever translation, let us read these vital letters. They are necessary to us if we are to be "furnished to every good work" and to "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."



## *"Be Not Unequally Yoked"*

2 Cor. 6 : 14-15

"AND when I heard this thing, I rent my garment and my mantle, and plucked off the hair of my head, and off my beard, and sat down astonished. Then were assembled unto me every one that trembled at the words of the God of Israel, because of the transgressions of those that had been carried away; and I sat astonished until the evening sacrifice."

### THE JEWS' RESPONSIBILITY

These words convey to us a sense of terrible grief and calamity, of unutterable distress and sorrow. Who is this who so writes? What are the dreadful tidings which have been borne to him that such a spirit of desolation should fill his soul? They are the words of Ezra, the prophet of God in the days following the captivity in Babylon (Ezra 9 : 3-4). At the time in which he speaks, the people have returned to the land of Canaan: Jerusalem is again inhabited. The temple has been rebuilt, and the services of the priests restored.

What then is the object of his grief? What national disaster: What devastating destruction has carried away the people of the Old Covenant?

The answer is found in Ezra 9:1-2: "Now when these things were done, the princes came to me, saying, The people of Israel, and the priests, and the Levites, have not separated themselves from the people of the land, doing according to their abominations . . . for they have taken their daughters for themselves and for their sons; so that the holy seed have mingled themselves with the people of these lands: yea, the hand of the princes and rulers hath been chief in this respect."

The children of Israel were forbidden by the Law to enter into any covenant with the heathen, and, in particular, they were not to mingle with them in marriage. "For they will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other gods: so will the anger of the Lord be kindled against you, and destroy thee suddenly." How terrible the personal and general consequences of this sin were is only too evident from the subject matter of the Old Testament. It ate into the vitals of the people individually and collectively; it resulted in endless grief and heartache; it corrupted them morally and spiritually. It led them into idolatry and its attendant evils; it wasted and destroyed them in a series of national disasters, *because* the people were "carried away" by this transgression.

### THE CHRISTIAN'S RESPONSIBILITY

There is a lesson here for the people of the New Covenant (2 Tim. 3:16). We are the people of God by faith in Christ Jesus. As citizens of the Kingdom of God, we are subject to the law of Christ. The apostle Paul says, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?" (2 Cor. 6:14-16). The yoke is that part of the harness which couples the oxen together for the purpose of ploughing. How awkward, how ungainly, how *unequal*, would be the yoking of an ox and an ass! So alas with the marriage of a believer and an unbeliever, for this of all human contracts is a yoke or bond whose essential elements are fellowship, communion and concord. If these are absent, marriage for the Christian is an unequal yoke indeed.

This undesirable bond is said here to be between a "believer" and an "unbeliever." The word "believer" comes from *pistos* which bears the idea of "faithfulness," as in Eph. 1 : 1. "And to the *faithful* in Christ Jesus." Hence this term applies only to the Christian. There is a sense in which one may be said to believe even though he is not a Christian, but this term does not apply here, for the devils believe and tremble (Jas. 2 : 19). This belief is not a matter of faith in Christ. Therein is the essential difference between believing *about* and believing *in*. We read in Acts 2:44 "And all that believed were together, and had all things common." These were the faithful in Christ Jesus, the people of the New Covenant, the Christians.

For many who follow in the paths of the Lord, this matter has been a heart-rending problem. No one would deny that this problem is fraught with grief and sacrifice which can only be fully appreciated through experience. Nevertheless, the command of the Lord is plain. His wisdom is supreme, and His will is best for us, whether we understand it or not. Those who do His will look back over the years and thank God for His guidance and counsel.



## THE APPLICATION TO US

Let us consider some of the practical aspects of the case:

A brother (or sister) marries one who is unsaved. He has bound himself to one who may never (and probably will not) repent. The day will surely dawn when the final parting must come—and that parting will be complete, and eternal. What a prospect for one with deep convictions of eternal life, and death to come! Until one is "born again," he is "dead in trespasses and sins," but the believer is as one "that is alive from the dead." The unbelieving wife (or husband) will never understand his loyalty to Christ, and if she does, we must conclude that she has heard, but has rejected the gospel of Christ. There is therefore no spiritual communion or fellowship, for he is spiritually alive, while she is spiritually dead.

The atmosphere of the home will be one in which the world is in conflict with Christ, and no matter how subtle that conflict may be, it is there (Matt. 10:35-39). An attitude of passive resistance of the one parent to the word of God will bewilder the children, and the believer will probably live to see the children, and *their* children, become hardened against the truth. Nothing kills the potential seeds of faith in the young so effectively as the stolid indifference of a close relative, particularly of a parent. The witness of the believer is thus effectively destroyed. A husband will probably have no objection to a wife's spending time and money at the hairdresser's, but his impatience with his believing wife's attendance at meetings will probably be thinly veiled.

The likelihood is that the believer will be persuaded into a compromise with the world, and will drift away from Christ. Those who do not follow this pattern are the exception rather than the rule. The prophet Ezra in his time had seen it all before!

Never in all the years of marriage will the believer know the blessings which come from partnership in the Lord; to be able to speak freely in his own home of the thing pertaining to the Kingdom of God; to worship with his own household and of others; to read together from the word of God; to kneel together in prayer. These blessings are not for you, my brother, my sister, if you should be unequally yoked together with an unbeliever. Yours will be the unending struggle against uneven and unequal forces, with the prospect of release only in eternal separation in death.

I firmly believe that the numerical and spiritual decline of the church in this age is largely due to this same cause, for the well-being and prosperity of the church must be dependent on that of the individual, and hence by this issue. Brethren, let us not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers! "For ye are the temple of the living God, and He hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you, and I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." (2 Cor. 6: 16-18).

JOHN M. WOOD.

## *How to become a Christian*

WHEN we speak of becoming a Christian we have in mind a Christian as described in the New Testament. So strangely are matters reversed at the present day, that a person may be a member in good standing in a popular church, yet not be a Christian at all, in the scriptural sense of the word. On the other hand, one may be a genuine disciple of Jesus, approved of the Master, though not of men, and have no connection whatever with the religious establishments of the age. Indeed, to be a Christian of the New Testament type involves separation from policies and organisations of a religious sort, and a vital union with the Saviour through obedience to His precepts.

"The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple." This statement of the Psalmist has been true under all dispensations. There is nothing good in religion that is not begun and finished by the Word of God. Hence the origin of the new life in Christ is always attributed to the Word as its instrumental cause. "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever," is a universal statement, concerning those whom the Most High acknowledges as His children. In like manner, another apostle declares, "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures." And Jesus Himself says, "Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you."

A man can be a Christian without being a Roman Catholic, Anglican, Methodist, Baptist, Salvationist or Presbyterian, or of any other religious organisation, but



he cannot be a Christian without believing the gospel, which is God's testimony concerning Christ. To put the case more plainly: he cannot be a Christian without believing the testimony of those witnesses whom Jesus Himself sent into all the world to tell the things which they had seen and heard of Him as the Christ, the Son of God. Hence the faith contemplated in the gospel includes hearty reception of the apostles' testimony. It is the faith that comes by hearing the Word of God, as spoken by the apostles of Jesus.

In its broadest sense this faith includes a ready assent to all that the pen of inspiration has written. In its concentrated form, it is a strong persuasion that Jesus arose from the dead, and is now exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour to give repentance and remission of sins." It is a faith that concerns itself with facts, and makes Jesus the centre and essence of all that God has done for the salvation of men. Therefore, to produce this faith in the hearts of the people, the apostles preached Jesus by setting forth, in simple language, the words and deeds of their Master. They recounted His doctrine and miracles, and dwelt upon His death, testimony they enjoined repentance and baptism in His name.

Though the apostles have been dead for nineteen hundred years, and countless changes have occurred in these intervening centuries, we stand upon the same ground, with respect to the divine testimony, that was occupied by those who listened to the gospel from the lips of Peter and Paul. The written testimony is the same that was spoken, and the divine message on the sacred page is the power of God unto salvation to all that believe it.

We should gain nothing, therefore, were the apostles sent to us from the dead to repeat the story of the cross. They would add nothing to what we have in the New Testament, nor would they in other respects make the slightest change in the terms of salvation. To all objectors they would say, "Thus it is written!" Hence the only way to have a genuine living faith in the Son of God is to consider the testimony which they have left on record and act upon it. In so doing we leave aside the opinions of men, and attain to divine knowledge as heirs of eternal life. "Who-soever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born (begotten) of God: and everyone that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him" (1 John 5:1).

"The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart; that is, the word of faith, which we preach, that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Rom. 10 : 8-9).

While it is true, as the apostle affirms, that "with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation," we must not conclude that repentance and baptism are not implied as to those who would become Christians. On the contrary, we must remember that one condition of salvation always implies the others, and that to take one item—faith for instance—and qualify it with the term **only**, as many do, is to deal deceitfully with the word of God, and incur condemnation.

When Paul told the Corinthians that he determined to know nothing among them save Christ and Him crucified, he did not mean that he ignored or made of little value the resurrection and ascension of the crucified one. So when he told the Romans that they were justified by faith, he did not mean that repentance and baptism were not required in order to receive pardon and have peace with God. And when Peter declares that baptism "doth now save us," we act foolishly to infer that he had not in mind faith and repentance also as essential conditions of salvation. The mention of any one condition always implies all those which are naturally connected with it, and by this rule we must understand every passage of the apostolic writings that relates to redemption and eternal life.

The best way to teach an enquirer is to set before him examples in which we are sure the process of conversion has begun and finished under the immediate supervision of the Holy Spirit.

Here we need make no mistake in our instructions, for we can speak as the scripture speaks and be silent where it is silent. The cases of conversion recorded in the Book of Acts, or referred to in the Epistles, are enough to guide the reader in his endeavours to know just what was required to make a person a Christian. The very first sermon preached by Peter under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit is reported in detail by Luke.

Three thousand hearers were made Christians by hearing, believing and obeying the words spoken on Pentecost by him to whom the Saviour gave the keys of the kingdom of heaven. It is hardly needful to say that no other way of becoming a Christian was known to the apostles than that described in the second chapter of Acts. **Nor has the way ever been changed by the Lord.**

It was faith, repentance, confession and immersion in the first century; it is still the same in the twentieth. As there is but one manner of believing on Christ, so there is but one manner of putting on Christ. The old truth is the saving truth, and he who fully grasps this will learn, as David did, "to hate every false way," and to glorify God by obedience to His word.



## "What Baptism Stands For"

A reader's notes on a book having the above title written by H. Cook.

THE AUTHOR quotes Principal Forsyth as saying that there is no infant baptism in the New Testament, only adult and believers' baptism; that this always took place on confession of faith, which rules out infant baptism, and that infant baptism is not within the principle of the New Testament. Scriptural supremacy must be adhered to. The Church has no liberty to change with changing conditions. The advanced thought of scholars is no guarantee that they are safe to follow. Progress can be purchased at too high a price. By following such scholars it could be a case of the blind leading the blind, and both falling into the ditch.

Mr. Cook next questions some modern thought that New Testament revelation can be a growing thing, and maintains that only out of the Word comes revelation. He quotes that Augustine heard God speaking to him "Tolle-Lege," "Take it and read it," i.e., the Word. The scriptures alone will vindicate our faith. God created a new Israel to supersede the inadequate Israel, to fulfil His redemptive purpose. No longer were the Jews *ecclesia* because they were born in the Jewish nation, but by relation to Christ. He then quotes Paul as saying that His Church is His body. A body is a wonderful thing, has many functions. It is a symbol of unity even though it (the church) is made up of all sorts of people. This body was given life at Pentecost, and if the Church has to show its meaning it must show, and be intimate with, its risen Lord, for the Church sits in the heavenlies (Eph. 2:6). The New Testament Church was fluid and, under the impulse of the Spirit, adapted its policy to meet the needs of each situation in which it found itself.

Of evangelism the author says that we need to channel our resources so that they may work in a given area. In the Baptist statement to the Lambeth Conference, it says "we therefore have no separated order for priests; the Church is one body in Christ, and all members have the same relation to Him whatever gift or office. This was a re-discovery at the Reformation." He quotes Bishop Gore as saying, the teaching of a separate Priesthood would

lead to the belief in Apostolic succession, and this is not taught even by the Fathers."

Mr. Cook next deals with proselyte baptism, and connects John's baptism with this, when the one being baptised would walk into the water up to the neck and dip himself. He says it is a debatable point, but that baptism for John was, as in proselyte baptism, a severance from the past and a declaration for the future. The mode in both cases was immersion. Baptism was not regarded as a substitute for circumcision. Two distinctive points here: John did the baptising while the proselyte candidate dipped himself. He says that John Smith the founder of English baptists dipped himself in the year 1609.

The Gospel records of Christian baptism are three-fold: example, concurrence, and injunction. Christ came to John seeking it; it was God's demand on men and Christ was God's man; hence it behoves us to comply. Harmony with God will bring happiness. Christ in His baptism deliberately took His stand with sinful men; He made their position His. Christ's baptism remains an inspiration to us. Cook states that Dr. T. R. Glover (a Quaker) was teaching Hindus and Moslems in India to become Christians. They wished to become Christians, yet remain in their cults, Dr. Glover saw that this would not do, because if they remained in their cults they could not contribute to the spread of the Gospel. He also saw that they would have to be baptised on the confession of their sins. The consequence of this was that Dr. Glover himself became an ardent Christian, and said that, Christ made no mistake by teaching baptism, that man cannot improve on Christ's teaching.

These subjects for baptism: accepted the rite for themselves; they expressed a change of mind. But in Christian baptism involvement takes place. In the eleven baptisms mentioned in the Acts and Epistles, no case could be made out for the baptism of any but believers.

J. E. BREAKELL.

A Bible in the hand is worth two on the shelf.



# SCRIPTURE READINGS

## MARCH, 1963

3—Leviticus 16:1-10, 20-28	Hebrews 13
10—Isiah 2	Luke 24:13-53
17—2 Kings 2:1-17	Acts 1
24—Joel 2:23-32	Acts 2:1-21
31—Psalm 16	Acts 2:22-47

### A CONTRAST

How very different is the writing of Luke from that of the writer of the letter to the Hebrews! In any case there is a contrast in the subject matter. We do not know for certain who wrote the letter, but it is very plain that Luke wrote the story of the beginning of the church as a sequel to his story of the life of the Saviour. Read the introductions to the two books carefully and consider how they fit together. We have suggested reading the end of the gospel in preparation for the reading of the "Acts"; in the Gospel we have a short recapitulation and enlargement of the Saviour's contacts with His apostles and disciples before His ascension. It would be reasonable to believe that Luke wrote for an eminent Greek, Theophilus, "lover of God." If so, his intention was divinely over-ruled for the edification and blessing of us all. This is how God uses His willing and faithful servants. It is certain that the epistle we are concluding this month was intended for Hebrew Christians, with the purpose of stabilising their faith in the new and better covenant, with its spiritual and permanent basis as against the impressive material realities of the old, still then in operation, but quite soon to be finally destroyed. No power in earth or hell can remove or change the foundations of the church, but destruction—God-ordained—of the Sanctuary in Jerusalem made and makes it impossible to maintain or renew the old. Nevertheless, that letter is as useful and necessary today, and is full of most valuable truths.

It is good that we know something of Luke apart from his name on the manuscripts of the gospel, and the evidence of the introductions. He meets us first at Troas in Acts 16:10, with the little word "we." Following this clue we find Luke travelling and staying with Paul and his companions in Philippi, where he appears to have stayed, for we do not meet him again until Paul, after some years of work and travel, is in Macedonia and sails away from Philippi (20:5 & 6). Whether Luke accompanied him on some or all of these journeyings is not certain, but we presume from the

first person being so freely used throughout the rest of the book, that he was not, but that he joined Paul as his travelling companion at this point and certainly continued with him until he arrived in Rome.

During the time of Paul's imprisonment in Caesarea Luke would have ample opportunity to gather material from the apostles, elders, prophets and the women-folk in Jerusalem and Judaea, for the great work he undertook in writing the gospel, and to have close fellowship with Paul himself for the "Acts" up to that point. The first few chapters of the gospel indicate, as do some other portions (Luke 8:1-3; 10:38-42, for instance), a close acquaintance and loving sympathy with the women who were close to Jesus and would probably still be alive and living in the Jerusalem neighbourhood. We remember they were "eye-witnesses" in whom he would be particularly interested. What a thrilling and delightful experience it would be for him to make these careful enquiries and to write down the results! Am I letting my imagination take me too far to think that these things would be talked over with Paul himself? It is one of our failings not to speak enough of Jesus.

We shall be following Luke through the trials of that dangerous and terrifying voyage and shipwreck, described with such graphic details, to Rome where he was Paul's close companion—the "beloved physician," so needful and helpful to the apostle who experienced times of great distress of body and mind—in helping him to endure the "thorn in the flesh" (2 Cor. 12:7) and "the care of all the churches" (2 Cor. 11:28). Paul's mention of him with this title tells us that the two men loved one another fervently—which is, of course, the plain duty of all Christians (1 Peter 1:22) and that Luke was a doctor and could not but exercise his gifts and skills upon "such a one as Paul the aged" (Philemon 9). Then we come to the last mention of Luke in holy writ in Paul's second letter to Timothy, where with his last greetings and with the end of his earthly pilgrimage in sight, he states: "only Luke is with me." So he was by "the beloved apostle," to the end.

Here are two, at least—and how many more there are—to add to the heroes of faith (Heb. 11), to whom we may look for example. It would be impossible to measure the influence which the writings of Luke have had upon the world, but we know of him only through the title on the manuscripts, "According to Luke," two mentions of his name by Paul and his own use of the first personal pronouns. His object and satisfaction will be to have told the truth about what "Jesus began to do and teach," and went on to do and teach through "the acts of apostles."

R. B. SCOTT.



## CORRESPONDENCE

[IN December 1962 the "S.S." published a pathetic letter from Bro. Severe telling of deaths and injuries caused among the church at Wendewende, Nyasaland, Africa, through an accident. A few brethren and churches have sent help to the suffering families, among them the church in Dalmellington, Ayrshire. Here is a further letter from Bro. Severe, acknowledging the gifts.

We publish it, however, because of the appeal coming to us again to "go over and help them" or to be ready to receive them in this country for training in God's vineyard. Coupled with Bro. Campion's letter which follows, we are shown what great privileges and responsibilities are ours. Let these appeals not fall on deaf ears.—ED.]

5th January, 1963.

DEAR Bro. Black.—I am to refer to your nice letter of 6th December, 1962. Your letter reached me on the 19th December and I read it to the church on 22nd. The church at Wendewende appreciates and acknowledges the cheque order for £14 19s. 3d. the church there sent on behalf of our sick in the hospital. Your donation proves helpful.

Two of our patients were discharged from the hospital but they are weak and thin. The doctor said that they will be strong after a long time. The others are still there and it will be long, and after some months, before they get to be discharged. We are glad that they are making a steady improvement, though slow.

Our plea for someone to come from there and work among us as a missionary continues to ring. The church here continues to make progress but has no experienced leader to manage church affairs according to scriptural order. The brethren over here would be too glad if the brotherhood there sent someone to work or visit us. We badly need your help in this particular request.

Our school work grows by leaps and bounds and we too need teachers and educationalists to speed their progress. If brethren there would like to come and shoulder these responsibilities, it would be beneficial to us. We people in this land need your help educationally, scripturally and spiritually.

We have two young men who passed their Std. 8 exams and are really faithful brethren. As the church in England finds it hard to send someone over, would

it be possible for the church there to have these come there to train as preachers and educators for two years? Can the church support? The church in Africa feels to demand it! What is your suggestion on this matter?

I shall be grateful as to whether you would be kind enough to convey my Christian regards to the brethren there on behalf of the church here.

E. C. SEVERE.

Box 98  
Blantyre,  
19-1-63.

DEAR Bro. Melling.—Thank you for your very welcome letter.

The work among the African brethren seems to progress well here in Nyasaland. The problem of the Church here is not so much bringing and baptising people into Christ; that is easy. The problem is to keep them in the faith afterwards.

Our missionary friends in Zomba and elsewhere keep us pretty well informed, as you may realise that I do not do very much work among our African brethren. Times of change are here in Nyasaland, and evidence of these changes are seen even in our closest African brethren. The two missionaries' families at Zomba and Betty and I worship every Sunday at 6 p.m. as I told you, together with any visitors that we can interest. All the African brethren who wish to come are warmly invited, but this meeting has been labelled a European meeting—class distinction has reared its ugly head. This is one of the minor problems we face at this present time. We pray for wisdom and understanding.

I did a trip, together with the two missionaries from Zomba. We went to visit a small congregation on the slopes of beautiful Mt. Mlanje in mid-November.

We arrived Friday afternoon, and gave a film slide lecture. Saturday, there were lessons at 6 a.m., 8 a.m., 10 a.m. 2 p.m., 4 p.m. and then at 6.30 p.m., films strips once again. Sunday, 8 a.m., a lesson, and then main service at 10 a.m. followed by twelve Baptisms—five miles away from the assembly, that happened to be the nearest suitable water. Then home at 5 p.m. after a short drive of 52 miles for me, 84 miles for my friends. A week-end meeting like this makes up for quite a lot of dissension. We met quite a lot of people, and made many friends for Christ.

This brings out the need for more full-time preachers. I wish we had one here—to work with the European population full time. More would help the Lord's work in England too. Happy New Year!

FRANK CAMPION.





(Conducted by  
A. E. Winstanley,  
43a Church Road,  
Tunbridge Wells,  
Kent).

### A TALK TO TEENAGERS FEVER!

"A NEW survey by National Opinion Polls reveals today that 55 per cent of our adult population is now caught up in the growing gambling fever. . . ."

In other words, more than half the grown-ups in the country gamble regularly. That's bad enough, but notice that the writer of the article calls this practice a "growing fever." Certainly it is growing—the amount of money spent in gambling goes up and up each year. And it is a fever too—a disease. Have you noticed the crowds going to

#### Bingo?

The first time I saw a crowd going to Bingo I didn't know where the folks were going. It was in a Scots mining town on a winter's evening. I saw crowds of women hurrying along the streets, obviously anxious to get somewhere as quickly as possible. Something was "on"—something important. It saddened me to learn what it was all about. It shocked me to think that many of these decent folk were in the grip of a disease. For gambling is—for lots of people—just that: **a disease of the mind.**

Why so? Because the root of it all is what God calls

#### covetousness.

Principles of right behaviour are eternal, and one of God's unchanging prohibitions is that "**Thou shalt not covet.**" If we are to be children of God—if we are to be truly like Jesus Christ—then this evil thing must be rooted out of our hearts. To be a Christian means to be like Jesus, and His life was ruled by love. Covetousness says: "What can I get?" Love asks, "What can I give?" The dreadful thing about covetousness is that it exalts self—it is "me" I'm concerned about; I want more for "me"; and self takes first place. Now whatever takes first place in life is **my God.** That's why we are told that "covetousness . . . is idolatry" (Colossians 3:5). It's a case of putting myself in the place of God.

So covetousness, which is the root cause of gambling, is

#### wrong.

The report said that one-quarter of the women questioned, and one-fifth of the men, believed gambling to be wrong, or even wicked. They are right. It is. The fact that it is legalised makes no difference. A thing does not become right because a government allows or condones it. That applies to pools, sweeps, raffles and

#### Premium Bonds.

It's strange that many who would never have gambled on the pools think it proper to buy premium bonds. That's "official"—run by the State. But it is still gambling—and who organises it makes no difference. To every young disciple of Jesus I say, sincerely: Shun gambling in every form. "Mortify . . . covetousness" in your life.

And just one more thing. The nation's addiction to this thing is shocking

#### waste!

In many lands today countless people go to bed hungry. Babies are born to live in disease and weakness because of malnutrition. Many—yes, many—die of starvation. Yet £760,000,000 was frittered away in gambling in Britain last year, and the figure will be more this year. We who are Christ's people cannot be indifferent about this. We can—we must—do something to help. Let's face this simple fact: following Christ means living selflessly. Let's do just that.

#### WHICH BRANCH?

We get asked all kinds of questions when talking to people about the way of life. Here's one put to me: "To which branch of the church do you belong?" My answer, "I don't belong to any branch—I am a branch." Read John 15:1-8 and examine verse 5 closely. Every child of God is a branch in the true vine, one united spiritually to the Son of God, and drawing all needed strength and grace from Him. And that of course is what we want for all others, to bring them into union with Jesus, that they too



might be members of Him, sharing His life, doing His work and growing like Him.

### DO YOU KNOW?

THAT your heart is really a double pump having two systems for circulating blood through your body? Your blood moves quickly too. It takes only eight seconds to travel from your heart to your brain and back to your heart again. To go to the limits of your body and back again (say to your toes) takes about eighteen seconds. Normally your heart beats 72 times a minute, so that's about 100,000 times a day and 40 million times a year! No pump that man has made is as wonderful or efficient as your heart—a pump designed by God.

### *Understanding its Purpose*

The church is not a refrigerator for preserving perishable piety. It is a dynamo for charging human wills with power. The object of the church is not to tell men how to dodge difficulties, but to furnish strength and courage to meet them. The business of the church is not to furnish hammocks for the lazy, but rather it is to offer well-fitting yokes for drawing life's loads.—Woodstock (Cape Town) "Bulletin."

### *"The Mission Messenger"*

Again we draw the attention of our readers to this fine, courageous magazine edited and published by Bro. Carl Ketcherside of St. Louis, Missouri.

Bro. Ketcherside has just completed a series of articles examining not only other religious bodies in the light of God's word, but churches of Christ, the Christian Church and the many divisions into which Christians have divided in the United States, on various grounds. We commend the articles to all those concerned in this country about the true fellowship and unity in the Body of Christ.

The magazine is equally admirable now that its contents comprise "things most certainly believed among us," giving necessary teaching in these vital doctrines.

Subscriptions (7/-) per year, can be sent to Paul Jones, 41 Pendragon Road, Birmingham, 22B.

Bro. Ketcherside has obtained a good number of subscriptions to the "S.S." from readers in the United States.

## NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

**Dewsbury.**—The Church here is very pleased to report the baptism of one of our senior scholars, Lynne Thomason, daughter of Bro. and Sister Jack Thomason.

**Reading.**—We are very glad to report the baptism, by Bro. M. Miller, on Saturday, 9th February, at Aylesbury, of Ian Longcroft, who has been attending our meetings for some months. We rejoice in this and pray that he may continue steadfastly in the faith. R.M.P.

## OBITUARY

### THANKS

Sister Mary Roughley and Bro. and Sis. P. Partington wish to express their thanks and appreciation to the many brethren who have sent letters, or have extended their sympathy in other ways at this time when they mourn the passing of a dear husband and father.

At such a time as this, one values his relationship with Christ, and finds comfort and consolation in the love of the brethren, and through an assurance of their prayers.

**John Allen Hudson.**—We read several months ago in American magazines "Firm Foundation" and "Gospel Advocate" of the death of Bro. John Allen Hudson. We have now received from a correspondent a copy of the "Old Paths Guide" for July 1962, in which appears an outline of Bro. Hudson's life and an appreciation of his work. We gladly accept the suggestion to write a few words concerning our late brother.

He died on May 13th, 1962, at the age of 69. He was best known as a preacher, first in Texas, then in Oklahoma and, in his last years, in California. He was enthusiastic in raising funds for the building of new meeting-houses but was even more concerned for the spiritual building of God—the church. He was a scholar-preacher, widely read, a prolific writer and author, and with some ability as a poet. He had a deep love for nature, seeing through it a revelation of its Creator. As David ex-



presses it in Psalm 19, Bro. Hudson read of God in his two books—creation and the Bible.

As well as in his preaching, Bro. Hudson spread the word of God over an even wider sphere. He was the founder and editor of the Old Paths Book Club. This project has succeeded in its object of publishing and circulating the writings of such men as Thomas and Alexander Campbell, Barton Stone, Walter Scott and others, whose names are prominent in the glorious movement to restore New Testament Christianity. This Old Paths Book Club has filled a gap which was getting wider: these writings were becoming scarce and difficult to obtain. Today, not only in the United States, but throughout the world these works have now been made available, and not a few in this country are possessors of some of them.

To us here, Bro. Hudson was known in person through his visits to Britain in 1937 and 1947. In his first visit he wrote several articles for the "S.S." His second visit will be better remembered by most, for, as well as preaching and lecturing at the Hindley Bible School, he visited many assemblies and Christians in these parts.

He was a lovable personality, who never forgot his friends. Many in Britain received from him and his wife loving and warm mementoes of their happy experiences here, reminding us of the blessings they had not only received from but conferred upon many of the saints of God.

"Servant of God, well done."

C. MELLING.

**Ikeston.**—Our esteemed sister Ellen Cheatele fell asleep in Jesus on January 19th at the age of 92, (widow of the late Bro. George Cheatele of Lyddington) transferred from the Church at (Church Gate) Leicester on July 17th, 1960. She had endeared herself to all by her steadfastness and courage for the Lord's cause.

She was a loyal attender, being absent only three times in two and a half years. She loved the fellowship of the saints, and it was a delight to talk to her about spiritual things. She was of a cheerful nature, witty and full of humour for one so aged; and a generous giver of her substance to the Lord's work.

She never wavered in her faith and love toward her Lord and Saviour, and was looking forward to seeing Him in that day when He will come to receive His faithful ones. In recent weeks increasing frailty was manifest and on

January 6th, the steps to the meeting-room were climbed with great difficulty. This was her last attendance, and she said she was getting very tired and ready to go when the call should come.

Only ill for one week she passed to her well-earned rest greatly loved and honoured for her great example of faithfulness. To her sorrowing relatives we express our deep sympathy. The committal service was held at Markeaton Crematorium, Derby, on Wednesday, January 23rd. The service was conducted by Bro. R. Gregory. F.G.

**Rose Street, Kirkcaldy.**—Once again, we have to report the passing of one of our members in the person of Bro. John Wotherspoon, on January 29th, in his eightieth year. He had been a member of the Church for over 50 years and had served the Church for many years as a deacon. He was an inspiration to the many brethren with whom he came in contact, his knowledge of the Scriptures was great, and he was always willing to help the younger members in the search of the truth. During the last few years, physical infirmities have kept him from being able to meet with the Church, but he remained keenly interested in the labours in this corner of our Lord's Kingdom. We tender our sympathy to his wife and our sister in Christ and pray that our Heavenly Father will be her help meet in this her hour of sorrow. John Mayer.

**Wallacestone.**—It is with the deepest regret we record the passing of Sis. Janet Brown, wife of our late Bro. Richard Brown. At the age of 73, Sis. Brown was one of the church's oldest members, both in years and in service for the Lord. She was baptised some 45 years ago and until the start of her illness almost three years since was always present at the meeting of the Lord's people, whether for worship or for Bible Study. Even while in hospital, the last year of her life, she witnessed whose she was and whom she served by her consistent reading of God's word, morning and evening, so much so that those outside of Christ did not fail to notice it. We extend to her family our deepest sympathy, and commend them to the comfort of our heavenly Father. Nevertheless, we rejoice in the knowledge that she died in Christ, confident that on the judgment day she will be numbered with those on the right hand of God. She was laid to rest on Saturday, February 9th. Bro. David Dougal officiating both in the home and at the graveside. James Grant.



## COMING EVENTS

**Liverpool, 15.** Saturday, March 2nd, at 7.30 p.m.: Bro. Frank Worgan preaches the Gospel in the Co-operative Hall, Wavertree Nook Road.

Friday, Saturday and Sunday, April 5th, 6th and 7th, in the same hall and at the same time. More Special Gospel Services. A different preacher but the same Gospel. Accommodation available if booked in advance: R. A. Hill, 31 Mossley Hill Road, Liverpool, 18. Telephone: Allerton 3772.

**Wigan: Scholes.**—April 6th to 14th, 1963, God willing. Gospel campaign, Bro. David Dougall preaching. Details:—

Saturday, April 6th, Gospel meeting 7 p.m. Preachers: Bren. Dougall and Frank Worgan.

Lord's Days, April 7th and 14th, Gospel 7.30 p.m.

Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday, April 9th, 11th, 13th, Gospel meetings, 7.30 p.m.

Your prayers and presence and help in any way will be greatly appreciated.

**Ince - in - Makerfield (Lancashire).**—Gospel effort. April 12th-21st, 1963 (D.V.). Meetings nightly at 7.30 p.m. Preacher: Bro. Gary Adams (Holland).

This effort will include the holiday weekend (April 12th-15th), when special meetings will be held.

**Friday, April 12th:** 3 p.m. Discussion led by Bro. Frank Worgan. Subject: "The Christian's attitude to war."

## TEA

7.30 p.m.: Gospel Preaching (Bro. Gary Adams).

**Saturday, April 13th:** 10 a.m. Devotional Meeting. Talks by Bro. Douglas Melling and another brother. Subjects: "For what things may a Christian pray?" "The closer walk with God."

## LUNCH

3 p.m.: Discussion led by Bro. A. E.

Winstanley. Subject: "The Christian's attitude to modern amusements."

## TEA

7.30 p.m.: Gospel preaching (Bro. Gary Adams).

**Sunday, April 14th:** 10.30 a.m. Bible Classes. 11.30 a.m. Breaking of Bread. Exhortation by Bro. A. E. Winstanley. 3.30 p.m. Group Personal Work. 7.30 p.m. Gospel Preaching (Bro. Gary Adams).

**Monday April 15th:** 10 a.m. "Singing and Praying together." Led by Bro. A. E. Winstanley. 1.30 p.m. Ramble (organised by Bro. E. Makin). 7.30 p.m. Gospel Preaching (Bro. Gary Adams).

Come and spend a happy weekend in fellowship and service. Write for accommodation to Bro. Brian Stevens, 2 Wigan Road, Ormskirk, Lancs.

**Eastwood, Seymour Road.**—9th Anniversary Services, May 5th and 6th. Speakers: Bro. E. Jess, of Dalmellington, Scotland. Bro. H. Davidson, of Kilbride, Scotland. Saturday: Tea at 4.15 p.m. in The Brookhill Keys School, Chewton Street, Eastwood. Public Meeting 6 p.m. Come and support us.

**Ilkeston.**—The Midland Churches of Christ are (D.V.) holding a United Gospel Meeting on Saturday, May 18th, 1963, at 6.30 p.m. Speaker: Bro. C. P. Slate (Wembley). The meeting will be held in the Town Hall (Market Place), Ilkeston. A warm invitation is extended to all brethren to meet with us on this occasion.

## MARRIAGE

**Buckie.**—On January 26th, 1963, in the meeting hall of the Church of Christ, Cluny Terrace, Buckie, by Bro. Samuel Hunter, Brother James Geddes to Sister Mary F. Souter. Address: 1 Grant Street, Tanstown, Buckie.

## CHANGE OF SECRETARY

**Wallacestone.**—James Grant, 45 Kirkwood Avenue, Redding, by Falkirk, Stirlingshire, Scotland.

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Secretary of Conference Committee: A. HOOD, 45 Park Road, Hindley, nr. Wigan.

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