

The SCRIPTURE STANDARD

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

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'THAT THE WORLD MAY BELIEVE...'

(John 17:21)

IT is obvious that great changes are taking place in the religious world, largely because of the desire for unity among those who are followers of Christ. Leaders and congregations of various denominations are talking and meeting together in a way which would have been unthinkable 25 or so years ago. It is apparent that these various churches have come to see that denominations, speaking in many voices, and presenting different ways to God are not, as once was boasted, the many aspects of truth, but are contradictory and bring confusion and bewilderment to those who stand outside of Christianity. It is seen that these various ways are not leading people to God, but that they are rather causing despair and indifference among those not claiming any religion affiliations.

These effects are not to be wondered at. For in these movements unity tends to be regarded as an end in itself. The slogan is "Unity is strength," when unity can often be weakness. Unity in itself must not be the aim of the "ecumenical movement." We must know what this "unity" is aiming at, what is its purpose, what it is hoped to accomplish. Not simple "Unity" but "unity for what?" should be the purpose behind this activity and these discussions.

If only we would place less trust in men's fallible wisdom and more in the infallible written word of God, we should see that long ago God's messengers said and wrote all that is necessary for the attainment and maintaining of the unity of all believers in Jesus Christ. It is strange that the two passages of scripture most quoted in the search for "Christian unity" are so largely ignored as to their meaning. We refer to Christ's words in His prayer (John 17:21) "that they may all be one; even as Thou, Father, art in me and I in Thee, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that Thou hast sent me;" and to Gal. 3:28—"you are all one in Christ Jesus." It is our desire to try to show in this and in a succeeding article that if we rightly understand and act upon these two statements the unity we long for will be realised without our anxious and feverish rushing to and fro to bring it about.

First, we note that Jesus prays for the unity of His disciples not as an end in itself, but as the means to an end—"that they may all be one . . . *that the world may believe . . .*" "That they (my followers) may (in order) . . . that the world may . . ." We are reminded of what Peter writes concerning the church, Christians, in his first epistle, chapter 2, verse 9: "But you are a chosen race (etc.)" Campbell Morgan in his book "Peter and the Church" expounds this passage very finely: we are these glorious things that Peter says, not simply to rejoice in them, or to sit back in smug complacency. "Ye are . . . that ye may . . ." We are saved to serve. Our salvation is not simply an end but a means. These glorious blessings are ours, by the grace of God, in order to convey them to others.

In His prayer for unity Jesus shows us that unity is in order "that the world may believe . . ." May believe what? We are not left in any doubt as to the purpose of unity: "That the world may believe that Thou hast sent me." It is all so clear when we take Christ's words just as they are, and other words of scripture bear out the Saviour's meaning: the greatest and most important fact in history is that God sent Jesus Christ into the world: "God sent forth His Son . . . to

redeem..." (Gal. 4:4); "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners..." (1 Timothy 1:15); Jesus said of Himself, "the Son of man has come to seek and to save the lost" (Luke 19:10). How is this salvation accomplished? By what Paul terms "the foolishness of the preaching"—that is, the message preached, the gospel. So that unity among Christians has as its object that the world may believe the gospel. Not in order to present an image of a great world-wide church, "the Church Universal," making its impact upon political, educational, social or other world problems, but that individual men and women may believe that "God so loved the world as to give His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life." From the individual, from you and me, this message is to spread to others, and thus will be world-transforming.

The message is simplicity itself, that "Christ died for our sins, according to the scriptures; He was buried; and that He was raised again the third day, according to the scriptures" (1 Cor. 15: 1-4). We often say that the only belief necessary to salvation is that "Jesus is the Son of God." Yet the belief Jesus speaks of in His prayer is simpler still: "that Thou hast sent me." This is the simplest possible creed and basis of union.

It has been well said by one commentator on the gospel of John that, "This unity of believers is to find alike its principle and its ideal in the unity of the Father and the Son: it is not a co-ordination of organisations, but a personal relationship of mutual love." And the late Archbishop William Temple in his "Readings in John's Gospel" very finely comments: "This way to the unity of Christendom does not lie through committee-rooms, though there is a task of formulation to be done there. It lies with personal union with the Lord so deep and real as to be comparable with His union with the Father. For the prayer is not directly that believers may be 'one' in the Father and the Son . . . The prayer is *that they may be in us*. If we are in the Father and the Son, we certainly shall be one, and our unity will increase our effective influence in the world. But it is not our unity as such that has converting power; it is our incorporation into the *true Vine* as branches in which the divine life is flowing. When all believers are truly 'in Christ,' then their witness will have its destined effect — *that the world may believe that Thou didst send me.*"

EDITOR.

THE DIVINITY OF JESUS, THE CHRIST

I WOULD like to offer for consideration my understanding of what the Scriptures teach on this subject. Basically I believe that "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever" (Heb. 13:8). To expand on this briefly I ask you to consider that:—

1.—Jesus was the son of God before creation. ". . . the Son of his love. In whom we have our redemption, the forgiveness of our sins: Who is the image of the invisible God, the first born of all creation . . . And he is before all things" (Col. 1:13-17). "The same was in the beginning with God" (Jn. 1:12).

2.—Jesus was the Son of God at the time of creation. "All things were made by him" (Jn. 1:3). "For in him were all things created" (Col. 1:16). "Through whom also he made the words."

3.—Jesus was the Son of God before Mary conceived. "Though he was existing in the nature of God . . . He laid it aside . . . and became like other men" (Phil. 2:6-7, Williams). "Jesus said . . . Before Abraham was, I am" (Jn. 8:58). "He was rich yet . . . he became poor" (2 Cor. 8:9).

4.—Jesus was the Son of God when He was born. "That which is born will be called holy, the Son of God" (Luke 1:35, Williams). "God sent forth his Son, born of a woman" (Gal. 4:4). "For there is born to you, this day, the Saviour which is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:11). In Psalm 22, which portrays Christ's suffering on the cross, verse 10 says, "Thou art my God from my mother's belly." John the Baptist was said to be filled with the Holy Ghost even from his mother's womb; are we to suppose that Christ was only equal to John before he was baptised (Luke 1:35). No—Jesus was born the Christ (Luke 2:11).

5.—Jesus was the Son of God when he was 12 years. "Wist ye not that I must be in my Father's house?" (Luke 2:49).

6.—Jesus was the Son of God when He was baptised. "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased" (Matt. 3:17, Luke 3:22, Jn. 1:34).

7.—Jesus was the Son of God when He was preaching because (a) His friends declared it (Jn. 11:27); (b) His disciples declared it (Jn. 6:69); (c) Christ Himself declared it (Jn. 5:18); (d) God the Father declared it (2 Pet. 1:12, Luke 9:35, Matt. 17:5).

8.—Jesus was the Son of God just before His death. (a) Jesus said He was (Mk. 14:61-62); (b) The Jews said He was (Luke 22:70).

Where is the point where confusion arises? Our Lord and Saviour having been condemned to death is about to die for our sins. To do this He has to become sin for us (2 Cor. 5:21). To enable us to obtain this precious salvation Jesus had to suffer the ignominy of the Cross, which meant being accursed of God (Deu. 21:33; Gal. 3:13). These two facts meant that God the Father had to forsake Jesus completely (Matt. 27:46; Isa. 53:10). This was the reason why Jesus came to the earth (1 Pet. 3:18; 1 Jn. 3:8). This loneliness on the Cross caused Christ to cry out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" The veil in the temple is now rent in two, the old Covenant is abolished, the price has been paid. Just as Jesus dies he is reconciled to God, and could now say again—"Father" (Luke 23:46), having been made perfect (Heb. 5:9). Jesus could now preach again (1 Pet. 3:19). Small wonder is it that it is said "this day have I begotten thee."

Whilst there may be some conjecture as to whether Jesus was begotten again on His death or resurrection, there can be no doubt whatsoever that Jesus was the Son of God when He was placed on the Cross. As Jesus was also fully man (Phil. 2:7) he could not enter into heaven without being born again (Jn. 3:3). Christ is first fruits in all things, so following His "rebirth" we are born again when we share His death in baptism.

To return to our main theme:—

9.—Jesus was the Son of God on His deathbed. "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit" (Luke 23:46).

10.—Jesus was the Son of God on his resurrection. "As the Father has sent me, even so I send you" (Jn. 20:21).

11.—Jesus was the Son of God on his ascension and remains so till the end of time. "But of the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever" (Heb. 1:8). "But these are written that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God (Jn. 20:31). "Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: every spirit which confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God" (1 Jn. 4:2).

I trust the foregoing will at least provide food for thought on the nature of Christ our Redeemer and Saviour.

BRIAN J. BOLAND.

CHRISTIANITY

AMIDST all the conflicts of denominationalism can we determine what Christianity is?

It may have its history, its philosophy and its doctrine as well as a ritual and creed; but these terms do not define the thing itself. It is all summed up in one word, life.

Its doctrine is to teach men how to live (and incidentally how to die) but practically how to live forever. It does not exact things unreasonable, but it says "whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely and of good report; think on those things." It does not decide under what form of civil government we shall live, but shows our duty to those who bear rule. Nor does it decide the conventionalities of society, but it makes known our relation to each other and our obligations to God. As to its philosophy, it is a perfect adaptation of means to an end.

All life is the product of a seed or an egg, whether vegetable, animal, or spiritual. "The seed of the kingdom is the word of God." There is no spiritual life communicated to any creature that has not intellectual and moral faculties; hence man alone of all earth's occupants can possess spiritual life, and we cannot with impunity ignore the method God has ordained to give this life. "We are born again not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible by the word of God, which lives and abides forever; and this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you." (1 Peter 1:23-25).

This cuts off rationalism and shows our dependence upon God for this new life in Christ. It requires a mighty force to turn the current of a man's life, but the word of God comes to us replete with divine power and pregnant with heavenly

wisdom, unfolding the way of life, and making known the purposes of God to redeem and save man. It presents the gospel in its facts, commands and promises. These facts are accredited by the testimony of God and all the holy men who spake as the Spirit gave them utterance. These facts are filled with divine wisdom and grace, and when accepted by an honest heart root out sinful desires, and bring the soul to the obedience of the faith.

Here his fidelity is tested, and the sincerity of his repentance declared, and through these commands he appropriates to himself the "exceeding great and precious promises" of the gospel by which he is made partaker of the divine nature, viz., remission of sins, adoption, the Holy Spirit, the priestly intercession of Christ, the promise of the resurrection and eternal life; so that whoever believes the facts of the gospel and honestly obeys its commands, and thus appropriates its promises is a Christian, and may be as divinely assured of it as he is of the existence of God, every day and in all places. Christianity has to do with our material organism, and hence it has its ritual or forms of expressing itself: but these forms are few and significant. The first one meets the believer at the threshold of the kingdom and declares his death to sin, and his purpose to lead a pure life. "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptised into Christ were baptised into his death; therefore, we are buried with him by baptism into his death that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." (Rom. 6:3-4). We always find the internal convictions associated with the outward expression, "He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved." "They that gladly received the word were baptised," "repent and be baptised," etc.

The next form stands within the portals of the House of God and is a living testimony of faith in Christ's death; "for as oft as ye eat this bread and drink this cup you do show forth the Lord's death until he come."

But the ritual of denominationalism today is a multiplicity of forms, observed with decorousness and solemnity in a place styled "holy," in which Christianity exhausts its power and finds no vitality to reign, as a sovereign, over the great commercial, mechanical, agricultural interests of society by condemning dishonesty, sanctifying toil, resisting selfishness and brooding with sheltering wings over scenes of poverty and wretchedness, thus expressing itself in a true life: this, sad to say, is not understood. The history and creed of Christianity are embodied in Christ.

He is like the north star that touches the needle, that guides the mariner safe across the ocean of life. In Him is life: "He that believeth on Him shall never die. He that hath the Son hath life." He demonstrated what it is to live. Standing amidst all the wise and great, the noble and good, blending in Himself all the graces, perfections, excellencies, and attributes of power in humanity, Christ is the character of all the centuries of history that gives us the true and noblest idea of life. That conception of life, as found in Him, is to do good, to make sacrifices and suffer for others, not to be ministered unto, but to minister; to find the truest greatness in being the servant of humanity; to express tenderness, humility and charity in the daily walk and acts of life; to comfort the sorrowing; to raise the fallen; to speak words of hope and strength to the weary and heavy-burdened; seek and save the lost, and to die that others might live. Such a life possesses a double immortality; one in succeeding generations, and one of endless blessedness at the right hand of God.

There is nothing so dear to us as life, and to possess such a treasure forever gives it infinite value.

O.G.H.

I will feed My flock, and I will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord.
(Ezek. 34, 15.)

—We need to be fed. Even when we are born again we are only babes in Christ. We have quality of life; we lack quantity, the forceful, irresistible, abundant life which filled to the full the channels of the Christ. How are we going to gain the abundance? It is largely a matter of diet. "I will feed My flock." We are to be fed into maturity by the Bread of Life.

Refuse the evil, and choose the good.
(Isaiah 7, 15.)

—If a man has been truly converted, he should say a firm "no" to the things that crowd out, a firm "no" to the things that drag him down and tie him up with this world in all its rebellion against God. "I will not be under the tyranny of any worldly lust," is the determination of the believer.

HEAVEN

THE year 2000 is not far away. Millions of people will have died before the twenty-first century begins. Where will they go? What will be their final destination? Is there such a place as heaven?

A Russian cosmonaut failed to find God in space. A Danish theologian failed to find God in his search among the great religious writers. An English historian failed to find God in his laborious piecing together of source materials used in his monumental study of history. A German philosopher failed to find God in his examination of pure reason. An American scientist failed to find God in his experiments. But a Hebrew found God in the wilderness. A Jew found God on the way to Damascus. A Roman soldier found God on Golgotha. And millions more have found God in his Holy Book. And the finding of God has led them to believe in the existence of heaven.

For every person who believes in heaven there are many more who do not believe. To the unbeliever, death means the blackness of utter nothingness. To the believer, death is the last great adventure.

When the great writer-preacher Alexander Campbell lay dying his eyes rested inquiringly upon the quiet glory of the sun's rays upon his bed. He was told it was the setting sun. "Yes," he said, "the setting sun! It will soon go down. But unto them that fear his name, shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings." (Lectures on the Pentateuch, p.49).

"Truly, if our hope in Christ were limited to this life only we should, of all mankind, be the most to be pitied." (1 Cor. 15:19, Phillips). So said the apostle Paul. Any preaching that ignores or eliminates altogether the hope of heaven is poor preaching, unworthy of the name. Cut off a man's hope of heaven and he is reduced to the status of beast or bird. However, Jesus said, "Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows. Every one therefore who shall confess me before men, him will I also confess before my Father who is in heaven." (Matt. 10:31, 32).

The word heaven, with its derivatives, is found hundreds of times in the Bible. If a man believes the Bible it follows that he will believe in heaven. Yet in recent years we have seen an ungodly progression, or digression, of thought in which men came first to reject the possibility of the existence of the devil. Then they rejected the Bible teaching about hell. And now some who masquerade as gospel preachers are disclaiming the living God and discounting the possibility of an eternal home of the soul. Such preaching is emptying church buildings and despoiling men's hearts:

To all such we would ask, What did Jesus mean when he said to his disciples, "In my Father's house are many mansions"? (John 14: 2). What did he mean when he said, "I go to prepare a place for you"? (*Ibid.*) What did he mean when he taught his disciples to pray, "Our Father who art in heaven"? (Matt. 6: 9).

When man hungers, though he must earn his bread by "the sweat of (his) face" (Gen. 3: 19), there is food to be had. Water exists to quench his thirst. But he has another great need—to love and be loved. Therefore, God has provided the home and family. But man's greatest yearning is for life beyond the grave. And heaven is the fulfilment of this towering need. It is extremely logical to believe in the existence of heaven.

When Voltaire said, "If there were no God it would be necessary to invent him," it is quite likely that he spoke in jest. But his words are true. When Columbus found a new continent he found ignorant savages who worshipped a Great Spirit. And hundreds of years before, when Paul came to Athens, he found learned philosophers who worshipped an "unknown God" (Acts 17: 23).

Paul insists that "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." (1 Cor. 15: 50). Any discussion of heaven must deal with death and resurrection. The great ones of Athens were scornful of such preaching: "When they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked; but others said, We will hear thee concerning this yet again." (Acts 17: 32).

We do not know whether they ever heard another gospel message. But we do know their spiritual counterparts are with us today. Since they cannot measure God or heaven in test tube or telescope they refuse to believe. But the rule still holds, "We walk by faith, not by sight." (2 Cor. 5: 7).

Is it too far-fetched to believe in the continuation of our lives in another form? Consider the radical changes of body form that some insects undergo during their development after hatching from the egg. The process is called metamorphosis.

Butterflies, before their maturity, have a form entirely different from their parents. Before issuing forth a beautiful butterfly, this lovely creature went through various unlovely stages—egg, larva, caterpillar larva that spins a cocoon, chrysalis, emergence from its case and finally a full-formed butterfly.

As for man, what insistent force stimulates his thinking about life beyond the grave? Whether unlettered aborigine or cultured member of civilised society—there throbs within his breast a longing that transcends his every material need. That longing impelled the apostle Paul as he "fought with beasts at Ephesus" (1 Cor. 15: 32), and as he endured beatings, shipwreck, hunger, cold and the pressing anxieties of all the churches (2 Cor. 11: 24-28).

It was this great apostle who could say, "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain," (Phil. 1: 21). And when at last he came face to face with death he asserted triumphantly, "The time of my departure is come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give to me at that day." (2 Tim. 4: 6, 7).

For man, the end of life on earth is just as logical and certainly more inevitable than the beginning. The longest day ends in the shades of night. The mightiest river becomes lost in the sea. And the history of man with all his triumphs and tragedies, joys and sorrows, victories and defeats—must end. And all is meaningless if death is not "swallowed up in victory." (1 Cor. 15: 54). "The last enemy that shall be abolished," said Paul, "is death." (1 Cor. 15: 26).

L. D. HARLESS

SCRIPTURE READINGS

FEBRUARY 1967

5—Micah 4	Revelation 12
12—Daniel 7:1-12	Revelation 13
19—Isaiah 47	Revelation 14
26—Daniel 7:13-27	Revelation 15

EARTHLY AND HEAVENLY WARFARE

OUR February readings present us with some problems of interpretation which are not easily solved, and are similar in general pattern to general prophecies in the book of Daniel. We are sure a detailed study of these would be profitable and helpful but must be content with some careful and prayerful thought.

What is the significance of the woman so gloriously arrayed, and in such trial to increase her offspring? We cannot but think that the church is pictured here at some specific time of her history. Her glory is wonderful—"arrayed with the sun." The other heavenly bodies in their unique beauty are also her adornment. Her future, however, is in doubt, for a powerful adversary waits to destroy her precious progeny. God intervenes to save them. Here is the heavenly destiny of those who at that time were "keeping the commandments of God and bearing testimony to Jesus" (12:17). Death by martyrdom saved them, but the church herself was only saved by flight, concealment and divine sustenance in hiding.

The great red dragon is a picture of Satan, who is invisible, our implacable enemy. His sevenfold heads and crowns signify his intellectual completeness and power, and the ten horns his tools. We learn (17:9) that Rome is meant by the seven heads. It is not surprising and it is fitting that the God of this world (John 14:30; 16:11; 2 Cor. 4:4) should be clothed with Rome, as Rome held universal sway in the civilised world of that time.

Nevertheless Rome passed through many crises, internal and external, during the early years of the church of Christ, while heathendom was in conflict with the saints. In the time of Constantine (about A.D. 313) the empire was divided into east and west, and in the west Christianity was formally recognised while still being persecuted in the east. Heathendom was discredited very largely and a form of the Christian religion (2 Tim. 3:5) was taking its place. Real victory for the Saviour could not remain dominant with worldly favour, and in course of time went underground as signified by the woman in the wilderness, and there remained for 1260 years.

The spiritual hosts of wickedness in high places defeated in heaven are still waging war against the church on earth. Our victory as individuals can still only be by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of testimony to Jesus, and with a love which puts Him first—before life itself! May our study of this book and the reading aloud of it (1:3 R.S.V.) strengthen us in this by its vivid portrayal of the reward of faithfulness and the punishment of sin. Through the Dark Ages of medieval history true Christianity was hidden and its professors were persecuted, yet it survived in

human hearts and was preserved all the while in the writings copied and re-copied laboriously until the renaissance, the re-birth of learning, and the invention of printing, whereby came the "Reformation."

Our story of the devil's work continues through chapter 13 where we have the first beast arising from the sea with the characteristics of savage animals, and being grievously wounded in one of its heads, but still regarded as invincible. The Roman Empire survived until about 476 A.D. but it had been attacked by Goths, Vandals and Huns successively and was weakened by internal strife, unsettlement and anarchy in its borders. As a political and civil power it had been greatly diminished but its dominion was renewed when the Papacy was joined to it, and exercised "spiritual" dominion over all the kingdoms of Europe, and the clergy in their dioceses, bishops, abbots, priests exercised authority over small and great. The Papal Bulls, Interdicts, and the Inquisition terrified kings and nobles into submission, and had an almost complete monopoly of learning. This is surely represented by the second beast which had the two horns like a lamb and spoke like a dragon. The martyrs of the Reformation could testify to the exercise of these powers, and only their firm adherence to truth, and willingness to die for it, brought in the light and liberty which we are now enjoying.

We read that both beasts were allowed to make war on the saints and to conquer them. Everyone was compelled to worship them. Besides there was a restriction on buying or selling, controlling every part of life unless submission to the power was given. Those wishing to look into history of this kind of rule will find indications of it in Foxe's "Book of Martyrs" and other histories of the period.

The vision of the victors on Mount Zion with the Lamb provides again the necessary contrast and encouragement for all who "follow the Lamb wherever He goes" against the dark picture of times of dreadful suffering and persecution under the domination of Satan and his agents. In this highly favoured land we can scarcely imagine the terrors under which our brethren have lived in times past, or some are now living in some parts of the world.

R. B. SCOTT

HE that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

1 John 2, 17.

GOD had always intended His people to have two dwelling places: we are to live in the world, and to abide in Christ—not one or the other, but both, and at the same time.

'EVIL COMMUNICATIONS CORRUPT GOOD MANNERS'

In an old English novel entitled "Eothen" there is recounted the life history of a hard-headed Englishman who was thoroughly scientific and realistic in his approach to every subject by him discussed. He travelled to the East and after making his home there amused himself with the superstitions of his new countrymen. He ridiculed them and laughed at their beliefs, but as time went on he gradually became infected with the very thing he scorned until, in the end, he became the slave of the superstitions he had once despised.

Everyone knows that it is most difficult to disbelieve what everyone around us believes. It takes very little actual evidence to cause us to believe a rumour, if everyone else believes it. For example, it is extremely dangerous to yell, "FIRE!" in a crowded theatre. Whether there is danger or not, many may be crushed in the rush because everyone believes there is fire. Little evidence is needed to cause everyone to arise and get out! Many good men have been immeasurably harmed because a question was raised regarding their lives. Without evidence a rumour was spread that they were wicked and little persuasion was necessary, after a few believed, to cause all to doubt their morality.

It is for this reason that it is supremely important for the Christian to guard himself against association with evil. God has said, "Evil communications corrupt good manners" (1 Cor. 15:33); "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump" (Gal. 5:9); "Abstain from all appearance of evil" (1 Thes. 5:22). The Christian may be thoroughly convinced that God is, until he places himself in constant association with those who do not so believe. He may ridicule their position and laugh at their lack of faith, but gradually, if he remains in their company, it will become more and more difficult not to become infected with their atheism.

The child of God may abhor the alcoholic drink until he enamours himself with those who drink constantly. He may not swear and curse until he puts himself in a position of hearing foul language from his friends. He may be a regular attendant of the church services until he becomes involved with associates whose get-togethers always come on Sunday or Wednesday evenings. "Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners." C. G. COLLY

OUR PLEA

"Where the Bible speaks, we speak. Where the Bible is silent, we are silent." It means nothing more than the one reading or accepting it wants it to mean.

Get together a dozen preachers and ask for their individual understanding of this statement. They will agree on faith, repentance, confession and baptism—but anything beyond that and all will be in confusion.

Not long ago a preacher delivered a series of sermons containing very rigid rules to obey. But it so happened that he did some things others would not do, under the belief that it would not be scriptural.

If the gospel was presented as "good news" instead of so many rules, and in a do-or-be-damned spirit, it would have more of the results it was intended to have.

The Bible does not say a word about such incidentals as baptisteries, Bible schools, lesson helps, but it was certainly expected that people would use the commonsense God gave them.

FACTS ABOUT THE BIBLE

It contains 66 books; 1,189 chapters; 31,173 verses; 773,692 words; 3,566,480 letters. Its shortest chapter is Psalm 117 (also the middle chapter); its longest chapter Psalm 119; its middle verse Psalm 118, verse 8.

The shortest verse in the Old Testament is 1 Chronicles 1:25; in the New Testament John 11:35. The middle verse in the N.T. is Acts 17:17.

The word "and" occurs 35,543 times in the Old Testament and 10,664 in the New.

"WHO LOVED ME AND GAVE HIMSELF FOR ME"

(Gal. 2:20)

There was no room for Him when He was born (Luke 2:7);

But to prepare our place the Lord has gone (John 14:2).

He had not where to lay His weary head (Luke 9:58);

"He maketh me to lie down" the psalmist said (Psa. 23:2).

He was a-weary journeying (Jn. 4:6);
"Come unto me and rest" I hear Him say (Matt. 11:28).

He took the servant's form, the lowest place (Phil. 2:7);

To make us kings and priests—amazing grace (Rev. 1:6).

"Floods overflow me," Jesus sinking said (Psa. 69:2);

But rivers never can o'erflow my head (Isa. 43:2).

The Man of Sorrows wept that sad, dark day (John 11:35);

That God might wipe all other tears away (Rev. 7:17).

They all forsook Him in His hour of need (Matt. 26:56);

"I never will forsake mine own," I read (Heb. 13:5).

"Reproach hath broken my heart" (Psa. 69:20);

That to hearts afflicted He might wealth impart (Psa. 147:3).

Foes plaited for His brow a crown of thorns (Matt. 27:29);

"A crown of life" my happy brow adorns (Rev. 2:10).

"I thirst," upon the cross He cried in death (John 19:28);

"Shall never thirst," He to His followers saith (Jn. 6:36);

"Was made a curse"—accursed for us He bled (Gal. 3:13);

That "no more curse" might of His own be said (Rev. 22:3).

He came into my place, that I at last (Matt. 8:17);

Might share His glory, suffering days all past (Jn. 17:22).

If one wishes to lose the joy of salvation (Ps. 51:12) all that is needed is to cease reading the Bible and to quit praying.

"LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE"

God's lamps are we to shine where He shall say:

And lamps are not for sunny rooms nor for the hours of day,

But for dark places of the earth where crime and sin and want have birth,

Or where the lamp of faith burns dim, or hungry hearts grope after Him.

And as sometimes we see a lamp far shining in the night,

So dark we cannot see the lamp, but only see the light—

So may we shine, His love the flame, that men may glorify His name.

WINNING!

WINNING. Our goal in life should not be to get ahead of the other fellow, but to get ahead of ourselves. We should see that our todays are ahead of our yesterdays; our work should be performed more resolutely each passing day.

MISCELLANEA

To live for today is in the noblest sense to live for eternity. To be my very best this very hour, to do the very best for those about me, and to spend this moment in a spirit of absolute consecration to God's glory—this is the duty that confronts me.

Knowledge of God in the mind produces love in the heart, which leads to obedience in the life. (Col. 1:9-10; Rom. 5:5; Heb. 5:8-9).

There is not enough darkness in the world to extinguish the light of one small candle.

It is recorded that almost the last words of the great first President of the Czechoslovak Republic, President Masaryk, were to the man who officiated at his funeral: "Brother, give the Republic the gospel."

The vow of elders of the Paulician Christians in Armenia: "I take on myself scourgings and imprisonment, tortures, reproaches, crosses, blows, tribulations and all the temptations of the world which our Lord the Intercessor and the Apostolic Holy Church took upon themselves, and lovingly accept them."

There is little hope of children finding a home in the church unless they have previously found a church in the home.

Enter, O Lord, this house with me, that I may enter Thine with Thee.

The men who move the world are the men whom the world cannot move.

It is well to keep unspotted from the world, but at the same time we should try to clean up some of the world's spots.

"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).

"To him who knows to do good and does it not. . . ."

A priest or a Levite might admit that a man who had fallen among thieves had a claim to succour without admitting that the claim applied to himself. No doubt the poor fellow had some relation who might be informed of his plight. If no relative was likely to come by then the obligation would lie on some wealthy traveller, who could well afford the money, or some leisured person, who could well afford the time.

LIFE IS LIKE A BOOK

Your life is like a book. The title-page is your name. The preface is your introduction to the world. The pages are a daily chronicle of your efforts, trials, pleasures, discouragements, ambitions and achievements. The principal subject of your book may be business, romance, tragedy, comedy, science, literature or religion. Day by day your thoughts and acts are being transcribed.

What you will record on the remaining pages is of vital importance. Hour by hour a record is being made which will stand for all time. One day "Finis" must be written. Let it then be said of your book that it is a record of noble purpose, generous service and work well done.

JOSHUA 5:14

"As Captain of the host of the Lord am I come." He came, not to help, but to take command.

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Editor.—For over thirty years the "S.S." has done well to survive. It was preceded by the "Bible Advocate" edited by Bro. W. M. Kempster, who announced that it would cease with the issue of December 1934. A few brethren of whom I was one, acted at once and it was agreed that we should continue. It was to be called the "Bible Standard." I suggested "Scripture" instead of "Bible" and this was accepted. Of brethren who gave a helping hand, only two remain, Bro. John Garnett of Doncaster and myself. Others were W. Crosthwaite, J. Holmes, J. Scouller, J. Anderson, C. Bailey, W. H. Clark, T. E. Entwistle, G. Hassell and J. Wardrop.

Readers should know that financial help has been given from the "Samuel Wood Trust Fund," a grant of eighty pounds being made in August 1965.

Bro. Samuel Wood of Ulverston was keenly interested in the "S.S.," so much so that the aims and objects of the "S.S." were, I believe, stated in his will.

One quarter of his estate came to me as an executor, which was used for the work of our churches and the "S.S."

A. L. Frith

[We are most pleased to receive and to print Bro. Frith's letter. We acknowledge the generous help given to the "S.S." from the Samuel Wood Trust Fund, and Bro. Frith's part in obtaining this help. Bro. Frith has always been a loyal friend of and devoted worker for the paper.—Editor.]

NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

Ilkeston.—We rejoice to report the addition of two to the church here.

K. W. Trusswell, a young married man who has been studying baptism and related subjects for about two years heard Bro. C. P. Slate, of Wembley, who was conducting a mission organised by the Midland churches, at Hucknall, Notts. At the close of the meeting on November 15th, he made a request for baptism. He was immersed at Ilkeston on Lord's Day, November 20th.

Then on Lord's Day, November 27th, we were made glad to hear one of our elder scholars in the Lord's Day school make the great decision to follow her Lord and Saviour in baptism. She is Marion Brown, the daughter of Bro. and Sis. John Brown, and was immersed on November 30th.

We pray that they both may attain "the crown of life which fadeth not away."
F. Gregory

Slamannan District.—The New Year's social gathering was held at Slamannan on January 2nd, 1967, under the presidency of Bro. L. Purcell, Motherwell.

We are pleased to report that there was a large gathering and our thanks are due to the Slamannan brethren who were responsible for the catering arrangements.

Bro. Purcell read to us the parable of the sower and others from Mark ch. 4 exhorting all that sowing the seed is necessary as well as living the Christian life. We should remember that by our endeavours we labour not in vain in God's work and in the end our reward will be life everlasting.

Bro. Jack Nisbet, our first speaker (deputising for his father Bro. Tom Nisbet who was ill and unable to attend) spoke of our reason for coming together on an occasion such as this and gave us a stirring message on "The New and Living Way," the narrow way in which we must all walk.

He exhorted that this way leads upwards not downwards, it is a way in which to be in we must be in Christ, how to remain in this way, the end to which it leads, everlasting life at the end of the journey.

Bro. Jack Parker, Wigan, gave us an outline of the history of the Jews at the time of Nehemiah and made us aware that the cry then should be the cry now "Let us rise up and build."

To this end we need each other, all are needed in the work of building up and strengthening the church to the praise and glory of God.

Together, with God, we can accept this challenge and apply positive thinking and action to all our problems. Let us be workers, not shirkers or jerkers, as God depends on us to do His work on earth.

We were favoured with choir pieces from the Wallacestone Choir, male voices, solos and a trio by other brethren.

Bro. Paul Jones gave us a short report on the position of the "Scripture Standard."

We look forward to a happy and prosperous year in the work of the Lord
Hugh Davidson (Dist. Sec.)

OBITUARY

Sister Elsie Hood

We record with sorrow the death of a beloved wife, a gentle sister in Christ and a lady who was a friend to all she met and whose marriage relationship latterly was a source of inspiration to the intimate friends of Bro. and Sis. Hood.

Her greatest quality was based on a gentleness and meekness of character all too rare in church life today. Hers has been a full life—the details perhaps meaningless to all but her close associates, and suffice it to say, that when the writer first met her, she exhibited that maturity of perfection for which Paul prayed for the Ephesian Christians.

Memories of personalities soon fade: one experiences formative influences all one's life. Sister Hood's greatest epitaph will be that by her example such attributes as love, sympathy, meekness and understanding have become realities — realities which influenced those around her.

Sister Hood was a woman "who went about doing good."

CAMP HEATHERBELL

(July 8th-22nd, 1967)

A reservation of facilities for a camping holiday has been made for the two weeks, July 8th-22nd, 1967.

The camping site is at Weston Lodge near Biggar, in beautiful Southern Lanarkshire, at the foot of the 2,335 feet Tinto Hill. The estate covers 53 acres of gardens, lawns, woodlands and playing fields.

Within the estate is accommodation

SLICES FROM THE BREAD OF LIFE

To Start your Day—		March		For your Evening's Meditation—	
Mar.	1 ... Numbers	6 and 7		Romans	1 and 2
"	2 ... "	8 and 9		"	3 and 4
"	3 ... "	10 and 11		"	5 and 6
"	4 ... "	12, 13 & 14		"	7 and 8
"	5 ... "	15 and 16		"	9 and 10
"	6 ... "	17, 18 & 19		"	11 and 12
"	7 ... "	20 and 21		"	13 and 14
"	8 ... "	22 and 23		"	15 and 16
"	9 ... "	24 and 25		1st Corinthians	1 and 2
"	10 ... "	26 and 27		"	3 and 4
"	11 ... "	28 and 29		"	5 and 6
"	12 ... "	30 and 31		"	7 and 8
"	13 ... "	32 and 33		"	9 and 10
"	14 ... "	34, 35 & 36		"	11 and 12
"	15 ... Deuteronomy	1 and 2		"	13 and 14
"	16 ... "	3 and 4		"	15 and 16
"	17 ... "	5 and 6		2nd Corinthians	1 and 2
"	18 ... "	7 and 8		"	3 and 4
"	19 ... "	9 and 10		"	5 and 6
"	20 ... "	11 and 12		"	7 and 8
"	21 ... "	13, 14 & 15		"	9 and 10
"	22 ... "	16 and 17		"	11
"	23 ... "	18 and 19		"	12 and 13
"	24 ... "	20 and 21		Galatians	1 and 2
"	25 ... "	22 and 23		"	3 and 4
"	26 ... "	24 and 25		"	5 and 6
"	27 ... "	26 and 27		Ephesians	1 and 2
"	28 ... "	28 and 29		"	3 and 4
"	29 ... "	30 and 31		"	5 and 6
"	30 ... "	32, 33 & 34		Philippians	1 and 2
"	31 ... Joshua	1 and 2		"	3 and 4

for approximately 120 campers. There is a permanent kitchen and good toilet rooms for the camp site.

Boys will be accommodated in Icelandic-type ridge tents; Girls in chalets.

Besides opportunities for healthful physical exercises, a programme of Bible lessons is being prepared. Each day will be a full day of spiritual and physical recreation.

As we hope to have some young people in residence from non-Christian homes, the opportunity to show how Christians can enjoy themselves, while at all times pleasing the Lord, is given.

Write for more details and application forms to: William Steele, 31 Niddrie Road, Edinburgh 15.

The camp is being organised by five brethren who are members of five different congregations. None of these churches is responsible for the camp. The brethren organising it will be responsible to their local churches for behaviour. This will apply to campers as well as to vigilators. W. Steele.

HOLIDAY FELLOWSHIP, 1967

THE Holiday Fellowship is to be held, the Lord willing, at the George Hostel, Bangor, North Wales, July 22nd to August 5th, 1967.

1. **Accommodation.** Single bedrooms will be provided whenever possible. Some have wash-hand basins. Facilities have been greatly improved.

2. **Meals.** Breakfast 8.15 a.m. (9.00 a.m. Sundays). Mid-morning coffee 10.30 a.m. Lunch 1.00 p.m. Tea 4.30 p.m. Evening meal 7.00 p.m.

3. **Terms.** Charge for adults 30/- per head per day. Children (14 years and under) half price. All charges include gratuities.

4. **Bookings.** These will be accepted only if accompanied by deposits. Adults £2; children £1. Those intending to come are asked to book as soon as possible, as fifty places have been reserved for us, and the College authorities want final number at an early date.

5. **Information, bookings etc.:** A. E. Winstanley, 59 Frederick Street, Loughborough, Leics.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Philip Partington, 6 Corporation Street, Morley, Leeds, Yorkshire. Telephone Morley 3928.

BOUND COPIES FOR 1964-66

Bound copies of "S.S." 1964-66, will be available at 18/- each. Order to R. Malden, 41 Comberton Park Road, Kidderminster, Worcs.

THE FUTURE OF THE "S.S."

Further to our note of last month — "Please Help if You Can" — it is necessary to inform our readers that Bro. Walter Barker, the printer, has now ceased any direct connection with the "S.S." From time to time we have paid tribute to his interest, devotion and care towards the paper, both in personal letters and in the pages of the "S.S."

We are assured that the previous good and sympathetic relationships between the printers and ourselves will continue. Every consideration and help will be given in order, so far as possible, to ensure the continuance of the "S.S." In other words our relationships in every respect will continue as they have always been.

For these assurances we are deeply grateful to the printing firm of Walter Barker, and we take this opportunity of expressing publicly our appreciation.

EDITOR

COMING EVENTS

ZOAR STREET, MORLEY:—

A special series of gospel meetings, including our anniversary meetings, will be held from Monday, February 20th to Sunday, February 26th, 1967 (D.V.). Monday 20th to Thursday 23rd (inclusive): gospel meetings nightly at 8 o'clock.

Saturday 25th: Tea at 4.15 p.m.; Evening meeting at 6.15 p.m. Chairman, Bro. Philip Partington.

Sunday 26th: Bible Classes at 11 a.m.; Breaking of Bread at 2.30 p.m.; Gospel Meeting at 7.30 p.m.

The speaker at all these meetings will be Bro. Frank Worgan (Ince). Ac-

commodation will be provided for any who wish to help us in this effort.

Intimation as to numbers expecting to be with us for tea on Saturday 25th will help us. Details to Michael Gaunt, 1 Hembrigg Gardens, Bridge Street, Morley, Leeds. Phone Morley 5309.

ZOAR STREET, MORLEY:—

The business session organised by the conference committee will be held here (D.V.) on Saturday, March 25th, 1967, from 2.15 p.m. to 3.15 p.m.

WEEK-END ACTIVITIES PLANNED BY THE MORLEY CHURCH

Saturday, March 25th:—

3.15 p.m. Devotional Meeting.

Speakers, Geoffrey Lodge (Dewsbury). Jack Parker (Wigan). 4.30 p.m. TEA. 6.30 p.m. Evening Meeting. Chairman, Donald Hardy (Morley). Speakers, Len Daniell (Bristol). Subject, "Christ and the Teenager"; Chas. Limb (Eastwood).

Sunday, March 26th:—

11 a.m. Bible Classes. 2.30 p.m. Breaking of Bread. 6.0 p.m. Gospel Preaching. Speaker, Eric Limb (Eastwood).

Monday, March 27th, 1967:—

10.30 a.m. Prayer Meeting. 1.30 p.m. Ramble (organised by Albert Crosby). 7.0 p.m. Evening Meeting. Speaker, Michael Gaunt (Morley). Subject, "Why be a Christian in the Twentieth Century?"

Brethren desiring accommodation over the weekend are asked to write as soon as possible, giving full details.

It will greatly help with catering arrangements if you will let us know if you will be present for tea on Saturday, March 25th, 1967. Write to Michael Gaunt, 1 Hembrigg Gardens, Bridge Street, Morley, Leeds.

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NYASALAND Mission: Contributions to W. STEELE, 31 Niddrie Road, Portobello, Edinburgh, Mid Lothian.

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