

The SCRIPTURE STANDARD

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

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Why Not? (4.)

"WHY NO MINISTERS?"

[WE cannot do better this month than to present to our readers extracts from Bro. David King's article, "Ministry in the Church of Christ," printed in "Memoir of David King." On pages 251-257 David King presents what we may term the negative position of the New Testament ministry. God willing, next month we hope to show the positive position—that the ministry is composed not of a selected few but of the whole church.—Editor.]

The Minister

"WHO then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed?" (1 Cor. 3:5).

In the Church of Christ, by the Lord's appointment, there are a variety of workers, some of whom have special designations; as, **Apostles, Bishops, Elders, etc.**; but none of these have the title *Reverend*, to mark them off from some other class of workers and from the people of the Lord in general. In the New Testament we never read of the "Rev." Simon Peter; nor of any other person, so distinguished.

It is not wrong to designate a person *venerable* who really is so; and it cannot be improper to apply the term *reverend* to any worthy Christian (man or woman) whose character really corresponds. But the use of the term to designate the "clergy" as distinguished from the "laity," is of the Apostasy, both **unscriptural and antiscritural**. It amounts to an exclusive application of a term which is applicable to every Christian, whose age and character correspond thereto, to a class which . . . is very far from manifesting special sanctity.

But, again,—**The Minister!** **Who** and **what** is he? It is quite common to hear persons allude to **the** minister of the church to which they belong. Nonconformists almost invariably use the term in the singular, as "**the** minister of our church." We have, therefore, to ask of the New Testament an answer to the very reasonable question—What is that office in the Church of Christ which entitles the person who fills it to be termed **THE MINISTER?** The answer is short and simple—There is no such office; and, therefore, no such officer.

But Paul called Timothy "a minister of God," and declared Epaphras "a faithful minister of Christ." (Col. 1:7, 1 Thes. 3:2). What did he mean? Simply that they were faithful servants of God and Christ. The term *diakonos*, in those instances rendered "minister," occurs in the N.T. about thirty times; and is translated "minister" twenty-one times, "servant" seven times, and "deacon" twice. Its meaning, according to the lexicons, is—"one who serves; an attendant; a servant." The word "servant" may be applied to anyone whose service is rendered in the kitchen, shop, or counting-house, but it never, in itself, expresses the kind of service; it

merely marks off the person as "one who serves." So also with *diakonos*—you may know that the person so designated serves by preaching, teaching, executing a commission, but the term expresses nothing of the preaching, teaching, or commission, but only declares the actor a servant . . . He then who would be great in the church is not to become "the minister," in the sense in which the term is used by most churches, but a "servant" to his brethren in every good work. The same word is used in reference to Martha's house service, the service of Paul, the service of relieving the saints, and the service of God's people as a whole. In no instance does the word itself express the nature of the service, the act of "serving" being alone expressed. There is therefore, nothing clerical in the word.

Clerical ministry is also imposed upon us in the N.T. by means of the word *huperetees*. In "four" instances it is translated in the interest of the clergy—"Who from the beginning were eye-witnesses and 'ministers' of the word" (Luke 1:2); "And they had also John to their 'minister' (Acts 13:5); "I have appeared unto thee to make thee a 'minister' and a witness" (Acts 26:16); "Let a man so account of us as of 'ministers' of Christ" (1 Cor. 4:1). But *huperetees*, in its primary meaning, is an "under-rower," one who sat on the rower's bench under a superior officer. In its secondary sense it denotes an "inferior officer" . . . It also came to denote a kind of servant . . . It is translated "officer" in Matt. 5:25, and in other texts. It is rendered "servant" in Mark 14:54; and elsewhere. Here, too, we find no trace of clerical meaning.

In the N.T., "ministry" is presented to us as service of any kind, rendered by disciples of Christ to God and His Church . . . ; that "minister" is never once used to denote a clerical functionary; and that there is no work or office in the Church of God set apart for one individual, which entitles him to be designated THE MINISTER; also that there is no trace of a class of officers who are authorised specially and exclusively to designate themselves Minister—in a word, that there is no more authority for one man to be regarded as the one minister of a church, than there is for popes and cardinals. Not that the word "minister" is in itself inappropriate. It is derived from the Latin *ministro*, which signifies "to serve, to wait on." If the term, in Church usage, were applied to all departments of service, and to all who serve, there could be no objection to its use. Let it be deprived of its special parsonic application, and brought back to its proper and original use, and there will be no need to set it aside.

So far, we have been merely clearing the ground of the clerical rubbish, with which it was covered. "And you have cleared it," says one. "You have swept away the priesthood, the clergy, the minister; and what have you left?" Patience, dear friend! We have very much left. Go with us carefully, and we hope to show you the entire apostolic structure. Our purpose is to bring into view ministry in the Church of Christ as ordained by the Lord, and as it was when the apostles, guided by the Holy Spirit, completed the God-given order of things.

The Christian Family

IN a sense we call the people of the whole world "the human family." But we wish to treat an individual household as the basis for our teaching.

We are not wrong in saying that a family is one where there are husband and wife. Having children increases the number: the husband becomes father and the wife becomes mother; yet they still retain the titles husband and wife. At times lack of love causes dissension and separation, when the two regard themselves no longer as husband and wife.

In order that the motive of the Creator—that the human race be subject to Him—be fulfilled, He has given explicit instructions as to how family life should be conducted. In obedience to God, the social and domestic blessings in this life prepare us for that life which is "eternal in the heavens." It is essential, therefore, that we heed God's instructions to fathers, mothers, aged men and women and children, all these persons making up the complete family.

In 1 John chapter 2 (and we must understand that he spoke from God and the teaching is thus binding upon Christians) the writer says in the 11th verse: "I write unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning; I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one; I write unto you, little children, because ye have known the Father." Here he is writing to three classes of people—fathers, young men, little children—steps as it were in age.

Fathers

"Fathers" here include those more advanced in years than young men, mature in life; who had embraced Christianity from the beginning; elderly, and eye-witnesses of longer standing in the church, established in the truth of the gospel and Christian experience. Secondly, those who were heads of families (as the words "bringing up your children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" imply). You, fathers, are not to provoke your children to wrath; you are to avoid all severity which would do them no good and harm you. Many times severe punishments, cruelty, can harden children in sin. Rebuke, chasten, but in love; do not use that physical force which savours of a revengeful nature. To correct and rebuke without anger emanates from affectionate concern. Even when one older in the church is to be rebuked, such must be treated as a father.

Children are to be nurtured in the admonition of the Lord. As you give every attention to their physical life, so give that spiritual food, spiritual instruction, in early life and its value will be doubled in later years. True, many think themselves beyond the age of receiving spiritual guidance: they regard themselves as too advanced in this world's ways to desire anything of a spiritual nature. Hence the need to "train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it" (Prov. 22 : 6). These words testify that right training of the young has immense potentialities for good. Apart from the home, what more suitable for this work than the Bible School, and yet many growing up think the Bible School is not for them. Every meeting where religious instruction is given is needful for spiritual growth. What a tragedy that so many parents are neglecting this vital duty: they afford every opportunity to satisfy their children's materialistic tendencies—tendencies which become more and more difficult to remove in older years. Fathers, the seed you sow in the life of your offspring is either corruptible or incorruptible, and you will be held responsible to God in the Judgment.

Young Men

"I write unto you, young men": those in the prime and vigour of life and manhood, who have used their vigour in overcoming the allurements of vice, triumphing over the passions of youthful life, overcoming the allurements of vice, sensuality and ambition, depicting that strength of character attainable only through Christ. What parent is there who does not desire his son in full manhood to have those characteristics spoken of by John? We make excuses and say that the times today are so different from those of John's day: we have more worldly amusement, sport, pleasure. ("Room for pleasure, room for business...."). Yet this truth does not free us from blame. Satan is still Satan, sin is still sin. A man is a man not according to his educational, sporting, artistic or physical attainments, but according as he overcomes vice and sin in its every form. That power which glorified the young men of John's day is available today for the receiving. "God will not suffer you to be tempted more than ye are able to bear..." That "we've been young ourselves" does not give licence to indulge in worldly pursuits which lead to spiritual poverty and ruin.

Fathers then are responsible to a great extent for the spiritual education of their children. The characters of our children generally (we say generally because there are almost unbelievable exceptions) are evidence whether we have succeeded or failed in carrying out this responsibility. May God not judge us failures in this serious duty.

In 1 Tim. 5:1 Paul exhorts that the young men be entreated as brethren, brothers in the flesh. This passage advocates that spiritual effort be expended should any fall into sin. It is apparent today that there is lack of respect among

the young for the elder or aged. There are but few cases when it is becoming for a younger one to reprove one older; but when an elder one does err he should be entreated as a father, with caution and respect. In Lev. 19 : 32 it says, "Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head and honour the face of the old man and fear thy God." In Prov. 20:20 we read, "Whoso curseth his father and mother, his lamp shall be put in obscure darkness." Job (in chapter 29) tells of the great respect accorded him before his terrible afflictions came upon him. Let us pay respect to those whose years merit it.

Children

"I write unto you, little children" or "I have written...": to babes in Christ. This follows up Paul's teaching in Ephesians that children are to obey their parents in the Lord, referring, naturally, to children under the government of parents. Obedience is the first great duty which God has enjoined upon children; they are to do the bidding of wise parents.

The young and inexperienced need wise tuition from those older and more experienced, especially from those who rear them. Not only so, but the love of parent for child should be so strong as not to injure. No child disobedient to Christian parents will be obedient to God—we say "Christian parents" because Paul is writing to those "in the Lord."

Husbands and Wives

We come now to the relationship of husbands and wives. Colossians 3 : 18 is almost identical with Ephesians 5:22 — "Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord." Having done with general directions, the apostle comes to particular duties of persons in certain conditions, which are not incumbent upon all. No woman has the duty of a wife to perform but she who is a wife; no man has the duty of a husband but he who is married.

The submission of wife to husband is "as unto the Lord." As the Lord Christ is Governor, Head of the Church and of the man, so is man the head or governor or the woman. This is God's ordinance and order not to be transgressed, unless physical or mental disability prevents one or other bearing his or her responsibilities. The husband should not rule wife or children as a tyrant, but in love. It is unnatural to be an obeying husband or a commanding wife.

The primary motive of this order of subordination is "as unto the Lord." Wives, act under the authority of your husbands as the church acts under the authority of Christ. As the church submits to the Lord, so let the wives submit to their husbands.

Husbands, wives, this is a serious matter. How can we attain to this divinely inspired order unless we are conversant with God's word? The more we know of His truth the more will love be shown, for God is love. Husbands in complete obedience to Christ, their Head; wives lovingly obeying their husbands, their head—love is the key to this wonderful order, for "husbands should love their wives even as Christ loved the church and gave himself for it." So, if we want to know the love a husband must show to a wife, we must know something of the cost paid for our redemption.

Just as from a young age children are schooled in education as something absolutely necessary, so in the home: if harmony is to be experienced, husband, wife and children must know this divine order. Love, divine love, holds the key.

Mothers

Now, a word to mothers. "What is the meaning of mother, why is that name so sweet?" Mother: she who attends to your needs, sacrifices for you, spends sleepless nights watching over you in sickness, loves you and stands by you in adversity. Mothers, aged and young women: as one entertains and gives respect to an elder man as to a father, esteem the older women as mothers, showing the same respect for age and the proprieties of life. No child with proper feeling can rebuke a mother with severity. Have you ever spoken harshly to your mother without being ashamed of yourself?

One of the great changes made by the gospel was that it produced in the social position of women blessings and liberty. It gave them at once their dignity and freedom of action. In early Christianity the care of women became of special concern to the rulers in the church. We can understand why Paul gives in detail to Timothy and Titus intimate instructions on these matters.

The aged women are to be in dress and deportment such as their holy calling requires. It is natural for the young to imitate the old. How necessary it is, therefore, that mature women should be an example of godly living to the young women in the church; giving advice in marital relationships, showing the dangers of the world, and need to be busy in the beautiful things peculiarly applicable to women.

J. MELLING.

The Compliments of Christ

THE compliments of a flatterer are nothing. (Psa. 5:9) "For there is no faithfulness in their mouth; their inward part is very wickedness; their throat is an open sepulchre; they flatter with their tongue." Solomon says: "He that goeth about as a talebearer revealeth secrets, therefore meddle not with him that flattereth with his lip" (Prov. 20:19). Of flatter, Webster says: "Used not merely to give pleasure, but with motives of self-interest." Thus we can readily see why the compliments of a flatterer are nothing.

The compliments of Jesus are different. They are not used to flatter, but rather to encourage and give honour to whom honour was due. Jesus never misplaced a compliment. Why? Because He knew what was in man. (John 2:25) "And needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in a man." While here below our Lord paused in His busy schedule of living and complimented five persons. We would like to study with you those compliments, realising that if we have in our lives what these people had the Lord will compliment us, too.

The first is listed in John 1:47. There was a great deal of moral corruption among the Jews of Jesus' day. In this passage Jesus compliments a man because he is free from such. Notice, "Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile." Guile or deceit is that "which gives a false impression, whether by appearance, statement, or influence." This was certainly rife in Jesus' day. How many, many times the Lord refers to the Jews as "hypocrites." These people pretended to be something they were really not. Read Rom. 1:28-29 and notice the terrible sins with which guile is classified. Some would tend to think that being deceitful is only a minor thing, and that they can do so with but little consequence. Be not deceived: those who are deceitful shall be punished. In 1 Pet. 2:1, guile is again condemned, also in chap. 2:22, we are told that Jesus was free from guile. Let us endeavour to be likewise.

The next compliment is given to a Roman centurion for his great faith. The account is found in Matt. 8:5-11. Someone might ask, "What is so outstanding about this?" The answer is: this man was not a Jew. Jesus said: "I have not found so great faith, no not in Israel." I wonder, brethren, if we today might not be in the same boat as were the Jews? We claim to be the church, God's people, and yet some of us show our lack of faith by our actions. Every time we worry and are anxious about the future we are showing our lack of faith in God. When we fail to carry out His commands because we are caring for the temporal things of life, we are but showing our lack of faith. Truly, our faith should be great.

In Matt. 11:11, Jesus says, "Verily, I say unto you, among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John, the baptist; notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he." But, why was John great? For one thing he obeyed God. He did what divine providence intended for him to do. He remained in his God-given sphere. He did not claim to be the promised One, only His harbinger. For this, John was great. In Matt. 18:1-4, Jesus gives His standard of greatness. Let us all strive to be great by being humble, and the Lord will be pleased.

We read of the next compliment in Mark 12:41-44, where Jesus says of a poor widow: "Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in than all they which have cast into the treasury." Why? Because she gave of her want and they of their abundance. According to the A.V. she gave two mites which in our money would be equal to a farthing. Jesus blessed her for her liberality. He will bless us, too, if we are liberal. It is not so much the amount that we give, but what we give in accordance with what we are able to give. The words of this poem should be our sentiment.

"Go break to the needy sweet charity's bread,
For giving is living," the Angel said;
"And must I be giving, again and again?"
"Oh no," said the Angel, piercing me through;
"Just give till the Master stops giving to you."

The last compliment we shall notice is found in Mark 14:3-9. Of the woman who had so unselfishly anointed Him, Jesus said: "She hath done what she could." I can think of no greater compliment anyone could receive than this. Wouldn't it be wonderful if the Lord could look down on us all and truthfully say, "they did everything they could." Brethren, when it comes to living a Christian life, do we do everything possible to protect our Christian reputation? When it comes to studying our Bibles, could the Lord say of us "He has done everything possible to learn more of me." When we miss church services, have we done everything possible to be there? These questions should make us think and stir us to do the right things.

Truly, the Lord knew what was in man. He never misplaced a compliment. May our lives be such here that, when the Lord calls us home, He can say, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joys of thy Lord." This will be the greatest compliment of all.

—Selected.

Christian Baptism as understood by an Infant Sprinkler

"THE sacrament of baptism shows forth the gospel in another way. It demonstrates that the Christian life is a participation in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and therefore a dying to self and a rising to newness of life in him. This Word is most clearly visible when baptism is administered as total immersion . . .

"The early church acted out the meaning of the gospel in baptism. Since Christ by his death and resurrection had broken the bonds of sin and death, the initiate, as he was incorporated into the body of Christ, participated in Christ's victory. He was submerged beneath the water—an act that truly symbolised his death, since it cut him off from the source of life. Thus he shared in the death of Christ, and entered into the tomb with him. But then the initiate was raised up from the water, symbolising his resurrection from the dead, his rising to walk in newness of life with Christ. He was now a new creature, a 'new being' in Christ Jesus.

"This is the imagery behind a number of Paul's difficult statements about baptism" (we venture to say that these statements would not be 'difficult' if it were not attempted to force them into referring to infant sprinkling).

'Do you not know that all who were baptised into Christ Jesus were baptised into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life (Rom. 6:3-4; see Col. 2:12).'

"This is why hymns about the resurrection are more appropriate at a baptismal service than hymns about little children.

"The picture of the initiate submerged beneath the waters suggests another dimension of the gospel. For the waters imply the *washing away* of sin, so that the initiate rises cleansed from all the stains of the past, forgiven and made clean.

"... 'believer's baptism' stresses the necessity of human response to what God has done. [There can be no such response from a baby in arms]. "When an adult is baptised he is publicly affirming his desire to accept what God has graciously offered him."

(Robert McAfee Brown, Canadian Presbyterian minister, in "The Spirit of Protestantism" 1961, p. 150).

ARE YOU A RUSTY NAIL?

A strong horseshoe magnet may be held over an old rust-eaten, shapeless nail without meeting any response to its magnetism. A bright, ringing nail will leap to the magnet, attract another and —through it draw yet another, until several are attached.

This is how Christians should be. A genuine, active shining Christian, has a tremendous attraction to Christ, and is magnetised with His love and purity, attracted by His power. And through that Christian Christ can draw still others to Him, to share the same power of attraction.

But a rusty, unpolished, corroded Christian; cranky, defiled and selfish has very little attraction and through Him the power of Christ to win the world cannot flow. God has enough power to wipe out every evil doctrine in the world. But He needs, "conductors." Rusty, untaught and unpractised church-members neither draw others near to God, nor are drawn near themselves. Your religion must be intensive, before it can be extensive.—(Selected).

TIRED CHRISTIANS

The **tired Christian** will work if coaxed. The tired Christian complains so much there is no joy in his work, for himself or anyone else.

The **retired Christian** believes he has done his share and sits idly by, exercising his right to . . . criticise.

The **rubber-tired Christian** will go along. He wants it soft and easy.

The **flat-tired Christian** was once closely affiliated with the church, but suffered a puncture and has never regained his wind.

The **at-tired Christian** goes to church at Easter and other times when he or she shows off new clothes.

The **never-tired Christian** is a regular work-horse. Nothing wears him out. God bless him!

—Woodstock Church Bulletin."

"NOT GOOD IF DETACHED!"

Did you ever notice on many kinds of tickets and coupons, the statement "Not good. . . if detached"? The coupon was made of the same material as the rest of the ticket, was printed with the same ink, on the . . . same press, and was kept in the same office, and used by the same company. But it was not good if detached. Its usefulness, its value, its ability to purchase anything, was dependent upon its relation to the rest of the ticket.

Of how much worth is a church member if he is detached from the rest of the church? How much fruit can a branch bear if detached from the vine? How good is your hand, when detached from your body? A Christian is one who stays with the rest of the church. He cannot serve part from it.

JESUS CHRIST IS

Able to do

All that we ask,

All that we ask or think,

Abundantly above all that we ask or think,

Exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think

According to the power that worketh in us

—(Eph. 3:10).

FROM THIS, LORD, SPARE ME

From prayer that asks that I may be,
Sheltered from winds that beat on Thee;
From fearing, when I should aspire;
From faltering, when I should climb higher;

From silken self, O Captain, free
Thy soldier, who would follow Thee.
From subtle love of softening things;
From easy choices, weakenings.

Not thus are spirits fortified,
Not thus went the Crucified:
From all that dims Thy Calvary,
O Lamb of God deliver me.

T. Frost.

Zacchæus

The eager crowds to Jericho
Flocked in from far and nigh;
They swarmed along the dusty streets
To see the Lord go by.

They'd heard that He could do great things.

Work miracles, 'twas said;
Had cured many of their ills,
And even raised the dead.

So, rich and poor, the Priest and Scribe
And Pharisee came down,
The humble shepherd from his flock,
And people of renown.

And Zacchæus, the publican,
Quite rich, but rather small,
Found that the crowd had grown so thick,
He naught could see at all.

But he had come to see the Lord,
That sight he would enjoy;
Bethought him of the sycamore
He climbed up as a boy.

So swift he sped along the street
To where the tall tree grew,
Swarmed up and seated on a branch
Which gave a splendid view.

Of Jesus coming down the road
With His disciples round.
He saw much more up in that tree
Than standing on the ground.

Then Jesus, stopping 'neath the tree
With His disciples twelve,
Saw Zacchæus peering through the leaves
Just like a little elf.

"The day is spent, haste down, my friend,
I at thy house will abide."
So quickly Zacchæus hurried down,
His heart aglow with pride

To think that this most famous Man,
The One Who was Divine,
Had chosen Zacchæus' house and friends,
And deigned with them to dine.

Then Zacchæus, when they all had dined,
Stood up and promised true,
The half his goods to give the poor,
And all his wrongs undo.

For though on earth he'd wealth enough,
By faith he saw he must
Commence at once to lay in Heaven
Treasure that cannot rust.

So children, though you may be small,
You too can win the prize
Of Jesus' love, for as you see
He takes no heed of size.

J.J.S.

* * *

Conscience tells us that we ought to do right but it does not tell us what right is—that we are taught by God's word. Trust him little who praises all; him less who censures all; and him least who is indifferent to all.

A Judge writes to Teenagers

THE Judge of the Juvenile Court of Denver, Colorado, has sent this open letter to teenagers:—

"Always we hear the plaintive cry of the teenagers—What can we do? Where can we go?

"The answer is. . . Go home! Paint the woodwork, rake the leaves, mow the lawn, wash the car, learn to cook, scrub the floors, get a job, help the minister, study your lessons . . . and then, when you're through and not too tired, read a book.

"Your parents do not owe you entertainment. Your town does not owe you recreational facilities. The world does not owe you a living. You owe the world something. You owe it your time and your talents, so that no-one will be at war or in poverty or lonely again.

"In plain words, GROW UP; quit being a cry-baby, develop a backbone, not a wish-bone. What you are, God gave you. What you become, you give to God. You are important and you are needed. It is too late to sit around and wait for somebody to do something someday. Someday is now . . . and somebody is YOU.—"Christian Advocate," Feb. 21st, 1964.

* * *

IT DEPENDS ON YOU!

PEOPLE losing faith in us may lose faith in God. Every time we do something wrong those who see or hear about it are weakened. They have less respect for us, less confidence in us. Sometimes this weakening leads them to do wrong. The wrong leads them away from God.

* * *

THE CAUSES OF OUR ILLS

MODERNISM and materialism must bear their responsibility for the present-day moral and spiritual "let-down." By the negative process of saying "We do not believe this" and "We do not accept that" they have helped to undermine and destroy the faith of this generation. When you rob men of their confidence in God and the Bible, moral decay sets in, human passions are not restricted, and human life becomes cheap.

Difficulties

Difficulties are often blessings in disguise. When I was a boy, I found a little chick that seemed to have more trouble than its fellows in obtaining its freedom from its shell. With more zeal and sympathy than understanding, I peeled it out of its shell and expected it would show its gratitude by hopping about enjoying its freedom. But what was my disappointment to find that it remained helplessly weak, and soon after died.

I didn't know then, as I do now, that the exertions of gradually breaking out of the shell were necessary stages in its proper development.

Thus we are exhorted, to look to difficulties, trials and temptations, as necessary stages in the upbuilding of our Christian character, and to "count them all joy."—Selected.

"GOD'S HANDIWORK"

Bro. John Breakell hopes to reply in the July issue to Bro. Barker's article under the above heading in April "S.S." especially as regards Daniel 3:25 and the pre-existence of Christ.

Editor.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

JUNE, 1964

7—Exodus 4:1-23	Mark 14:1-31
14—Exodus 14:13-31	Mark 14:32-52
21—Exodus 16:9-36	Mark 14:53-72
28—Numbers 21:1-20	Mark 15:1-20

BETHANY

(Mark 14:3-9)

"A village on the south-east side of the Mount of Olives, about two miles from Jerusalem." The word means "house of dates." The present village is set among fruit trees and cornfields, and it was probably so in the time of Jesus. This name has a fragrant memory for all Christ-loving people because of its hallowed associations. The household there, which alone accounts for this, first comes to light in the gospel of Luke, but he does not give us the story of Mary's tribute which we are reading in Mark's gospel. It appears in Matthew's, and

John provides a fuller picture and invaluable background.

There can be no doubt that Jesus visited Jerusalem at each of the appointed feasts. He would thus obey the law of Moses, which He of course recognised as the law of God for the Jewish nation. In the course of journeying He had received hospitality at the house of Martha and Mary, and a strong bond of love and friendship had developed. Bethany was on the route from Jericho to Jerusalem and visitors to that city from many parts would pass through it. Jesus and His disciples obviously did so and are reminded of the woman of Shunem and Elisha's visits there (2 Kings 4:8).

John (read chapters 11 and 12 to verse 11) provides the story which gives a vivid insight into the family at Bethany. Jesus's earthly life was coming to its "hour." The hostility of the Jewish authorities had become so fierce that He had retired after (and in fact did so before that) raising Lazarus, the brother whom He loved (11:3), to Ephraim. He was doubtless giving His precious time to the special instruction of His disciples (11:54). He was awaiting His final journey to Jerusalem, timed for the celebration of the Passover at which the Lamb of God was to be sacrificed. He came to Bethany six days before the feast, and was there several times in that last week. Probably he arrived on Friday evening, though the days are uncertain, as are the days of other events in that week.

At least some of the "twelve," probably all of them, were entertained with Jesus at the house of Simon the leper two days before the feast. He was the guest of honour, however. After a day of conflict, spiritual labour and gathering clouds at Jerusalem. He is here with those He loved in a special sense, and who dearly loved Him. This would be a large party for the household of Simon, who, we may assume, had been cured of leprosy by the Saviour. Martha, Mary and Lazarus were concerned in this—perhaps it is their own home, Simon in that case being the father, or at least the owner of the house. Martha would surely be serving without the distraction and the heartache she had on an earlier occasion (Luke 10:41). Had she not learned some wonderful lessons in the meantime, and grasped like Mary the

supreme need. And Lazarus—what glowing affection and deep reverence must have filled his heart! There must have been a joy and peace at that table with their honoured, respected and beloved Guest. Yet this was tinged with apprehension for His safety.

It is certain that the gathering clouds were realised by the family from the attitude of those who were with them mourning for Lazarus, and witnessed the miracle of his restoration. His retirement out of the public eye was known to them for they knew where to find him. Again the authorities at Jerusalem had given orders for His arrest. Thousands who had come into close touch with Jesus must have loved Him dearly, and we know many women had been greatly blessed by His ministry. They showed it in personal attendance and monetary support (Luke 8:1-3). Mary had already shown this close personal attachment, and deep appreciation of the truths He taught. Her loving heart was filled to overflowing when she realised this as perhaps a last opportunity to express her feelings towards the Lord. So she conceived the beautiful manner of honouring their guest and benefactor. The ointment was very rare, very fragrant and very expensive. It may have been a family treasure, or she may have bought it with this very purpose. So before that company she came and anointed both head and feet, and in utter humility and tenderest love and respect, wiped it from His feet with her hair. The deep, deep feeling thus expressed in action was pleasing to the Lord—oh that the same might fill more Christian hearts, and bring them to His feet, issuing in close attention to His worship, and like deeds of gracious blessing upon the lives and persons of others!

R. B. SCOTT.

NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

Peterhead.—During the month of April, we had the assistance of Bro. David Dougall. Meetings were well supported by members and non-members, and we had an inspiring time as the Word was opened to us. The climax of the mission came on Saturday, April 25th, when a young man, Alan Gardiner, made the

good confession and was immersed into Christ.

Bro. Dougall did not spare himself in his efforts to extend the Kingdom in this place, and our thanks are due to the district churches for lending him to us, and to God, to whom we render praise and glory.

J. Buchan.

Wigan, Albert Street.—From April 28th to May 7th we enjoyed the services of Bro. Albert Winstanley. We were greatly encouraged by members from near and far; and forceful addresses by our brother along with visitation round the district resulted in the effort being worthwhile. On the Saturday, meetings were held from 3.30 p.m. on the subjects: "Will Planned Giving help us?" "Does Prayer Change Things?" and "Evangelisation." Questions were answered, followed by short discussion. Our thanks to all who supported us, and we trust the seed sown will bear fruit to His church and the Master's cause in the days that lie ahead.

OBITUARY

Kirkby-in-Ashfield (Beulah Road).—The church here records with much sadness the passing of their beloved brother, Charles Wood, after a short illness, on Friday, April 24th. He was immersed into the Lord at Selston fifty-five years ago and had reached the age of 71. He was held in high esteem both as a brother in Christ and as an elder of the church here, and his passing leaves a big gap in the ranks of our fellowship. He will be remembered among us as a Christian of faith and integrity, loving his Lord, not in word only, but in deed. Patient and persevering, he held on to his faith tenaciously, fully believing in the promises for which he laboured and in the Lord who will give the eternal crown. His example is before us and is an exhortation in itself, that we likewise labour to receive the prize.

We commend his loved ones who are left behind to the comfort of the living God, into whose keeping our brother has gone until the great day.

Our brother was interred on Tuesday, April 28th, the services being conducted by the writer.

Tom Woodhouse.

TRAINING FOR SERVICE

Aylesbury, Bucks, July 19th to August 2nd:—

First Week. Sunday to Saturday, 19th to 25th, 7.30 p.m.: "Lectures on the Book of Revelation," by W. B. West, Jr.

Monday to Saturday, 20th to 25th, 9.30 to 11 a.m.: New Testament Evangelism (study of Acts) by W. B. West, Jr.; 11.30 to 12.30: Christian Evidences, V. Trout; 2 to 3.30: New Testament Evangelism (study of Acts), W. B. West, Jr.; 3.30 to 4.15: Group Discussion (selected topics).

Second Week. Sunday to Sunday, 26th to 2nd of August, 7.30 p.m.: "Lectures on the Book of Revelation," W. B. West, Jr.

Monday to Saturday, 27th to 1st of August, 9.30 to 11 a.m.: Church Problems (study of Corinthians), W. B. West, Jr.; 11.30 to 12.30: Christian Evidences, V. Trout; 2 to 3.30 p.m.: Church Problems (study of 1 Corinthians), W. B. West, Jr.; 3.30 to 4.15: Group Discussion (selected topics).

Note to the above: Classes will not be conducted on Saturday afternoons, but the lectures on the book of Revelation will be held each Saturday evening.

Registration: Registration fee will be £5 for one week and £8 for two weeks. This is necessary to cover the cost of text-books and other materials to be used. Text-books will be retained by the student. Final date for registration and payment of fees will be June 30th. The fee will be reduced and refunds made if this proves possible. Students are to provide only a Bible and appropriate notebooks.

Hospitality will be given by the Aylesbury brethren.

Please note that this series of studies is not a "holiday fellowship," as is generally meant by the term, but is an attempt to provide both serious and systematic study of the subjects chosen, in order to help those participating to more effective service in the work of the Lord. In drawing up the programme of studies, the aim has been to choose subjects that have a wide appeal, and will be of the most practical help. The group discussions will be of an informal nature

and will deal with some of the problems often met with in the work of the Lord. The lectures on the book of Revelation, are designed to help the student combat errors by those who so misuse this book, such as the Jehovah's Witnesses, Christadelphians, Evangelical Premillennialists, and the like.

Full particulars and registration forms can be obtained from: L. H. Channing, 10 Mandeville Road, Aylesbury, Bucks.

DAILY CLASSES FOR WOMEN

Subject: "Teaching Children," conducted by Sister Becky Tilotta, Freeport, Texas. Sister Tilotta is an expert in teaching techniques, especially in the making and use of teaching aids and illustrative material. She is at present on a world tour of the churches, with the aim of helping Christian women to become more effective children's teachers.

HOLIDAY FELLOWSHIP

Period: August 10th to 22nd, 1964 (including travelling time).

Place: Biel, Switzerland, in a Motor Association Hostel.

Limit: Party will be limited to 52—this being number of beds in hostel.

Board: We estimate that this will cost £5 10s. per adult (i.e. age 14 and over) and £3 for under fourteens.

Travel: Party rates for the journey (by rail) London-Biel return as follows:—

Age	£	s.	d.
4-10 years	4	13	0
10-14 years	7	3	6
14-16 years	8	15	0
16-21 years	9	2	0

Adult Party: Cost per adult for party of 10-24 adults, £13 10s. Cost per adult if 25 or more adults £12 6s.

Bookings: Must be accompanied with fee of £2 for 14 years and over; £1 for under fourteens. Bookings on "first come first served" principle.—A. E. Winstanley, 43a Church Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent.

AN INVITATION

Cleveleys.—Once again we should like to appeal to brethren spending their holidays in Blackpool or nearby to "come over and help us." We are only a small church numerically and it is a wonderful encouragement for us to see visiting brethren from other parts of the country during the holiday season. Although we have invited speaking brethren to serve us during the summer months, we shall still be grateful to hear from any other brethren who will be willing to serve us whilst they are on holiday. Please contact Bro. Eric Winter, 77 Kelvin Road, Norbreck, Blackpool. Our Lord's Day morning meetings are held in the Co-operative Hall, Beach Road, Cleveleys, at 10.30.

THANKS

Bro. Derek and Sis. Margaret Daniell would like to thank brethren for their messages of sympathy when Mark was taken from us on April 25th (aged 23 months). We bow to the will of Him who gives and takes away, knowing that "He is too good to be unkind, and too wise to err." (Rom. 8:28).

BIRTH

Kirkby-in-Ashfield.—We rejoice with Bro. and Sis. Tom King in the gift of a daughter, Margaret Ellsabeth, born April 21st. The Lord bless and keep them all.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Bro. R. B. Scott (from May 26th): 20 Midhurst Avenue, Muswell Hill, London N.10.

Bro. and Sis. Bill Jones, 45 Buncer Lane, Blackburn, Lancs.

CHANGE OF TREASURER

Blackburn (Park Road).—Bro. Bill Jones, 45 Buncer Lane, Blackburn, Lancs.

CANCELLED

Doncaster.—Owing to unexpected circumstances, the Tea and Meeting arranged by the above Church for June 20th has had to be cancelled.

J. Garnett.

COMING EVENTS

Loughborough.—God permitting, Bro. C. Philip Slate will preach on "Church Unity," on Saturday, June 20th. On Lord's Day, June 21st, Breaking of Bread, at 11.15 a.m.; Gospel Meeting at 6.15 p.m. We would be pleased if all in our district on these dates could be with us.

Statement of Accounts

Year Ending March 31st, 1964

INCOME

	£	s.	d.
Balances at 1st April, 1963:			
Cash in Hand	29	9	11
Balance at Bank	183	9	10
Subscriptions	348	14	7
Gifts	121	2	0
Subs. for "Mission Messenger"	2	14	0
Total	685	10	4

EXPENDITURE

	£	s.	d.
Printing	411	17	0
Printers' Postages	17	6	6
Secretary's Postages	37	10	0
Postal Wrappers	9	8	6
Refund Overcharge	2	4	0
Sundries	6	11	4
Paid to M.M.	2	14	0
Total Expenditure	487	11	4
Cash in Hand	48	1	9
Bank Balance	149	17	3
Total	685	10	4

I have checked all vouchers and book entries and declare this to be a correct extract therefrom. Signed, Henry Hardy, 4-4-1964.

THE SCRIPTURE STANDARD is published monthly. Prices: Home, one copy for one year, 12/-; two copies 20/6; three copies 28/6 post free. Canada and U.S.A.: one copy, one dollar 80 cents. All orders and payments to the 'S.S.' Agent and Treasurer: **PAUL JONES**, 41 Pendragon Road, Birmingham 22B. Tel. Birchfield 5559.

All correspondence, including articles, news items, coming events, etc., to be sent, before the 10th of the month to the Editor, **C. MELLING**, 133 Long Lane, Hindley, Lancs. Payments to **PAUL JONES**, address as above.

NOTICES. Scale of charges: 3/- for first 3 lines or less; 8d. each subsequent line. Repeats (if notified when sending copy) half original charge. Payments to **PAUL JONES**, address as above.

EVANGELIST FUND: Contributions to **R. McDONALD**, who is also Secretary of Conference Committee, "Aldersyde," 10 Mardale Road, Bennett Lane, Dewsbury, York.

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

Hymn Book Agent and Treasurer: **FRED HARDY**, 73a Bridge Street, Morley, Leeds, Yorkshire. Tel. Morley 255.