

The SCRIPTURE STANDARD

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

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DAMON AND PYTHIAS

THE friendship of Damon and Pythias (more properly Phintias) is an early Classical parallel with that of David and Jonathan. The friends were followers of the Greek philosopher Pythagoras. When Pythias was condemned to death for plotting against the life of Dionysius, ruler of Syracuse, he begged leave to return home to set his affairs in order. Damon offered himself as a hostage, pledging to die in his stead if Pythias failed to return by the date set for the execution.

On his way back Pythias was delayed when his horse was killed and he could find no other means of transport. On his arrival he found Damon at the place of execution, and rushed to embrace him. Dionysius was so moved by the close friendship between the two that he pardoned Pythias, freed Damon, and asked to be admitted as a third member of so remarkable a brotherhood.

Apart from being pleased at the happy ending of this incident it is always thrilling to read of such faithfulness and love between friends. Little wonder indeed that the ruler of Syracuse asked to be counted as a friend and be part of such a brotherhood. One's mind instinctly goes to the scriptures and thoughts come flooding in when one thinks of Ruth and Naomi ("for whither thou goest, I will go") and David and Jonathan (each loved the other as his own soul). One ponders if a third party can be successfully grafted into such a friendship without impairing it. When one reads of Jonathan one can be excused for longing for just such a friend. There arise such friendships from time to time, exclusive and sometimes quite unique.

Again, one thinks of surely the most remarkable brotherhood the world has ever known — the brotherhood of Christ. Exclusive and yet the most inclusive. Unique and yet the most far reaching and all-encompassing. Jesus set the very highest standard. He was a faithful friend to us all — faithful even to death on the cross. He is a loving friend to us all — His love being measured again by the fact that He was prepared to die for us and indeed did die. Such was the strength of the friendship between Damon and Pythias that Damon presented himself at the place of execution at the appointed time and would have died in place of his friend. Jesus, however died for his enemies. Our Lord knew well that men could become inseparable friends and would be prepared to die for one another. Paul also comments on the possibility in Rom. 5:6-10 "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners Christ died for us." Wretched

humanity though we be yet Jesus shunned the very nature of angels that He might become one of us and sojourn amongst us and thus lay a real and proper foundation for such a brotherhood. He is our friend but more: He is our brother. The writer to the Hebrews enthuses over the matter in chapter 2 "But we see Jesus who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour: that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man." (v.9); "For both He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren." (v.11): "For verily He took not on Him the nature of angels: but He took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren that He might be a faithful and merciful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that He himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succour them that are tempted." (v. 16, 6:18).

Was it Dr. Johnson who said that friendships had to be kept in repair?

May it be as the year 1974 unfolds we will keep our friendship with Christ in good order. "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you," said Jesus (John 15:14). Conversely, friendship with the world is enmity with God. May it be that we shall strive to be worthy of the great brotherhood of Christ of which we are members. May we succeed in trying to emulate our Lord in His faithfulness to His friends and loyalty to His purpose and may we capture a little of His matchless love. The writer to the Hebrews exhorts us to "Let brotherly love continue. Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares. Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them: and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body." (Heb. 13:1-3). In the same chapter at verse 5 the same writer reminds us that we have a friend who, unlike some earthly friends, will never forsake us or let us down. He says, "Let your conversation be without covetousness: and be content with such things as ye have: for He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." A friend who will never forsake us is a friend indeed and Jesus is one who sticketh closer than a brother. The apostle Peter adds to this already happy situation the great and grand assurance that God careth for us and we can confidently cast all our cares upon Him. (1 Peter 5:7).

I've found a friend: Oh such a friend,
 All power to Him is given;
 To guard us on our onward course,
 And bring us safe to heaven;
 The eternal glories gleam afar,
 To nerve our faint endeavour;
 So now — to watch! to work! to war!
 And then — to rest forever.

Shall we then, during the coming months, try to let brotherly love continue and abound, forgetting not to entertain strangers, remembering them that are in bonds and them that suffer affliction and adversity.

Within the brotherhood of man shall we try to enhance and enlarge this 'remarkable brotherhood' — the brotherhood of Christ.

EDITOR.

THE CHURCH AND YOUNG PEOPLE

THERE are more young people in the world today than ever before. We have many fine young people in the church that are loyal and dedicated to the truth. But we also have some that are using the young people in an attempt to restructure the church. Campus Evangelism was the first major effort to lead the young people away from the truth. Campus Evangelism was only a name to cover up what its real aim and purpose was. It was never designed to reach students on the universities with

the truth. Campus evangelism no longer exists by name, but it is not dead. It has just gone underground. The principles and the practices of campus evangelism are still being advocated by many that are leading our young people astray. When Campus Evangelism threw in the towel many thought that was the end of the problem, but when seeds of error are planted, they are not so easily rooted out. Many of the errors of Campus Evangelism are still being advocated. These errors and practices will corrupt the young people in the same way that Campus Evangelism was doing.

The problem among young people in the church did not develop overnight. Some of the things that we have allowed to happen opened the door. The beginning of this problem was parents rejecting their responsibility of bringing their children up in the nurture and the admonition of the Lord (Ephesians 4:1-4). Parents got so involved in the materialism of our day that they did not have the time nor the inclination to do any teaching at home. The church was having classes, so just let the church take care of the teaching of the children. It is fine for the church to have classes for young people. This will never take the place of the responsibility of parents. God never intended for the church to take over the responsibility of mothers and fathers. The church cannot do this even if it tries. It is time for the church to refuse to accept the responsibility of parents and put the parents back to seeing after their God-given responsibility. I hear and read that the church is losing its young people. I deny that it is the church that is losing its young people, it's the homes that are responsible for it. We need to put the blame where it belongs. The church cannot be saddled with a responsibility that God did not give it. How can the church be blamed for the failure of a responsibility that God never gave it. In our efforts and urging to get people to Bible classes, we have forgotten to teach parents to do some 'homework'. It is time that we sent parents home to do some of this work.

The church, in allowing parents to put their responsibility off on it, found a load it could not carry. Elders began to look for ways to try to do the work. This is where youth directors, youth ministers, and retreats for young people came in the door. In addition to the church trying to take over the work of parents in teaching the Bible, it was now ready for the next step. It must provide recreation for the young people. The church found it was unable to do the teaching necessary when parents gave up their responsibility, and so in order to try to hold the young people, it had to get into the recreation and entertainment field. Church-sponsored basketball, baseball, and softball, and you-name-it teams — where is the verse of scripture that even intimates, much less states, that this is the responsibility of the church. Timothy and Titus were young preachers associated with Paul, but with what stretch of the imagination can one conceive of Paul leaving Timothy at Corinth to organize a track team to race with the church at Ephesus, with Titus as their youth director? Or is it possible to picture Timothy carrying the young people at Ephesus on some retreat, then reporting in the Ephesus bulletin the following.

The young people at Ephesus have just experienced a new high in spirituality. Saturday night at 11.30, we blew out the lights and started spontaneous prayer, with the girls leading as well as the boys. We held hands while we prayed and you could feel the Holy Spirit working. At five minutes past twelve, we observed the Lord's Supper. It had never been so meaningful at Ephesus. Instead of passing the trays in the old folk's way at Ephesus, we were asked to pass by the table single file. Each passed by the table, partook of the bread and the wine, then returned to their seats. Titus led us in singing while we were observing the Supper. The communion service was so meaningful. Every heart was touched. Each communicant experienced renewal and forgiveness. It was beautiful and we praise God for "a full cup of blessing." The high light of the retreat was the speeches made by Hymenaeus and Philetus. Both of these men really know how to turn young people on. Hymenaeus discussed the subject, "Church

Traditions", and Philetus' discussion of "The Holy Spirit and Spontaneous Worship Services" really got things going. Both of these speakers really know how to talk to young people and they really laid the establishment low. We are looking forward to our next retreat, to be at the Moonside Motel on the Sea of Galilee.

Timothy, Youth Director for the church in Ephesus.

Lest you think that I just made this up, let me say that the report of the Ephesus bulletin was taken from bulletins that I have received. I just changed the congregation, the youth directors, and the names of the speakers at the retreat.

If we are still in earnest about following the Bible, it is time that we stopped and gave careful consideration to some of these things. Does the church have special interest groups? When will the elders employ a "Lonely Hearts Director"; a "Minister For The Sick", and let him do the visiting for all the church? When will the church get a minister for the over-thirty group and one for the old folks? If retreats for the young people produce a spiritual high, by turning out the lights and observing the Lord's Supper at five minutes after twelve, would not a little of this be good for the old folks? To listen to some of the youth directors and speakers on these retreats, the old folks need it worse than the young. If having the Lord's Supper at five minutes after twelve makes it so much more spiritual and meaningful than at ten or eleven a.m., why not arrange for the whole church to meet regularly at five minutes after midnight and observe the Lord's Supper?

Another practice that has developed is to take the young people off somewhere on Sunday Night following the regular service and have some kind of devotional. Is it out of order to ask what was wrong with the regular service? Why is the regular service good enough for the old folks, but not for the young? What scripturally takes place in these devotions that provide spiritually that does not in the regular service?

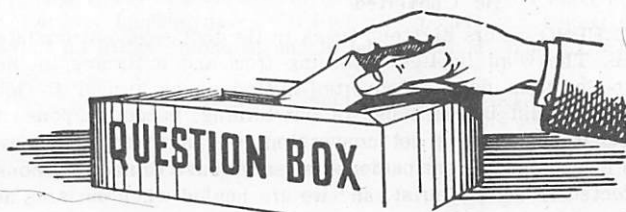
The church is the body of Christ. There are no special interest groups in the church whether they be young or old, male or female, black or white. To promote a special interest group in the church violates the unity of the church as taught in the Scriptures, (1 Corinthians 1:10). There is no more scriptural basis for special interest groups in the church than there is for clergy and laity. Anything that promotes special interest groups in the church, whether it be young, old people, or anyone else, violates the spirit of unity as taught in the New Testament.

Why can't we let our young people be just simple Christians like all the rest? The young people can make a contribution to the cause of Christ just as older people do. They can work beside and along with others in the church. They can grow spiritually in the same manner as the rest of the church. John said, "I have written unto young men because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one", (1 John 2:14). Is it not significant that not a single letter in the New Testament is written to young people as a group and dealing with their problems as distinct from other Christians? There are no special youth epistles in the New Testament. The instruction given to the young is right alongside the instruction given to all other Christians.

I am not opposing young people. I would be just as opposed in an effort to make a special group out of old people and corrupt them and leading them into error. If I had no interest in young people, I would never have written this article, as I know before it's ever printed that it's not going to win me any popularity contests. But I'm not concerned about popularity, but the church and the spiritual and eternal welfare of the young.

From "The Word of Life".

(A little glimpse of what can happen in the "States" but the warning to look after our young members is timely. There are some in this country too who want to restructure the church through the young. Ed.)



 Conducted by
 Alf Marsden

What is meant by "When the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord"? Acts 3:19.

This is a statement which is included in a more comprehensive statement, and we must examine the context before we can attempt to explain the meaning.

The Context

The statement is included in a discourse which Peter had with the people after he had healed the lame man at the Beautiful gate of the temple. The scripture says that the people were filled with wonder and amazement at what they had seen, and Peter, never one to miss an opportunity, spoke to them. He told them that he and John had no special power of their own to make the lame man whole, but that God had glorified Jesus, the Christ, and that it was because of faith in the name of Christ that the man was healed. He reminded them that they had delivered Jesus to be crucified and had desired a murderer to be released to them, but God had raised Jesus from the dead and glorified him. Peter also said that he didn't know whether it was because of ignorance that had done what they did, but he made it plain to them that they shouldn't have been ignorant of the facts because God had spoken about Christ through the mouths of all of His prophets, and that the prophecies were now fulfilled. He then made a call to them, "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord". In fact, what Peter did was to preach the gospel to the people.

The Parallel

The passage under consideration shows a marked similarity to the preaching of the gospel by Peter on the Day of Pentecost. We will note the similarities in table form.

Acts 2	Acts 3
1 O/T history and prophecies	Same
2 Jews responsible	Same
3 Jesus Lord and Christ	Same
4 Call to repentance	Same
5 Be baptised	Be converted
6 Remission of sins	Sins blotted out
7 Reception of Holy Spirit	Times of refreshing

You will notice, as I say, that there is a marked similarity between the statements made on each occasion when the gospel was preached to the people, indeed, we would expect this to be so. You see, it is inconceivable to imagine that Peter would say different things when preaching about the same Saviour; if we accept that, then the apparent difference in wording is capable of explanation. Points (5) and (7) are the ones that seem to require some explanation.

Be Converted

The Greek word STREPHO occurs eighteen times in the N/T; and is translated 'turn' in every instance. The word implies a turning from and a turning to. See 1 Thess. 1:9, "turned to God from idols". Converted to God means 'turned' to God. Divine grace expressed in Christ is the cause of our turning; human response to that grace is the effect. Repentance is not conversion; we 'turn' after we have repented. Conversion is not pardon; we are pardoned after we have turned. Response in turning to God is effected in Jesus Christ, and we are healed when our sins are forgiven. See Matt. 13:15 and Mark 4:12. It is quite evident that our sins are forgiven when we are baptised into Christ, indeed, Peter says that baptism is for the remission of sins. Therefore, when Peter says 'be converted' he means belief of and response to the gospel in baptism.

Times of Refreshing

The R.S.V. renders Acts 3:19 thus, "Repent, therefore, and turn again that your sins may be blotted out, that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord". From this scripture we can see (a) that forgiveness of sins and the coming of times of refreshing are conditional upon repentance and conversion, and (b) that the times of refreshing will come from the presence of the Lord.

Now to refresh means 'to give intermission from labour'; 'to give rest'. Jesus said to his disciples, "In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world" John 17:33. We participate in the overcoming of the world when we participate in Christ, and we participate in Christ when we are freed from sin and enter into the glorious rest and peace which comes with the forgiveness of sins. Paul teaches us in the Roman letter that we are in the Spirit, if the Spirit of God really dwells in us Rom. 8:9. He further relates this new spiritual experience to being 'in Christ', and we know we are 'in Christ' when we have surrendered to him Rom. 6. Therefore, when we are 'in Christ' we have peace through the Holy Spirit who dwells within us; who gives us rest from sin; who helps our weaknesses. This is God's presence with us through faith in Christ Jesus and obedience to his word.

In O/T days when God told Moses to lead the people toward Canaan, Moses said, "Now therefore, I pray thee, if I have found favour in thy sight, show me now thy ways, that I may know thee and find favour in thy sight. Consider too that this nation is thy people". And He (God) said, "My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest". And Moses said, "If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence. For wherein shall it be known here that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight? is it not in that thou goest with us? so shall we be separated, I and thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth". Exodus 33:13-16

Conclusion

From the foregoing I would say that 'the times of refreshing' coincides with the advent of the Holy Spirit into our lives. His presence goes with us. He marks us out as a people for His own possession. The Spirit witnesses with our spirit that we are the children of God. Paul said to the church at Corinth, "Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts". 2Cor. 1:21,22.

(All questions please, to : Alf Marsden, 66 Mitchell Street, Newtown, Wigan)

SCRIPTURE READINGS

FEBRUARY 1974

3—Genesis 21:1-21	Luke 1:1-25
10—Exodus 1:15 to 2:10	Luke 1:26-38
17—Judges 13,	Luke 1:39-56
24—1 Samuel 1:1-20	Luke 1:57-80

LUKE'S LOVELY LYRIC

THE lyre is a musical instrument. When played by a skilled hand, it produces lovely music. The mind and heart breathed upon by the Holy Spirit of God produced His Word. "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit" (2 Peter 1:21). So the writers of the New Covenant produced the spiritual music of scripture. Luke, the beloved physician (Col. 4:14), recounts in the chapter occupying us this month his motive and method in under-taking the momentous task, and the intimate details of two miraculous births. There is no sign whatever of lyrical effort and yet the truth plainly expressed excites our deepest interest and sympathy as we seek to enter into the experiences of the people concerned. Its simplicity gives it a fadeless charm. Translators too seem to have grasped and passed on in our own language the spirit and power of the original. The poetic utterances bear this stamp also—and Simeon's in chapter 2.

We look at the author's preface and at his life as far as scripture reveals it. Never does he mention his own name. His preface to "Acts" enables us to meet him first at Troas (16:10) and later at Philippi (20:5 & 6) by what we may call the "we" passages in that book, which also tell us he accompanied Paul to Rome (27:1). A wealth of meaning attaches to his title, "beloved physician" when we see him last at Rome with Paul (2 Tim. 4:11), and realise that for many years Paul suffered an affliction in his flesh, of which God chose not to relieve him, but in which Luke would be able to exercise his skill and help (2 Cor. 12:7-9). There is little doubt that Luke was at

Jerusalem while Paul was at Caesarea for two years awaiting trial with freedom to be visited (Acts 24, 27 & 23). See also 21:17 and 27:1.

Several important points are mentioned in the preface. We learn that he was by no means the only one who wanted to record the beliefs of the early christians about the Lord's life and teaching. The selection and preservation of the New Testament Canon represent God's hand in history — no one has yet explained this fully, and yet the collection of books forming Holy Writ bear in themselves the stamp of truth and authority. So the work Luke put into his investigations and his consulting of witnesses was richly blessed of God to form a part of "the faith once and for all delivered" (Jude 3). His eminent friend, Theophilus (meaning "lover of God"), like so many receiving letters for their immediate advantage personally or locally, received both "Luke" and "Acts" for the future benefit of us all — until faith gives way to sight. That Paul was one of the eye-witnesses and ministers is quite certain (Acts 26:16), but many more must have been consulted. It was a great and consuming work backed up by the very spirit of God Himself.

To learn by direct association with those so intimately concerned with the births of John and Jesus, Luke would have to be in touch with the women who knew it all so well. This is the only account we have respecting John. It is perhaps surprising that only Matthew and Luke give any of these early events, yet they are a necessary part of the revelation our Heavenly Father has made to us of the working out of His gracious purposes, and they are full of instruction and help. Did not some of the younger shepherds who heard the heavenly host singing their message of hope and peace, pass it on, and do we know what communication Mary living under care of John, son of Zebedee, passed on to Luke? Many christians living in or about Jerusalem (and Caesarea for that matter) would have heard the preaching of the Saviour. Some might well be there who ate the bread and

the fishes by Galilee. Preaching to Cornelius in Caesarea Peter said "The word which he sent unto the children of Israel, preaching good tidings of peace... ye yourselves know". The word and work of Jesus had been published all around, and was known. Philip the evangelist was at Caesarea (Acts 8:40), and had four daughters who prophesied (had the gift of declaring the truths of the gospel by direct inspiration). There Luke was lodged and they stayed there "many Days" (Acts 21:8-10).

Jesus promised His apostles that the Holy Spirit would guide them into all truth, and enable them to remember "all things whatsoever I have said unto you" (John 14:26)—something quite impossible humanly speaking. This capacity was made use of by Luke in writing the wonderful story of the heavenly messages given by Gabriel to Zacharias and Mary. The record is simply the plain truth, plainly written. It is divine revelation. Happy indeed were those who were thus honoured by the Lord. All subsequent generations call them blessed (1:48).

R.B. SCOTT.

DIFFICULT TO GET AWAY FROM

IT is difficult for an individual who knows the scriptures to ever get away from them. They haunt him like an old song. They follow him like the memory of his mother. They remain with him like the words of a revered teacher. They form a part of the warp and woof of his life. Woodrow Wilson.

HOW TO KILL A CHURCH

DON'T come or if you do come, come late. Stay at home if you have company. Give the smallest coin in your purse. Find fault with everything. Object to most proposals and offer nothing constructive. Doze off during the service. Never invite anyone to the church with you. Dash off after a service and say little to anyone. Avoid trying to share the workload with the other members of the church. Don't attend the Sunday evening or midweek meetings. Disappear when volunteers are being sought to carry out a difficult task.

CONVICTION

CONVICTION breeds conviction and the man who is only half convinced himself never convinces anyone. The church sometimes seems to have grown afraid of plain speaking and is often quite apologetic. It is thus often regarded with disguised contempt by the world at large. The way to regained authority is by regained sincerity; and that is true of the church both collectively and individually. We need a more virile type of piety, fearless, sincere and uncompromising. God does not want mice, but men.

DO YOU WANT A REVIVAL?

IF all the sleepy folk will wake up
And all the lukewarm folk will fire up
And all the disgruntled folk will sweeten up
And all the discouraged folk will cheer up
And all the depressed folk will look up
And all the estranged folk will make up
And all the gossipers will shut up
And all the true soldiers will stand up
And all the good preachers will speak up
And all the church members will pay up—

THEN INDEED WE WILL HAVE A
REVIVAL!

CHANGE OF SECRETARY

New Wellington Street, Blackburn, Lancs.
From February 1st, 1974, the secretary of this assembly will be :-

Bro. Tony Tyson, 14 Peel Close,
Blackburn, Lancs. Tel. Blackburn 60649.

ARTICLES WANTED

Probably everyone regrets the necessity for printing 'second hand' articles in the "S.S." (i.e. articles taken from other magazines or papers.) The only way of avoiding this necessity is for all the brethren capable of writing an article, even a small one, to do so and send it to the editor without undue delay. If twelve brethren would write but one article per year then the problem would be solved. There is a great wealth of talent in the brotherhood, if the truth were known, and so brethren I ask that you get pen and paper and start writing your one article per year. Don't care how short it is — just get it written and sent in. I look forward to a good response. Thank you.

EDITOR.

CHURCH OF CHRIST

THESE three words do not describe the building itself. "Church" in our language has a double meaning — the material building, as well as the body of people who use it for worship and work. In the Bible it is NEVER used with that first meaning. It refers to the community of people who have accepted Christ as Saviour, repented of sin and been baptised (dipped) in water for remission of sins, and have thus become Christians. This very brief summary of THE WAY INTO the church of Christ is that preached and practised by the apostles in the early days of the church. Additions or subtractions should not be made to that, but of course the points mentioned are only the beginning. They would be futile and false if the fruits of the spirit of Christ were not produced in the life which follows.

The title, however is not really any more ours than it should be that of every religious body owing allegiance to Christ. We believe it is a right name for the Christian community or church. Every community has to be labelled in some way to maintain its identity.

We now reprint an article on the subject:—

To many people the CHURCH OF CHRIST is a new religious group. They cannot remember ever having heard of it before. And yet the church of Christ is not a new or recently established church. It is as old as Christianity.

Jesus was the builder and founder of it (Matt. 16:18). The apostle Paul was a member of it (Romans 16:15). All New Testament Christians were members of it (1 Cor. 12:13), and anyone who has read the New Testament has read about it. Thus many people reading or hearing the New Testament have heard of it without realising it.

It is not an exclusive or proud church. You will find it is very simple. It does not propose to feed vanity with a display of vain things. Its aim is not to amuse or entertain those who attend its services. But it exists in your community as a simple body of Christians pointing all who look its way to Jesus Christ as God's Son, the hope of the world. Its

doors are open to those who from the quiet depths of their hearts would reach out to God in simple worship and obedient living.

You may be surprised to find that there is not much of the ready-made for you in this church. There is no ready-made creed such as you find in many places. You take the Word of God and make it your guide as you believe everything it teaches. There are no ready-made prayers. Every believer voices his own earnest longing for the presence of God, and for His sustenance and guidance. There is no ready-made order of worship. Each church of the Lord arranges its own order in harmony with the items of worship described in the New Testament. There is no ready-made music. We make our own music by singing together as the early Christians did, and it is sweet to the ears of God in proportion to the worshippers' sincerity and humble obedience to God.

You may be surprised to find that this is a free church under Christ only as its Head. It has no organised connection with any other congregation, but is bound in a unity of faith with all everywhere who are contented with the simple New Testament commands, precepts and practices.

In this church every member is a priest. There is no distinction between "clergy" and "laity". We believe all Christians are called to be saints. Their gifts and functions may differ according to capacity and sex, but their status before the Lord is the same. Jesus Christ is our High Priest.

This church is the outward manifestation of a deep conviction that simple apostolic Christianity can be produced today by the same living word which produced it in the first century. We do not claim perfection as human beings. We seek humbly to serve Jesus and urge others to do the same.

M. Norvel Young, California, 10-5-55.
(Reprinted from 'Kentish Town Messenger' issued by the church of Christ, Hope Chapel, Prince of Wales Road, October 1972).

I GUESS I'M JUST LAZY

HAVE you ever noticed how people will yawn and say, "I guess I'm just lazy"? There is usually a twinkle in the eye, an impishness in the face. Laziness seems to be an amiable weakness.

Being sloppy in meeting our responsibilities seems to have almost become a habit. It is popular with men but damnable to God. When you get out of bed in the morning, do you move as if you are half dead? There is no use jumping out of bed with the speed of a jet plane. But don't crawl out like a worm. The Lord condemns such: "As the door turneth upon its hinges, so doth the slothful man upon his bed" (Proverbs 26:14). The lazy man dreams up all kinds of difficulties and dangers to keep from work. "The slothful man saith, "There is a lion in the way; a lion is in the streets" (Proverbs 26:13). There was no lion. He was just too lazy to go out.

How terrible to let the mind become a lumber-room of unachieved beginnings, a graveyard of things half done, a field of stunted and decaying growths. "I went by the field of the slothful...and it was all grown over with thorns and nettles...the stone wall thereof was broken down" (Proverbs 24:30-31).

It takes effort to achieve anything worthwhile. The cult of doing nothing, have nothing, give nothing, accomplish nothing is not of the Lord. In Old Testament days God demanded the firstling of the flock, and accepted only the best (Deut. 15:19-23). David refused to offer a gift "unto the Lord my God of that which cost me nothing" (2 Samuel 24:24). Jesus rebuked the 'wicked and slothful servant' (Matt. 25:26). Paul insists that we be "not slothful in business": rather we are to be "fervent in spirit, serving the Lord" (Romans 12:11).

Laziness can eat into our spiritual life like cancer, people fail to study God's book because diligence is demanded. There is no easy formula to knowing God's will. We can know it only as we pray, meditate and study. Laziness is dangerous. It makes the difference

between happiness and unhappiness, life and death, heaven and hell.

Happiness is never achieved by undisciplined life. As followers of Christ we must never be content with mediocrity but in everything must do our best.

Heaven can be gained only by those who are Not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises" (Hebrews 6:12).
feet.

Read it slowly, frequently, prayerfully. It is a mine of wealth, a paradise of glory, and a river of pleasure. It is given you in life, will be opened at the Judgment, and be remembered for ever. It involves the highest responsibility, will reward the greatest labor, and condemn all who trifle with its sacred contents.

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction, in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Tim. 3:16, 17).

L.A. Fryar.

THE BIBLE

THIS Book contains:— the mind of God, the state of man, the way of Salvation, the doom of sinners, and the happiness of Believers. Its doctrines are holy, its precepts are binding, its histories are true and its decisions are immutable. Read it to be wise, believe it to be safe, and practice it to be holy.

It contains light to direct you, food to support you, and comfort to cheer you. It is the traveller's map, the pilgrim's staff, the pilot's compass, the soldier's sword, and the Christian's charter.

Here, Heaven is opened, and the gates of Hell disclosed. Christ is its grand subject, our good its design, and the glory of God its end. It should fill the memory, rule the heart, and guide the

MANY men owe the grandeur of their lives to their tremendous difficulties. Spurred on

HE WHO SERVES

He has not served who gathers gold:
Nor has he served whose life is told
In selfish battles he has won,
Or deeds of skill that he has done;
But he has served who now and then
Has helped along his fellow men.

The world needs many men today—
Red-blooded men along life's way,
With cheerful smiles and helping hands,
And with the faith that understands
The beauty of the simple deed
Which serves another's hour of need.

Teach me to do the best I can
To help and cheer my fellow man;
Teach me to lose my selfish need,
And glory in a larger deed
Which smooths the road and lights the day
For all who chance to come my way

20th Century Christian.

Those who follow the crowd are quickly
lost in it!

A shallow thinker seldom makes a deep
impression.

How sweet the words of truth breathed
from lips of love.

Worry often gives a small thing a big
shadow.

"THERE is no failure except in no longer
trying. There is not defeat except from
within, no really insurmountable barrier
save our own weakness of purpose."

GOOD ends can never be attained by evil
methods; the end itself is distorted if the
method pursued is bad.

A successful man is one who has tried,
not cried; who has worked, not dodged;
who has shouldered responsibility, not
evaded it; who has got under the burden
instead of standing off, looking on and
giving advice-

NOTICE : I have been entrusted with the remaining copies of the work of our late sister Caroline Kingswood—The Directory of Churches of Christ in the British Isles, and the leaflet on PRAYER. Numbers are limited and for free distribution write to R.B. Scott, 20 Midhurst Avenue, LONDON, N10 3EN.

OBITUARY

Buckie, Scotland: It is with sorrow that the church records the passing to be with Jesus of our sister Nellie Geddes on Friday, 21st December, aged 76 years. She was a faithful member of the church for many years and was constant in her attendance at the Lord's table, until about a month before her passing.

She was of a quiet and humble disposition and her cheery manner endeared her to all. She was much respected and loved by the brethren. She will be sorely missed by all. We think of the words of the Apostle John "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth. They do rest from their labours and their works do follow them", and believe that they certainly apply to our sister.

We commend her family to the care of our Heavenly Father who is the source of all strength and comfort.

She was interred at the New Cemetery Buckie on 25th December, the service being conducted by Bro. W. Mair and Bro. A. Harper.

Wallacestone: It is with deep regret that we record the passing of Bro. L. Clark, who quietly fell asleep in Jesus on Sunday, 23rd December. His death was very sudden. He was laid to rest on Friday 28th, with Bro. Paul Jones officiating. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord". JAMES GRANT.

CLEANINGS

If I am faithful to the duties of the present God will provide for the future. It does not take great men to do great things. It only takes consecrated men. No one can help everybody, but everyone can help somebody. Some use Christianity like a 'bus: they ride on it only while it is going their way.

WOODSTOCK BULLETIN

YOUR promises to God should be as binding as those you make at the bank.

SOME stand for nothing because they fall for everything.

SAMSON fell from the *binding, blinding* and *grinding* effects of sin. W.W. Ayer

INDECISION is a fatal weakness; a divided mind is never more than half a mind.

WISDOM LET LOOSE

By The Late Lord Dewar

- ***Many a false step is made by standing still.
- ***Nothing deflates so fast as a punctured reputation.
- ***Everybody should be busy, none should be a busybody.
- ***There is no traffic congestion on the straight and narrow path.

ACHIEVEMENT

He has achieved success who has lived well, laughed often and loved much; who has gained the respect of intelligent men and the love of little children; who has filled his niche and accomplished his task; who has left the world better than he found it, whether by an improved poppy, a perfect poem, or a rescued soul; who has never lacked appreciation of earth's beauty or failed to express it; who has always looked for the best in others and given the best he had; whose life was an inspiration; whose memory a benediction.

Mrs A. J. Stanley

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