

The SCRIPTURE STANDARD

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

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The Salvation Army

"The General next to God," by Richard Collier. (Collins, 1965, 25/-).

THE sub-title of this book is "The story of the Salvation Army": the volume is no doubt published to mark the centenary of the Salvation Army, formed in 1865 as the Christian Revival Association, later renamed the Christian Mission.

Our Views of the Salvation Army

We heartily disagree with many of its doctrines: we regard these as being not true to scripture, and, in some cases, opposed to scripture. We instance the Army's insistence on salvation by faith only, on simple belief in and profession of Jesus Christ as Saviour; the failure to observe the New Testament teaching on baptism and the Lord's supper (for reasons of their own); their conception of the church, as far removed from that set out in scripture; their methods of raising money for the carrying on of their work.

We disagree, too, with the Army's methods of attracting attention and reaching the public: their bands (in these days their keeping up with modern times in the use of guitars and other devices in order to be "with it": William Booth, the founder and first General, said that he could not see why the devil should have the best tunes, so he took song-tunes and used them for hymns); we disagree with the insistence upon military terms and conduct to live up to the fact that the movement is an Army; their theatrical and sometimes sensational display to get the people around in order to preach to them. Many are shocked by the regular visits of public houses by S.A. "lassies," to sell their literature and to collect money.

Then there are many who judge (or misjudge) the Salvation Army because of William Booth. He is "The General next to God" in the title of the book we are discussing. There is no doubt that he was autocratic: by some he would be regarded as dictatorial. As mentioned above, strict military discipline was enforced by Booth upon his "soldiers." His men and women were under orders. They were engaged in a life or death warfare, of God against the devil, light against darkness, holiness against sin. Absolute and unquestioning loyalty were demanded by and given to the General.

As children, we remember that the S.A. was treated with derision. It was to us the "Sally Army"; we sang comic songs poking fun at its teachings and doings and burlesquing its use of popular song-tunes in the singing of hymns.

The Circumstances Surrounding the Salvation Army

But this book helps us better to understand the reasons for the Army's aims and methods by describing the conditions in which the Army arose and still works in many parts of the world. What William Booth was, and the discipline he imposed upon his Army, grew largely out of his own terrible experiences and his observations. In 1890, the year of his wife's death, he published his book "In darkest England and the way out." The title was adapted from H. M. Stanley's work of a few years earlier—"In Darkest Africa." Stanley was the man who had found David Livingstone in tropical Africa, when, no news having been received of him for many months, it was feared that the great explorer had perished. Stanley's book, "In

Darkest Africa," gives his account of a later mission. The writer of the book under review describes Stanley's journey of 150 days and nights, when 500 lives were lost, through "dense undergrowth, sweating through the green underwater light of vast forests beyond the Congo.

"This primeval backdrop caught Booth's fancy. For mile after mile trees stretched 180 feet to the sky: no sunlight shafted through to sweeten the decaying air. To the forest's pygmies there was nothing on earth but this dark world where the rain pattered ceaselessly. A flash of inspiration and the General saw the parallel: weren't there thousands in Britain, too, to whom the world was all slum? His selling-title had come custom-built: 'In Darkest England and the Way Out.'"

We remember reading a passage from a social history of the Victorian period, in which the author compared "the Empire on which the sun never set with the streets of slums on which the sun never rose." Such was the London, and other great cities, at the time Booth wrote his book. It was an exposure, compiled from most painstaking evidence, of the appalling conditions in London in the late nineteenth century. The industrial revolution had produced the vilest living conditions, the worst poverty and the foulest immorality that this country had ever known. Little or no education for the poor; stark hunger; filth and disease; drunkenness; prostitution; violence. Disraeli in his novel "The Two Nations" depicts the England of the mid-nineteenth century as two separate classes of people: on the one hand blatant and extravagant wealth, on the other hopeless poverty. Very few of the rich had any idea of the existence of these poor, and, if they had, cared little. It would cast a blight upon the luxury and pleasures of the wealthy even to be told of, let alone think upon, the state of these wretches. They had "no hope and were without God in the world"; each of them could have cried with much truth, "No man cared for my soul." But William Booth did: he saw these people not as sub-humans, machines to make profits for their masters, dragging out their unspeakably miserable existence from cradle to grave. Booth saw them as souls, for each of whom Christ died. Since 1860 or thereabouts he had set himself to bring hope and compassion to what were regarded as the dregs of humanity. Now he set himself with redoubled efforts, and infused his enthusiasm into others, to care for and uplift these forgotten souls. His command to his Army was "Go for souls, and go for the worst of them."

That sums up in one sentence the mission and work of the S.A. For a hundred years its workers have reached strata of people whom more conventional religion never touches. Most of those who profess to be Christians would pass by on the other side rather than be near the characters who have been reached and lifted by the S.A. We are touched when we read of Christ's being with publicans and sinners, the harlots, the scum of society, people of the gutter. But we dread what would be our reactions if we were expected to mix among such.

"Wiser than the Children of Light"

This is a moving and disturbing book. It does not set itself to play upon our emotions. The author sets out facts in a plain, uncoloured manner which is more effective than any tugging at the heart strings, and reveals far more clearly the devotion and consecration, the courage and determination of the rank and file of the S.A. Where there is sin, with its awful results; where there is injustice, need, suffering, poverty, oppression, there is the Salvation Army. On reading the book the question constantly arose in our mind: "Is not this our mission too, and what are we doing about it?"

We withdraw from such people we meet in this book. Christ goes to them. We do not give much impression that we care for people. We are so very respectable, constantly wondering what people will think of us. We know little, and do not trouble ourselves to find out, about those in the immediate neighbourhood of our homes and our meeting-places. We are not interested or concerned enough to visit our Bible school scholars' homes, to find out their backgrounds and to understand them better. We adopt the attitude that our services are there for people to come to if they wish, and if they do not, so much the worse for them: the fault is theirs, and we cannot do anything about it.

Of course, we are not in the position to do such work as the S.A. does. We have not resources to be compared with theirs. But we can and must do much more in calling upon people in their homes, letting them see that we love them and are concerned for them, that we have something for them. We are not serious enough in the work of God; not sacrificial enough in time, money or abilities; not as deeply consecrated as we should be.

The motto inscribed upon the banner of the S.A. is "Blood and Fire." What "blood and fire" are there in our service for Christ? What energy, strength and virtue are we using up in His noble cause? Too often we ask "What is the use?"—of house visiting and tract-distribution. To adopt such an attitude we may as

well ask "What is the use of preaching the gospel?" or for that matter of doing anything? How many have heard the gospel through us? How many have we visited or served in any way? How many see in our lives that which helps them to see Jesus?

It is not a matter of "Why doesn't somebody do something?" What am I doing? This task of taking the gospel must begin in me. House-to-house visits can result in home Bible studies, in the hope of leading others to the salvation which is in Jesus Christ. It can result in winning children and young people to the Bible school, and influencing and interesting parents through their children. The zeal of Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons and the Salvation Army in such work should fill us with shame.

All this is easier said than done. It is a very difficult work, on hard ground. But Christ never told us His service would be anything else but difficult. "It is the way the Master trod. Should not the servant tread it still?"

EDITOR.

Amazing Accuracy in Bible Texts Revealed

[The following article by Reiman Morin appeared in the "Amarillo Sunday News-Globe" on January 29th, 1956. It deals with a subject of vital interest to all of us and illustrates the fact that the truth and genuineness of the Bible is being proved more and more with every passing year.]

THIS is the answer to those who say we do not have the original Bible.

It is now nearly nine years since an archbishop of the Syrian church, Mar Athanasius Yeshue Samuel, first held in his hands a brittle, dusty roll of parchment. He did not know what it was. He could not read the script which was partially visible where the edges had broken. Yet, something gripped his interest and impelled him to find out about the strange object.

The place was Jerusalem in the summer of 1947.

Even today, the archbishop's dark eyes burn with a deep intensity when he describes that moment.

For the cylinder of parchment, together with other rolls and uncounted thousands of fragments of still others—all found nearby—have come to be known as the "Dead Sea Scrolls." Archbishop Samuel, who now administers a diocese of his church in the United States and Canada, was one of the first men to see the scrolls after they were taken from the caves near the Dead Sea where they had been buried for centuries.

Since the original finds, other fragments have been found. Evidently, long ago, a whole library was hidden away in the remote, uninhabited wastes on the shores of the Dead Sea.

Who did this? Why? How old were the scrolls? What writings did they contain? Questions sprang up on every hand. The first shadowy indications of what the scrolls might be astonished the archaeologists and biblical scholars.

For, some books of the Old Testament were quickly identified, along with some of the so-called Apocryphal writings.

The most thrilling fact was their age—which was hotly disputed at first. They are 2,000 years old, and more—that is, written during the era of the life of Christ.

Thus, they provide "undreamed-of illumination to the study of biblical literature," said Dr. Frank, scholar in Jerusalem working on the scrolls.

To Archbishop Samuel, the important point is:

"They establish the fact that the Bible was written before and during the time of Christ, not in the Middle Ages as some have claimed. This proves that the Bible in our hands today is the true Bible.

"Now we can say with certainty that the prophecy of Isaiah was written before the birth of Christ. The truth of all the prophecies is reaffirmed and strengthened by this fact."

It will be years before all the writings found in the caves have been translated and evaluated. Optimistic scholars estimate 10 to 20 years. Others, however, say enough material is at hand to keep them working at top speed for the next 50 years.

Top speed is very slow. Merely unrolling the scrolls is a delicate, painstaking job. Many of the fragments are mere slivers of papyrus that may crumble when touched. They may have to be read with the assistance of infra-red photographs.

To give some idea of the magnitude of the task—

Seven fairly complete scrolls were found in the first cave. In addition, fragments of 68 other manuscripts were identified from that cave.

From another, 330 manuscripts, all fragmentary, were taken. Other fragments of writings have been found in eight other "minor caves," as they were described by Dr. Cross and Msgr. Patrick W. Skehan, of Catholic University of America.

Fitting these bits together, apart from translating and evaluating them, will be a gigantic task.

Still, a great deal already is known about them. While controversy swirls around many points, big and small, there is a general agreement on some basic facts about the scrolls:

1. They were written between 200 B.C. and 70 A.D. Radiocarbon tests, the age of Roman coins found near them, and other evidence has established this in the opinion of most scholars.

2. They were written mainly on leather, some on papyrus, a few on metal. Then they were sealed with pitch, and carefully placed in large pottery jars. The jars were hidden in the caves.

3. The languages on the scrolls read so far is Hebrew, Greek and Aramaic. (The latter, a Semitic tongue, is generally believed to have been the language spoken by Jesus).

Among the original finds, there was a complete copy of the Book of Isaiah. It has been described as "magnificent." Until this was discovered, the oldest known copy of Isaiah was dated around the 9th century.

Scholars immediately began checking later texts against this latest find. They were amazed at the accuracy of those in use today. But some experts say some revisions in the Old Testament may be necessitated.

There was also a document called a "commentary" on the book of the prophet Habakkuk found among the original group of scrolls. Dr. Millar Burrows, professor of biblical theology at Yale and author of the book "The Dead Sea Scrolls" has written of this:

"In some respects, this curious little document is the most interesting and important of all those found for the identification and history of the group that produced it."

What was that group?

Here, the first boomings of controversy begin to be heard. Scholars agree that a Jewish monastic sect, parts of whose monastery have been found, probably produced the commentary, made the copy of Isaiah, and wrote the other documents found in the first cave.

Dr. Cross says flatly: "The people of the scrolls were Essenes, a well-known apocalyptic sect within Judaism." Other scholars are less positive in the identification, using the term, "Essen-type" sect.

The Essenes are not mentioned in the Gospels. Two other major parties Judaism, the Pharisees and Sadducees, do appear. Dr. Cross says the absence of any mention of the Essenes is not due to ignorance of them by the early Christians, but "from lack of antipathy."

The sect, and the way its members lived—in austerity, sharing common meals, under strict discipline—has been described by the historians Pliny and Josephus and the Jewish philosopher Philo. He wrote of the Essenes:

"Their moral excellence triumphed and everybody treated them as independent and free by nature, praising their common meals and their indescribable good fellowship, the clearest proof of a life which is perfect and exceedingly happy."

Josephus noted that, unlike many of their contemporaries, the Essenes believed in immortality. He describes their tortures at the hands of the Romans, and says: "Smiling in their agonies, and mildly deriding their tormentors, they cheerfully resigned their souls, confident that they would receive them back again."

A widely held theory about the Dead Sea scrolls is that the Essenes hid their books—a great library—in the caves during the Jewish revolt against the Romans. Their community apparently was destroyed by the Roman 10th Legion on its way to the siege of Jerusalem.

Removing the Reproach

In Neh. 2:9-18, we have the account of Nehemiah's visit to the ruined city of Jerusalem. As this man of God surveyed the city he found rubbish in the streets, burned gates, and low walls. So congested was the rubbish in places, that the beast upon which Nehemiah was riding was unable to pass. Such scenes were disgusting to this man, and he declares in v. 17, "Then said I unto them, Ye see the distress we are in, and the gates thereof are burned with fire: come, and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem, that we be no more a reproach."

Jerusalem claimed to be the city of God. However, all this was poor advertisement. The people had a right to expect more, and Nehemiah wanted to see that they got more.

Basically, there are two kinds of reproach—deserved and undeserved. Jesus speaks of one in Matt. 5:11 "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake." We notice also in 1 Pet. 4:14-16 "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters. Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, Let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf." We can clearly see from the above that to suffer for Jesus is an honour, but when we suffer reproach as a result of our own wrong and neglect it is a disgrace.

The church in many places today needs to have the reproach removed. We make great claims to the world, boldly declaring that we are the "Body of Christ," the "Church of Christ," that we are a "Divine institution with a world-wide mission," hence we should be jealous of the Church's good name. But regardless of these facts conditions sometimes exist that cause reproach. For our study we would like to notice a few of these with you. They are:

1. Lack of preparation and diligence in the Lord's work. The work of the Lord is the most important work of all. It demands our very best. Instead of being the product of chance it should be the product of careful and thoughtful planning. I know of nothing that is more disgraceful to the cause of Christ than disorderly church services. Many times we are like those of 1 Cor. 11:17, we "come together, not for the better, but for the worse." Paul tells us in 1 Cor. 14:40 that all things should be done decently and in order.

Singing is a vital part of our worship to God, and from the singing we should all derive great benefit. However, the Lord's day service is no place to learn new songs. I personally enjoy singing new songs, but there is a time and place to learn and practice such, and it is not while we are trying to worship God.

Another part of our worship service that is badly neglected is the teaching. When brethren rise to instruct the congregation in righteousness who have ill prepared themselves for the task no good can result. Instead of being edified people leave confused and disgusted. We certainly need to make some improvements along this line. We cannot expect people outside to come back when our services are poorly arranged and executed.

R. F. WADE.

'Let's end this Mumbo-jumbo at the Font.'

CHRISTENING babies is like naming ships. You can launch them, wet them, shout God bless 'em, and after that simply hope for the best.

As a spectacle, I prefer a launching. Women, though, wring every ounce of value out of a christening.

Grannies love a good nose blow round the font, and parents can confer the distinction of godparent on their friends, like a personal honours list.

The Rev. David Collyer, the curate who has decided not to have his two children baptised, is merely catching up with the view of millions of laymen. Many other clergymen privately hold the same opinion. This is simply that an infant should not be baptised into membership of the Church until he knows his own mind. Yet at a baptism, godparents promise that a week-old baby will practise the Christian life.

My own two children have not been baptised. It would be as silly as putting their names down for the Liberal Party. Whatever a parent's beliefs, it would be absurd not to recognise that children will go their own way. It follows that infant baptism is a mockery.

The most pious cleric has no guarantee that his children will grow up to be Christians. There is often a violent reaction against it. Vicars' daughters are not joked about for nothing. It says a great deal for the nation's honesty, therefore, that baptisms are getting fewer. In 1933, 669 out of every 1,000 children were baptised into the good old C. of E. In 1962, the figure was down to 531.

Parents presumably now see that there is more hypocrisy in infant baptism than there is in church weddings. Only funerals are realistic.

There is, anyway, no scriptural basis for infant baptism. Only for the baptism of believers, and that is a total immersion affair. None of your handful of water and that's another of the perishers done . . .

The argument for infant baptism is that it is a passport to God's grace. A sort of ticket through the pearly gates. That kind of belief reduces baptism lower than mere ceremony, even, and turns it into so much mumbo-jumbo.

Infant baptism, with its present implications of being a member of the Church of England, is hardly likely to survive to the end of the century.

This will be bad news for the folk who make shawls and silver mugs, those who buy them, and those who would like to turn the font into a wishing well.

It is charming, it is sweet, it is good for a cry, but infant baptism has had its day. Christening is all rubric and old lace.

JACK LUCAS

—"Sun," April 27th, 1965.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

FOR JUNE 1965

§—Psalm 51	Luke 5:17-39
13—Exodus 20:1-17	Luke 6:1-19
20—Exodus 23:1-19	Luke 6:20-38
27—Psalm 37:1-22	Luke 6:39-49

THE PARALYTIC'S SIN

(Luke 5:20)

THE healing of the paralytic apparently took place in the early days of the Lord's Galilean ministry, before the Pharisees and teachers of the Law were engaged in their nefarious efforts to trap Him in His talk. He was manifesting His mighty powers over demons and disease in so great a measure that the crowds followed Him for the blessings He brought. He was teaching in a house in Capernaum. His fame brought also the religious leaders from all parts—those engaged normally in the teaching work at the synagogues in the villages and towns.

One man in desperate straits through paralysis was certain Jesus could heal him if He would. He had four friends willing to help and having the same faith. Learning where Jesus was, they carried their sick friend—how far we do not know—and with great assurance and much effort brought him into the immediate presence of the Lord. We may be sure that the teaching of Jesus absorbed the earnest attention of His

hearers and the interruption would not be welcome. Teaching and practice were never divorced in the case of *this* teacher, and no sufferer could appeal to Him without success. Every incident also was an opportunity for instruction.

So Jesus said "Your sins are forgiven you." We are sure that Jesus knew that every sickness and affliction was not the immediate result of sin. We recall His reply on another occasion, "Neither did this man sin nor his parents" (John 9:3). However it is quite certain that some afflictions are the direct result of sin, and with the ideas of his time the paralytic may well have connected his own condition to his sinful ways. What the effect of the words were on him we are not told. They electrified the educated religious folk naturally enough, for it was indeed a stupendous claim Jesus was making. The dying thief could be less surprised than these teachers and the crowd when he heard those wonderful words of compassion, "Today thou shalt be with me in paradise." His heart had responded to the kindly bearing of the suffering saviour and so he acknowledged Him as LORD.

When we consider the powers that Jesus manifested it is a matter of wonder that those who should surely have recognised His supreme authority not only disbelieved but also fought Him—and, in their own estimation, won! They were successful in ending His earthly life on the cross. The battle was beginning in the incident with which we are concerned. The gracious words of kindness and love, which as they rightly thought

were the prerogative of God Himself, brought the claims of the prophet from Nazareth, who had not even got his preacher's certificate, into sharp relief against the false views and hard hearts of those whose teaching was good, but whose practice was bad (Matt. 23:2).

Obviously it was the Saviour's intention most forcibly to impress the meaning and purpose of His miracles ("that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God"—John 20:31) upon the minds and hearts of those present. The same goes for us. Assurance of forgiveness and faith and obedience towards the Christ hold together. The miracles are a means to that end, not an end in themselves, and it was more important that the paralytic's sins should be forgiven than that his paralysis should be cured.

Those who heard the Saviour teach and recognised His selfless, beautiful and holy life could not fail to feel their need for forgiveness and in the early days of His ministry it is certain His preaching was identical with that of the Baptist (John 3:22; 4:1-3). We see this also in the message of the disciples (Mark 6:12; Luke 10:1-16). So we may be sure the paralytic had heard and was conscious of his greater need—though he may not have regarded it so, and indeed may have had an initial disappointment. The Saviour knew well what was necessary and best for the sick man, the faith-full bearers, the people, the teachers, and spoke first the words of compassion conditioned on repentance—we are assured there is no forgiveness without that—and gave assurance of the power to forgive by the power to banish disease at a word. This was not faith-healing but healing granted because of faith.

Shall we also learn—what is not the easiest of lessons though so obviously true—that it is more important to be forgiven than to have material blessings? An age of prosperity is not an age of purity. When Jesus stood on a level place with a great crowd of His disciples and a great multitude of people . . . He lifted up His eyes on His disciples, and said, "Blessed are ye poor . . . But woe to you that are rich. . . ." (Luke 6:17 et seq.). Why? Because the latter are less likely to see their need and to seek it.

R. B. SCOTT.

The Touch of the Master's Hand

"Twas battered, scarred, and the
auctioneer

Thought it scarcely worth his while
To waste his time on the old violin;
But he held it up with a smile.

"What am I bidden, good people?" he
cried,

"Who'll start the bidding for me,"
"A dollar, a dollar?" Now two; only two;
"Two dollars, and who'll make it
three?"

"Three dollars once; three dollars twice—
Going for three"—but, no;
From the room far-back, a grey-bearded
man

Came forward, and picked up the bow.

Then wiping the dust from the old
violin,

And tightening up the strings,
He played a melody pure and sweet,
As sweet as the angels sing.

The music ceased, and the auctioneer,
With a voice that was quiet and low,
Said "What am I bid for the old violin?"
And he held it up with the bow.

"A thousand dollars; and who'll make it
two?"

Two thousand dollars, and who'll make
it three?"

"Three thousand once; three thousand
twice,

And going—and gone"; said he.

The people cheered; but some of them
voiced;

"We don't quite understand, what
changed its worth?"

Swift came the reply—"The touch of a
Master's hand."

And many a man with a life out of tune
And battered, and torn with sin,
Is auctioned cheap to a thoughtless
crowd,

Much like the old violin.

A mess of pottage, a glass of wine,
A game, and he travels on.
He is going once, and going twice,
He is going, and almost gone;

But the Master comes and the foolish
crowd

Can never quite understand
The worth of a soul, and the change
that's wrought

By the touch of The Master's Hand.

Parables of Jesus

1: THE LOST COIN

IN this, first in a proposed series on the Parables of our Lord, let us at the beginning define what we mean by parable. We propose to use the definition "an earthly story with a heavenly meaning."

Our first parable concerns that very human but irritating habit of losing things. We all at some time or other misplace things of importance and are not able to find them. How typical of our Lord to use this failing in order to illustrate heavenly truth!

To be always losing things is a sign of inefficiency. In our young days, when work was not as easily obtainable as it is today, no employer would continue to engage for very long a workman who was continually losing things. When concentrating on a job, it is easy to misplace some tool or other article, but to be constantly doing this is bad.

Let us take a look at the woman of our story. How many of our housewife readers have, like this woman, lost some coin and seen it roll out of sight; perhaps when the milkman or grocer has called and you have been busy; perhaps the children or the husband have been irritating you; and to add to your trouble, at the crucial moment you have lost the money you needed to pay him.

We are told that in Christ's days women wore these coins round their necks on a kind of band.

This woman, evidently, was an efficient person, for she did three obvious things to remedy her loss: she "obtained a light"; she "swept the house"; and "she searched diligently" until she found the coin. Then she called her friends and neighbours and said, "Rejoice with me, for I have found that which I had lost."

Now what is the heavenly meaning behind this parable? This lost coin was of value, it caused a wide search, and when found it brought rejoicing. The key verse to this story, and to our subsequent stories, is the 10th verse of Luke 15: "There is joy in the presence of the angels over one sinner that repenteth": The lost coin speaks of a lost soul. "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

If one asked our readers, "What is your most valuable possession?" one wonders what answers one would get. Would you agree that your most valuable possession is your life? All we have and are lose their significance and value if we haven't life to enjoy them. How important, then, that we get our sense of values right in the first place. We are thinking at this stage not so much of the sinner as of the child of God. It

is always tragic to see sinners going to eternal damnation because of their rejection of the offers of mercy contained in the gospel; but it is even more tragic when those who have been saved drift back into "the beggarly elements of the world."

What are the lessons we can learn from this simple story of the lost coin? That there are things we can lose of more importance than lost valuables. What of lost reputations? The reputation of a lifetime can be ruined in an hour: one false step, one foolish action, and a character that has taken a lifetime to build can be shattered, often beyond repair.

An even greater tragedy is that of lost love. Think of the homes ruined, the happy marriages shattered, because of love that has gone.

But once love goes, everything goes. Lost love, blighted lives, broken hearts: these tell a sorry tale of human failure. This, alas, is true of many Christians gone astray because of lost love.

Lost fellowship, lost endeavours, and what is worst, lost souls. One of the tragedies of the Judgement Day will be the revelation of how many have been lost because Christians have been neglectful in "seeking that which was lost," because they have been too preoccupied with the things of this life and not sufficiently interested in the higher things. In the book of Revelation, chapter 2, verses 2 to 4 our Lord has some things to say to the Ephesian church that He could say to present-day churches: "Thou hast left thy first love."

Yet there are things that are never lost: sympathy, kind words, steadfast love, loyalty and devotion, faithful service. Sometimes unappreciated, but their effects never lost. We express the hope that one result of our study of this simple parable, with its very human and everyday meaning, will be that we concentrate on the virtues named and seek to plant them in the lives of others. They can never be lost.

A lesson we can all learn from this story of the Lost Coin is that we must seek diligently until we find that which was lost.

THINGS NOT LOST

The look of sympathy, the gentle word,
Spoken so low only angels heard;
The secret act of pure self-sacrifice,
Unseen by men, but seen by God's holy eyes—

These are not lost.

The thoughtful plans devised for others' good,

So seldom guessed, so little understood;
The quiet steadfast love that strove to win

Some wanderer from the dreadful ways of sin—

These are not lost.

HAROLD BAINES.

CORRESPONDENCE

WHITHER NOW?

Dear Brother Melling,—Bro. J. M. Wood's letter in May "Standard" charges me with something I neither wrote nor implied in my letter in the April issue. Contrary to commending someone for "imposing an unscriptural condition of fellowship," I stated, "May I commend brethren C. P. Slate and James Gardiner for the reasonable tone of their letters on the cups question?" I regret that I am not able to commend Bro. Wood for the tone of his letter, and must repeat as I wrote formerly that "far too often discussion of this issue . . . has been conducted on a level unworthy of Christians." I had in mind the attitude which seems to delight in misrepresentation and maligning of motives—and by which any discussion is rendered valueless before it begins.

Bro. Wood says, "I see no point in patting someone on the back for imposing an unscriptural condition of fellowship which is causing trouble in the church, and I cannot but question the motives of one who does." It is sad that a commendation of brethren for stating their opposing views in a loving manner should be so misrepresented. No-one can fairly read into my letter that with which Bro. Wood unjustly charges me. I am constrained to urge upon him—and all who engage in this controversy—a fact we ignore at our peril: a situation of great difficulty can only be made worse much worse, by unworthy attitudes. The fact that brethren differ is **no excuse** at all for unChristian conduct in controversy.

Brethren generally are weary of differences being made the occasion of personalities. They long for the day when such can be discussed solely on the level of principle, in love, free from personalities and partyism. For this reason I urged, and urge again, that brethren generally should come together, first for fervent prayer and self-examination, then to engage in frank and brotherly discussion of this matter and the problems arising out of it? Will not some congregation take the initiative in calling such a meeting?

A. E. WINSTANLEY.

Brother Editor,—Excepting only two brethren, to my knowledge, the written and oral response to mine in the March "S.S." has been encouraging. There is a growing contempt for bad attitudes and

misrepresentations, and a call for evidence rather than platitudes and dictation.

Notwithstanding my expressed unwillingness to meet this issue (*i.e.*, the number of containers on the table) via the "S.S." Correspondence column, I am virtually being called upon to do so. However, I must again refuse because (a) space is not sufficient for the size of the issue, and (b) indiscriminate printing of letters, many taking different positions, serves to confuse rather than clarify.

If brethren insist on this issue being discussed via the "S.S.," then let it be done in a helpful way or not at all. I suggest that (a) sufficient space be given to the discussion; (b) two representative brethren (rather than men who take characteristically peculiar positions) divide the space for a few months, having opportunity to reply and sum up; and (c) the Editor serve as a moderator for the exchange.

I shall be pleased to participate or otherwise to do what I can toward the correct solution of this difficulty. If what I am suggesting is not wise perhaps someone will bring forth a suggestion for more adequate discussion.

C. PHILIP SLATE.

Dear Bro. Melling,—In view of the fact that the practice of using one cup at the Lord's table is scriptural, and hence established over many centuries, Bro. Hill's contention that this "doctrine" is new—about ten years old—is surely far out of focus.

We are all aware that in this country several cups have been used in some assemblies as an expedient where numbers have been large. As far as I know, this practice has never been a cause of division among the churches until recent years. There are some who seek to justify the use of individual cups on the grounds that (regardless of the circumstances) the acceptance of a plurality must include this specific case. If there is any justification for the use of more than one cup, it can only be on the grounds of **ABSOLUTE NECESSITY**.

Whereas this condition may be considered to apply to a few communal cups, it cannot be shown that the use of individual cups is a matter of necessity. Suppose eighty people are to make a journey by bus, and it is found that a bus holds forty-five people; do we order eighty buses, or do we order two? We order according to necessity surely. No other arrangement can possibly be justified.

Was Jesus talking about a cup when he said, "This cup is the New Testament in my blood"? (Lu. 22:20; 1 Cor. 11:25).

"And he took the cup" (Matt. 26:27) defies anything but a literal interpretation. Irrespective of what was in it, this statement tells us that Jesus held a drinking vessel in his hand. Jesus said, "This cup is the New Testament in my blood." Of course Jesus was talking about a cup—a cup containing wine. It has been said that the drinking vessel has no significance. Neither does the wine—until it appears IN the cup—on the Lord's table.

The repeated use of the word "cup" in the scriptures emphasises the essential nature of the drinking vessel. Had the Lord wished to indicate that the drinking vessel had no significance, he would and should have referred to the contents of the cup as "wine." The drinking vessel had this significance, that it was the cup which the Lord commanded his people to drink out of.

It is further argued that we drink the contents and not the cup. We have here a figure of speech which is well understood. In everyday language, to "drink the cup" is to drink out of or from the cup—which is precisely what the scriptures say. One cannot "drink the cup" if there is no literal cup to drink out of. One cannot speak of a quantity of liquid as "the cup" unless that liquid is actually in a literal cup. Similarly, when talking of a kettle boiling, it is clearly understood that the water is boiling IN A KETTLE. We cannot speak of a kettle boiling if the boiling water is not IN THE KETTLE. Neither can one divorce the wine from the cup in the statement, "This cup is the New Testament in my blood." When people talk of "containers" on the Lord's table, they are trying to make the scriptures say something which is not there.

Having argued, apparently, that the drinking vessel is of no consequence, Bro. Hill concludes, "So long as a church has the emblems bread and wine upon the Lord's table. . . ." It would be interesting to know whether he considers a table (literally) essential to the keeping of the feast, or if anyone else knows of a case where the feast is kept without a table. There would seem to be more essentials in this matter than some people would have us believe.

JOHN M. WOOD.

NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

Aylesbury,—From April 17th-19th, we held a Young People's Weekend, which proved to be a great success. Young people from eight churches were with us, about 50 brethren in all. The panel discussion on the Saturday was much

appreciated and some very thoughtful questions were submitted. On the Lord's Day Bro. Slate and Bro. Hunter, from Wembley, gave some fine messages. The picnic planned for the Monday had to be abandoned owing to the unseasonable and wintry weather, including some snow. However, the young people were undaunted and the wet weather programme proved a great success. The young sisters of this congregation were responsible for the catering and they did an excellent job. In the belief that the young people in the churches need to get together in this way, we hope (the Lord willing) to make these Young People's Weekends a regular feature and to hold them as often as possible.

Cleveleys,—It was with mixed feelings of joy and sorrow that the church said goodbye to Bro. and Sis. A. L. Frith who have now returned to their native Nottinghamshire after being on the Fylde coast for nearly 50 years. We were happy in that they were going to a well-earned retirement, but their going leaves a gap which will be hard to fill.

Bro. and Sis. Frith were among the earliest members of the church which was formed in Blackpool, of whom only a handful are now left. For many years they held meetings in Fleetwood, and then in 1954 they joined in starting the present church in Cleveleys. During these years, Bro. Frith, ably supported and encouraged by his wife, has worked hard and faithfully in the service of our Lord. Sometimes, perhaps, the work may have seemed thankless and without apparent reward; but thanks be to God for his promises that we shall receive our reward. We take pleasure in putting on record, even though only briefly, our appreciation and thanks for their untiring service, and our Christian love and good wishes attend them in their new home. NUMBERS 6:24-26. E.W.

Kentish Town,—We are glad to report the baptism on Lord's Day, 18th April, of Mrs. Maria Burgrave. She has accepted the plain truth of New Testament Christianity after many years as a practising Roman Catholic.

Motherwell,—The church had the joyful experience of four baptisms on 13th April, when Isabel Purcell, Hazel Davidson, Nancy Wardrop and Ian Davidson put on their Lord in baptism.

We further rejoice that Douglas Hut-ton decided for Christ and was baptised on Sunday, 18th April, before morning service. The church feels strengthened by these additions from the Sunday School. To God we give the praise, honour and glory. L. Purcell.

Reading,—We are very happy to announce the baptism on 17th April at Aylesbury of Lorna Payne, younger

daughter of Sis. E. C. Payne. We extend our grateful thanks to the Aylesbury brethren for kindly making the arrangements. R.P.

Wigan: Beech Hall.—This small community is passing through exciting times. Since November last six souls have been immersed into Christ.

Kenneth Fenton, husband of Sister Annie Fenton, was immersed in November. Mrs. Hart was immersed a few weeks later, after attending the sisters' meeting for some time. Stewart Fenton, the son of Bro. and Sis. Fenton was added to the Lord's people in February, when he was immersed. Stewart has been a Sunday School scholar for some years.

A mid-week Bible study has been held and useful contacts made. One of these, Dianne Whittle, aged twelve, requested immersion, because she had come to understand the truth concerning Jesus. Her example and further contact has resulted in the immersion of Irvin and Beryl Whittle, her father and mother. Dianne was immersed on the 21st April and her father and mother on May 2nd.

These results are due to the faithful sowing of the Word into receptive hearts by brethren of this congregation and by the labours, at special meetings, of Bro. P. McDonald (Dewsbury), Bro. P. Partington (Ince), Bro. Frank Worgan (Ince), Bro. Jerry Porter (Glasgow), Bro. K. Brooks (Chester), and Bro. A. E. Winstanley (Tunbridge Wells). In all this we give God the glory and pray for a continued harvest of souls into the kingdom of His dear Son.

Workers from other assemblies have assisted in the work of this congregation which is situated in an area of dense population. There is great potential here for the gospel and we trust that a closer co-operation of all Christians in this and other areas will herald greater things for the progress of the church.

Colin Leyland.

OBITUARY

Buckie.—The church has lost another of its members in Bro. John V. Page, who passed to his rest on April 27th.

Our brother had been unable to attend the meetings lately owing to ill health, but had the church at heart. We mourn his loss, but rejoice that he has remained faithful. We commend his dear widow, our sister, to our heavenly Father, that He may truly bless and comfort her. Bro. George Reid officiated at the funeral. John Geddes.

Motherwell.—The church has lost its oldest sister in the person of Sis. Jack.

She had been in attendance right up to the Sunday before she died. We regret her passing but rejoice in her Christian life and experience. Bro. Dougall officiated at the funeral service, attended by a number of the brethren.

L. Purrell.

Dennyleanhead.—We record with sorrow the passing of our dear sister Elizabeth McClelland on 26th April, at the age of 85 years. Our sister had been a faithful member of the church for many years, and though her health had been failing for some time, she had the desire always to be with the Lord's people. Her cheerful and kindly personality was a source of encouragement to us all. We give thanks for her example of devotion, and her faith in Him who said, "In my Father's house are many mansions . . . I go to prepare a place for you . . . that where I am there ye may be also."

J. M. Wood.

CHANGE OF DISTRIBUTING AGENT

We introduce to you a brother young in the Lord, but eager to be of service to our Master: Ronald Maiden, 41 Comberton Park Road, Kidderminster, Worcs. Our brother was immersed at Summer Lane on 1st November, 1964. He and his wife are an encouragement to us all when we feel dispondant at the apparent lack of success which attends the preaching of the gospel. Half way round the world the message travelled before it reached the home of Mr. and Mrs. R. Maiden.

It was like this: Brother Maiden's brother in the flesh went out to Africa, where he came into contact with God's truth. Brethren from America were evangelising in the district with the result that their brother was obedient to the gospel. Later he returned to England and visited his brother at Kidderminster, where interesting talks and discussions took place. His stay in the Midlands was not long, but before he left he had sown the seeds which eventually caused those he had left behind to seek out the church.

After associating with the brethren at Summer Lane for a few weeks, Ronald and his wife, Laura, obeyed the gospel. They live some 25 miles away from the chapel and so their attendance is restricted; but their desire is very keen and they have agreed to relieve Brother Paul Jones of the distribution part of the work. It is hoped that this will result in more readers being obtained for the magazine and help the treasurer to keep abreast of the financial matters.

Please will you send, therefore, all changes in quantities, addresses, etc. to Brother Maiden. All financial communications to Brother Paul Jones.

P. JONES

URGENT NOTICE THE "S.S." FOR JULY

The Editor will be away from home on holiday from June 11th to June 25th. As this is the period when copy for July "S.S." will be received and sent to the printer, contributors are asked to send such copy to the Editor to be received by 10th June.

News, Coming Events and similar notices after that date should be addressed to: Walter Barker, 4 Howitt Street, Heanor, Derbyshire. Failure to observe this will prevent the inclusion of contributions in the July issue.

If it is necessary to address the Editor between June 12th and the 24th, please forward to: c/o Mrs. E. Wolf, The Laurels, 22 Babbacombe Road, Babbacombe, Torquay, Devon.

COMING EVENTS

Dewsbury.—In conjunction with a Mission to be conducted by Bro. C. P. Slate of Wembley, from Saturday, May 29th to Monday, June 7th, the Church at Dewsbury will (D.V.) hold a number of meetings which it is hoped will be of special interest to young people during the holiday weekend, Saturday, June 5th to Monday, June 7th.

Saturday, June 5th: 4.30 p.m. Tea; 6.30 p.m. Meeting, "Personal Work: Its Aims and Methods"; 7.30 p.m. Gospel Meeting, "Tell us Plainly . . . About Christian Unity."

Sunday, June 6th: 10.30 a.m. Bible School (including Young People's Bible Study); 2.30 p.m. Breaking of Bread; 7.30 p.m. Gospel Meeting, "Tell us Plainly . . . About Christ's Church."

Monday, June 7th: 10.30 a.m. Prayer Meeting; 11.00 a.m. Meeting, "The Position and Plea of Churches of Christ"; 2.30 p.m. Group Discussion, "Practical Christianity: The Young Christian's Place in the Life of the Church"; 4.30

p.m. Tea; 6.00 p.m. Open Air Meeting and/or Visitation and Tract Distribution; 7.30 p.m. Gospel Meeting, "Tell us Plainly . . . About the Future."

Tuesday, June 8th: An outing will be arranged.

A cordial invitation is given to all who wish to do so, especially young people, to spend the whole or part of the week-end with us. Please come.

Enquiries, including enquiries about hospitality, to T. McDonald, Norfolk House, 17 Northfield Place, Dewsbury, Yorks.

Hindley.—A mission, Saturday, June 5th to Lord's Day, June 13th, each night at 7.30 p.m. Speaker: Bro. A. E. Winstanley.

AYLESBURY

June 20th-27th: Gospel campaign. Preacher: Virgil Trout (Sunset church, Lubbock, Texas). Theme: "Christian Evidences." Meetings nightly: Lord's Days, 6.30 p.m.; Weeknights, 8 p.m. Brethren are invited to join the personal work teams being organised by us to support the campaign. Please note that the campaign is for one week only, and not for two weeks as previously announced.

July 25th-August 8th: Summer School "Training for Service." Classes will be held each day, Monday to Friday, and evenings, Tuesday and Friday of each week. Some of those who have offered to teach classes are: Brethren Frank Worgan (Ince), Roy Davison (Holland), W. N. Jackson (Ipswich), Vic Hunter and Phil Slate (Wembley). Full details, including subjects, hospitality and enrolment forms will be sent to all churches.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Bro. and Sister A. L. Frith, late of Fleetwood, are now residing at 26 Diamond Avenue, Kirkby-in-Ashfield, Notts.

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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.