

The
**SCRIPTURE
STANDARD**

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

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SEPTEMBER, 1948.

'Alarming Decreases.'

SPEAKING from the chair of the Annual Conference of Churches of Christ, held at Chester, from August 2nd to 5th, Bro. J. R. Francis said:

'With such a background, you will appreciate how much I share the concern of all who have the well-being of Christ and His Kingdom and our own particular association of Churches at heart, at the alarming decreases in our numbers, and our apparent lack of really effective Christian work during the past twenty-five years. We have lost something like a third of our Churches and a third of our total membership in this period; and this despite the fact that we are probably better organised and equipped than ever before. During this period we have had our own Theological College training men and women for the Ministry, we have increased the number of our Standing Committees, and have opened our doors and our hearts to a co-operation with our religious friends and neighbours which was unknown to our fathers in the faith. I do not wish for one moment to suggest that these things have hindered our progress as Churches. I do not believe they have. But the fact remains that despite these additional aids we have been losing ground, and no right-thinking Christian of any denomination can be happy in such a state of things . . .'

'Too often, because of our half-hearted efforts, we have allowed ourselves to believe that the world is no longer anxious for the gospel of Christ, and we have diverted our energies and dissipated our resources in stunts and side-shows which have been unworthy of our great plea. Empty pews and restricted exchequers have led us to think that our work for Christ was in vain. May I be allowed to give you a personal testimony? In my own Church we, unfortunately, began thinking that way. Like other Churches we found that blitzes and black-outs had reduced our congregations and our resources, and we had (without realising it) begun to think that the task was too much for us. In the infinite goodness of God, He brought into our midst a great Christian who had a real passion for souls. This man taught us to pray as we had not prayed for many a long day: he taught us to read our Bibles as we had forgotten to do; above all, he taught us afresh something we all thought we knew but had lost sight of—that 'nothing is impossible with God.' After a period of teaching he led us out in a great visitation campaign in the neighbourhood of our Church, and we were amazed at our reception. People asked us in, and we found to our surprise that they were ready to talk about Christ and His Kingdom.

Our baptistery, which had been neglected for long periods, came

back into regular use, and Lord's Day after Lord's Day we had the great joy of hearing confessions and seeing lives dedicated to God. Our Church income nearly doubled, our building was filled, and there is today a new spirit of hopefulness and adventure among us which we had not thought possible.' (*Christian Advocate*, August 6th, 1948).

The Church referred to above is Moseley Road, Birmingham. The lesson is obvious to all who have eyes to see. The remedy for 'alarming decreases,' which we all deplore (especially those of us who remember the former days) is not in highly trained preachers, Romanesque buildings, organisation, and fine organs; but in more Bible, more Gospel, more prayer, more faith, more personal evangelism, more definite, distinctive preaching and teaching, and less fraternising and compromising with sectarians.

—EDITOR, 'S.S.'

WHEN MINORITIES WON

DURING the years that Noah spent in building the ark, he was very much in the minority. But he won.

When Joseph was sold into Egypt by his brethren, he was in a decided minority. But he won.

When Moses appeared before Pharaoh and demanded the freedom of the Israelites, he, too, was very much in the minority. But he won.

When Gideon and his three hundred followers with their broken pitchers and smoky lamps put the Midianite hosts to flight, they were an insignificant minority. But they won.

When Elijah brought down fire from heaven and put the prophets of Baal to shame, he was a notable minority. But he won.

When Samson crushed the temple and destroyed his enemies, he was very much in the minority. But he won.

When David, ridiculed and laughed at by his brothers, went out to meet the giant, Goliath, in size he was in a decided minority. But he won.

When Jesus Christ was crucified by the Roman soldiers, he was a conspicuous minority. But He won.

When Luther nailed his theses on the door of the cathedral, he was a lone-some minority. But he won.

THE 'SCRIPTURE STANDARD.' A STATEMENT AND APPEAL. TO OUR READERS.

EXCEPT for a short period during the war, the 'S.S.' has been sold at 2d. since the first issue in 1935. Printing, postage, stationery are very much higher, as you all know.

This magazine costs 3½d. per copy to print and distribute, 2,000 copies per month are called for, and a loss of 1¼d. per copy cannot be allowed to go on. As from January, 1949 (D.V.) the price will be 3d. (full details next issue).

There has, for some time now, been a serious drain on 'S.S.' funds and, to bring this to an end, we appeal to brethren and Churches everywhere to send a gift **NOW**, as the loss will go on this year out.

The Editor, Treasurer and Agents have done their work gratis these many years, and we are confident this appeal will touch hearts and pockets everywhere.

Yours sincerely,

J. ANDERSON.

J. WARDROP.

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CONTROVERSY is the internal combustion engine of human thought. It's what keeps us all alive and kicking. Stop controversy, and you stop all hope of human progress.
—Selected.

'Things that accompany Salvation.'

Heb. vi. 9.

'ARE YOU SAVED?' We are familiar with this question as put to those attending religious services such as those held by the Salvation Army. It is asked as the question of first importance. It is of supreme moment that we should be saved. The question, 'Are we saved?' takes it for granted that a man is sure to know whether he is saved or not. So far, we think, the Scriptures agree; if a man has been saved he ought to know it.

Our subject: 'Things that accompany salvation,' seems even to go a step further. It suggests that others, besides the man himself, can tell whether or not he is saved. The writer had just described some who were in an unsaved condition. They had indeed been professing Christians, but they had fallen away, had 'crucified to themselves the Son of God afresh and put him to an open shame.' These lapsed ones he compares to land which, instead of bearing useful herbs, bears thorns and thistles, 'which is rejected and nigh unto a curse, whose end is to be burned.' Then, as if startled by his sombre picture, and afraid his readers would think it was meant as a picture of their condition, he hastens to say: 'But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak.'

That is, looking at what he knew about them, he could see certain signs that they were real Christians; that they were in possession of salvation; that not only might these Hebrews have said in answer to the question, 'Are you saved?' 'Yes, we know that we are saved'; but he, the writer of this Epistle, could have answered for them, and said, 'Yes, they are possessed of better things than are those who reject Christ; they are possessed of things that accompany salvation, things that are a

sure sign that they are a saved people.'

In this respect 'salvation' is like the wind, or even like life. We are made sure of the presence of the wind by its effects. We 'hear the sound thereof,' as Jesus expressed it, or we see the effects in some waving branches, and we know the wind by the things that accompany it.

A sleeping person might be thought to be dead, but when consciousness returns, and he sits up and speaks, we know he was not dead—only sleeping; that he lives we know by the things, the signs, that accompany life. In like manner, the writer of this Epistle knew the Hebrew Christians were saved, because he saw in their lives 'things that accompany salvation.'

As already said, in our day we find the same thought, or one in some measure the same, in meetings of an evangelistic character, such as those of the Salvation Army, or of evangelists like Mr. Gipsy Smith. To inquirers the question is often put, 'Are you saved?' As we have already indicated this question is not to be regarded as unscriptural or objectionable. The Scriptures clearly assume that if a man is saved he himself must know it, and not only so, but that others who know his life and circumstances can know whether he is saved or is in an unsaved condition.

But we sometimes think the question, though not objectionable, might be better worded. The meaning of course is, 'Are you conscious that God has pardoned your sins and received you into His family? Now while that experience is a part of what is meant by salvation in the New Testament, it is only a part. We have the exhortation addressed to Christians, 'Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.' Even if it be granted that it is here

implied that these Philippians had salvation, it is clearly also implied that it requires to be perfected, 'worked out.' But in speaking to Timothy, the apostle indicates that even a preacher like Timothy was, in some sense, not yet saved. In 1 Tim. iv. 16, it is written, 'Take heed to thyself and to thy teaching. Continue in these things, for in doing this thou shalt save both thyself and them that hear thee.' And this need of salvation continued right up to the end to be felt to be Paul's own case. Among his 'last words' in his last epistle, he writes: 'The Lord will deliver me from evil work, and will save me unto his heavenly kingdom. (2 Tim. iv. 18).

You will see, therefore, that when we keep before us all that is said in the New Testament about salvation, the subject assumes great proportions. Though salvation is all one, yet it is also varied. All of it is of God through Christ; but Christ saves us from a variety of things, and so we may do well to think just what is meant by the question, 'Are you saved?' before we make answer.

In fact, some interesting divisions almost demand that we take notice of them. We may endorse the usual view and say in a word, Christ saves from sin and all its consequences. But in reference to sin, we remember that there is the guilt of sin, and there is also the power of sin. When a sinner accepts Christ, he is pardoned for all his past sins. They are wiped out, his sins and his iniquities God remembers no more for ever. So that from the very beginning a Christian is saved from all past sins, they are forgiven in Christ. Hence the apostles' appeal, 'Forgive one another, even as God in Christ hath forgiven you.' Thus, from the start, the Christian is saved from the guilt of all past sins.

If some one, therefore, were to say to a sinner who had just accepted Christ, 'Are you saved?' it would be quite correct for him to reply, 'Yes, thanks be to God!' But in this case the question, are you saved? would be understood to have reference to his past sins and the answer to

mean, I am forgiven and accepted in Christ.

But now there is also the power of sin. The sinner has been in the habit of sinning. Ungodliness and worldliness in more or less marked degree have prevailed. Are we then to take the view that from the moment a sinner surrenders to Christ, he lives a sinless life? The New Testament does not so teach.

Writing to Christians, the apostle John even says: 'If we say that we have no sin we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.' That is, such a claim is a proof that we are still in the dark, and not in possession of 'the truth.' So that there is a provision made for Christians to come to the throne of grace that they may receive mercy and pardon; and John continues the portion just quoted by saying: 'If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.'

But Christ's salvation is not a mere negative thing, a wiping out of sins by forgiveness which the propitiation in His blood makes righteous. The word salvation (that is the word so translated) means renovation, renewal, in a word, wholeness. It is so used of the body in the Gospels, and undoubtedly the salvation of the soul of man includes the complete restoration to it of the image of God: 'righteousness and true holiness.'

We are glad to say that in conversion, the great change which takes place when a sinner surrenders to God, his heart being softened and changed and his will rendered submissive to Christ, there is a wonderful liberty experienced from the power and practice or habit of sin. But, as passages already quoted show, this is not complete and at no moment until death is the Christian so free as to be absolutely sinless. Indeed his progress in moral discernment makes him conscious of imperfections which at an earlier stage, he did not discern. Nor does he ever realise that he has 'obtained' or 'apprehended' perfection of character, the divine image, as it is seen

in Christ. His freedom from sin, his sanctification, his attainment of the Divine image, is at the best a process, a progressive attainment. He who surrenders to Christ is saved, and can always say yes to the question, 'Are you saved?' if that question means, as I suppose it usually does, 'Are you forgiven, and accepted and are your feet in the way of holiness?' But from conversion to death, if he continues faithful until then, he is not perfectly saved.

This opens out to us a threefold division of our subject of salvation. Let us call them for convenience : 1. The Initial Salvation ; 2, The Progressive Salvation ; 3, The Perfect Salvation.

Here then, at last, the intelligent recognition of things that accompany salvation becomes easy and bright with a new light. Would we see the things that accompany the initial salvation we must look to the passages where the Gospel meets the sinner for the first time and sinner and Saviour are united. Thus the Great Commission says, 'preach the gospel to every creature, he that believeth and is baptised shall be saved.' Saved here refers to forgiveness and the adoption of sons. Faith and baptism are the things that accompany.' So in Acts ii, after we read of the hearers of the Gospel being 'pricked in their hearts' and asking for directions, they are told to repent and be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ. Thus to faith they are to add repentance and baptism, and three thousand who obey are at once recognised as Christians and they continue steadfastly in the apostles' teaching, the fellowship and the breaking of the bread, and the prayers. Thus as the chapter ends, Luke, referring to the continuance of this work—the apostles preaching the Gospel and the people believing, repenting and being baptized—significantly, for our present subject, thus sums up : 'The Lord added to them day by day those that were being saved.'

Thus we see plainly what things accompanied the initial salvation. Always in the Epistles the refer-

ences are back to the time when these Christians heard, believed and obeyed the Gospel of Christ. They are addressed as those who were then and there saved, 'by grace have ye been saved,' says the apostle to the Ephesians.

But would we know what things accompanied the progressive salvation, we learn this from the writings of the apostles as to the signs that the Christian exhibited in his daily life; signs that he had passed from death and was in possession of a new, regenerate life. The whole of John's first Epistle may be consulted, for the subject of that Epistle is the signs in a professing Christian that he really lives the new life. Unworldliness, love of the brethren ('ye know that ye have passed from death unto life because ye love the brethren') and doing the will of God are a brief summary of these 'accompaniments.' In varied form, the beloved apostle describes these traits of a new life, the 'things that accompany salvation,' and says of his whole Epistle, that these things he wrote, 'that ye may know that ye have eternal life.' (1 John v. 13).

Quite in a line with this is the place in Hebrews where we find the writer saying he was persuaded of better things and things that accompany the salvation of his readers; for he goes on to say, 'God is not unrighteous to forget your work and the love which ye showed toward his name, in that ye ministered to the saints and still do minister.'

Clearly he looked on this love for God and His people, shewn to be genuine by their practice, as a thing that accompanied salvation.

If now we would know what are the things, the signs, that accompany the perfect salvation, we have no experience to go on, but can turn to the great and exceeding precious promises, such as that one closing Philippians iii : 'Our citizenship is in heaven; from whence also we wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of His glory.'

To the question, 'Are you saved?' when it is salvation perfect and to 'the uttermost,' none can yet answer 'Yes!' Here we have but 'the hope of salvation.' But it is a well-grounded, sure hope, and so 'do we with patience wait for it,' only

dimly able to answer the question of our hymn, 'What will it be to be there?'

But this we know, when He appears
We shall be like our Lord;
For we shall see Him as He is:
In power, enthroned, adored.
L. OLIVER.

The Clergy and Infant Baptism.

THE following are extracts from *News Chronicle*, of July 24th: 'More than one thousand Church of England clergymen have asked the Lambeth Conference of Bishops to consider their proposals for revising the baptismal laws, so that clergy can be authorised to refuse baptism to the children of parents who have fallen away from the Church . . .'

'The Conference has been asked to stop the present system of "semi-private" christenings, held only in the presence of relatives and friends and to insist on baptism during Sunday services . . .'

'We cannot stress too strongly that we feel that, in most cases, sincerity has gone out of baptisms. They have become automatic family celebrations . . .'

'A priest should, we feel, have the authority of the Church to refuse baptism until the parents have satisfied him that they intend to repent from their own falling away, and, by their own example, bring the child up in the state and practice of the Church . . .'

'The movement urges that in cases of unrepentant parents the children's baptism should be deferred until they are old enough to understand the significance of the ceremony . . .'

'Many of us regard the present practice regarding christenings with something approaching contempt. The service has been allowed to degenerate into a practically meaningless and perfunctory ceremony, regarded by many parents as rather on a par with vaccination.'

It is good to know that such a large number of clergymen are thinking so seriously about this matter. When, many years ago, at a Methodist Conference, 'the relation of baptised children to the Church' was being discussed, a minister said: 'It is high time we started at the right end, and decide by the Scriptures who are fit subjects for baptism.'

Article VI. of the Church of England, states: 'Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation: so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of the Faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation.'

When Brewin Grant, a clergyman, who was famous as a debater, gave a lecture on Infant Baptism, Timothy Coop offered to give £1,000 if he would produce a passage from the Scriptures authorising the baptism of infants. The passage was not given, and for years after, in that district, when infant baptism was named, someone would ask: 'Has that £1,000 been claimed yet?'

No clergyman, or other person, could produce that passage, even if their eternal salvation depended upon it.

In the Church of England Catechism, the following questions and answers are given:

'Question: What is required of persons to be baptised? Answer: Repentance, whereby they forsake sin, and Faith, whereby they steadfastly believe the promises of God made to them in that Sacrament.'

'Question: Why, then, are infants baptised, when by reason of their tender age they cannot perform them? Answer: Because they promise them both by their sureties: which promise, when they come to age, themselves are bound to perform.'

It seems amazing to us that intelligent persons could compile the foregoing: and still more amazing that those who claim to be scholars do not see the folly and futility of the whole thing. Sureties standing and promising to do what is impossible, to repent and believe for another person, and then because they have made that promise the person is bound to repent and believe! Repentance and believing are personal acts. There is no religion by proxy taught in the Scriptures of Truth. God demands personal trust, repentance, obedience, consecration and service.

Professor J. A. Beet (Methodist) well said: 'In order to prove that spiritual blessings are conveyed in baptism to an unconscious infant, what is the proof adduced? Simply teaching in the New Testament about the baptism of believers: for no other baptism is ever mentioned there.' (*Churches and Sacraments*, p. 140).

All attempts to justify infant baptism from the Scriptures have cor-

spicuously failed. We do not think there is a 'clergyman' or 'minister' who, in public discussion, would affirm that infant baptism is according to the Scriptures. If clergymen of the Church of England would follow the teaching of their own Prayer Book they would come much nearer to New Testament practice.

Again quoting from the Catechism:

'Question: What is the outward visible sign or form in baptism? Answer: Water: wherein the person is baptised.'

In the Prayer Book order for baptism, we read: 'He shall dip it in the water discreetly and warily' . . . with note: 'But if they certify that the child is weak, it shall suffice to pour water upon it.' But clergymen to-day neither dip nor pour, they only sprinkle. So they are doing what even their own Prayer Book does not warrant. It seems hard for some to keep to human laws, to say nothing of Divine.

When all that name the name of the Lord Jesus come on to what they acknowledge to be Scriptural grounds regarding baptism, a big step will have been taken towards that unity for which our Lord prayed, and which He deemed essential to the salvation of the world. May that day soon come!

EDITOR.

Repent and Turn to God.

What is Repentance?

How do we Turn?

GOD'S message of old, by the prophets to the Jews, was, 'Turn ye, turn ye, why will ye die.' His appeal was ever 'Turn to me, and I will turn to you.' But they rejected God's loving requests and long-suffering warnings, and 'He that sitteth in the heavens' at last destroyed them as a people. Jerusalem, with its temple, was brought to ruins and the whole people were scattered to the ends of the earth. Their covenant with God as His

people was annulled, and their possession of the land of Canaan came to an end. Like the people in the days of Noah, they defied the Almighty, and refused to turn from their evil days, and so, as it must ever be, judgment overtook them. Their cup was full.

The repentance and baptism (or act of turning) taught to the Jews by John the Baptist, and by Jesus in His personal ministry, were as John showed, not of a deep spiritual na-

ture. They were for a temporary purpose and, having fulfilled what was required of them in the preparation for the Kingdom, they passed away.

Let us now seek to bring to your notice God's final appeal, through the Lord Jesus Christ, which is to the whole world: to you and to me. It requests that all should repent and turn to God, so that He may forgive our sins and give us an inheritance in the land of promise, in the Canaan that is above. The Apostle Paul declared to all peoples that they should repent and turn to God, doing works worthy of repentance.

Peter, preaching at Solomon's Porch, said: 'Repent ye, therefore, and turn again that your sins may be blotted out.' (R.V.) At Pentecost, Peter used synonymous words when he said: 'Repent ye and be baptised every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins.' To be baptised is to turn to God. Peter and Paul, at the beginning of their messages, proclaimed and testified that Jesus was the Son of God. This was in order that the hearers might believe that Jesus was Lord of all and the Saviour of the world, and after their declaration of the divinity of Jesus, they, in the name of Jesus, gave instructions as to the necessity of repentance, a repentance that would lead to and be followed by their turning to God. The Scriptures show that in addition to believing and repenting, we must also turn to God.

The repentance under the Gospel, which has been since Pentecost, is not merely a moral resolution. It is more, it comes from a change of the heart, as well as that of the mind, and it includes a resolution of the will and an urge of the conscience. Our whole soul is in it. It is the decision to openly give our life to the Lord Jesus Christ, to outwardly act on our inward faith and love, to do what we wholeheartedly believe and feel to be true and from God. It is not just a cold resolve but comes from a personal faith and love for the Saviour. A repentance

such as is in the New Testament, can only come from a living faith that Jesus is divine, and from a love for Him as the Saviour who freely gave Himself as a sacrifice for the sin of the world.

Faith brings repentance, and repentance completes the profound inward change which the Holy Spirit, through the Gospel, the power of God, makes on those who believe. Man is thus prepared for his turning to God by his open confession of the Lord, followed by his baptism into Christ. God requires both. They are a fitting evidence and a consummation of the change in your mind and heart. Since creation, God has always accepted those whose faith was shown by obedience. James says: 'Thou seest that faith wrought with his [Abraham's] words, and by works was faith made perfect,' also 'Ye see that by works a man is justified, and not only by faith.' Jesus says: 'He that believeth and is baptised, shall be saved,' and we cannot trifle with His words, as it is His to say who can come and how they should approach to where He has promised to receive them.

Our conversion does not require any change in the constituent parts of our being. We retain the same intellect, heart, will, conscience, and body. To change any faculty is beyond man. While man cannot, in himself, change any part of his being, yet God, by nature, has given him the power to change the activities and whole life of his entire being. The invitations of the Gospel are sent to man as he is and constrain him to order his life by the divinely given means for his conversion. When God, by the death of Christ and the Gospel, made a new and living way, He made it so that we, with our natural faculties, are able to follow and carry out His instructions as to the new way and how we can find it. We can apply the Gospel to our mind and heart by faith and repentance, and thus beget within us new beliefs, desires, motives, purposes, hopes, affections, and a new life in our soul, that calls

within us to be born out into a new life. Baptism meets and satisfies this inward desire. At the same time, it is our obedience to the divine command, but it is more, as, by it we complete our obedience to the conditions of salvation.

In this sacred emblematic ordinance of baptism, we, in symbol, bury our old life and are brought forth or are born out of the water into the new life. (Rom. vi.) As our Lord puts it, we are 'born of water and the Spirit.'

May you not only believe and repent, but may you show your repentance by turning to God in the divinely appointed way, by being immersed into Christ.

Naaman suggested other ways than that of God, but only when he latterly obeyed the prophets' instructions, did God cleanse him. The rich young man loved Jesus, and he lived a strict religious life, but the Lord said: 'One thing thou lackest.' His faith had not been submitted to God's test. How near he was to the kingdom, but without obedience he could not enter. Paul said to the Galatians: 'As many of you as were baptised into Christ, did put on Christ.'

JOHN ANDERSON.

[This article is published as a tract. Copies can be had from Bro. W. Steele, Atholl Dene, Longniddry, East Lothian. Price 7/6 per 1,000].

Things most surely Believed among us.

The Bible

WE hold that the Bible is the Word of God in which He reveals Himself to man, and in which He gradually unfolds His Will through chosen servants. This revelation reaches its highest manifestation in Jesus Christ, and in the New Testament Scriptures which make known to us the Divine Will for the Christian Age.

The Foundation

'Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.' This is the foundation truth of the Church, and must be believed and confessed in order to salvation (Matthew xvi. 16; John xx. 30, 31; Rom. x. 9, 10).

The Gospel

The Gospel is 'the power of God unto salvation' (Rom. i. 16); it is 'concerning God's Son' (Rom. i. 1-4), and so includes the foundation truth above; and also the redeeming work of Christ—His death for our sins; His burial; and His resurrection for our justification. (1 Cor. xv. 1-3; Rom. iv. 24).

The Baptism

Baptism was commanded by Christ to be administered to all dis-

ciples (Matt. xxviii. 19) and is a 'burial' or immersion in water (Acts viii. 36, 38; x. 47; Rom. vi. 4). It is for induction into the Divine Name, into Christ, into Christ's death, and so 'unto (or into) the remission of sins' (Matt. xxviii. 19; Rom. vi. 1-11; Acts ii. 38). Penitent believers are qualified for Christian Baptism (Mark xvi. 16; Acts ii. 38). Hence we reject Infant Sprinkling as unauthorised alike in action and subject.

The Church

Its membership consists of those who have believed the Gospel, repented of their sins, and been baptized. This appears from the fact that the Church was formed by obeying the Great Commission (Matt. xxviii. 19, 20; Mark xvi. 16); from the accounts of the origin of Churches as in Acts ii. 31-42; xviii. 8; and from the references in the Epistles to members as baptized believers (Rom. vi. 1-4; Gal. iii. 26-27).

The Organisation

The Church is the Body of Christ (Eph. i. 22-23), of which He is the Head. As such it is subject to Him alone, acknowledging no other authority. Each separate community of Christians is the Church of God

in its locality (Rom. xvi. 16; 1 Cor. i. 2, etc.), and independently of any Conference or Synod, Council or Parliament, Monarch or Pope, seeks to carry out Christ's will as expressed by Himself and His Apostles.

The Names

Sectarian names are held to be sinful (1 Cor. i. 10-17; iii. 1-5). We use only names given in the New Testament, such as for the local community, 'Church of God' or 'Church of Christ'; the plural for such Churches, or for those in a certain area, as 'the Churches of Galatia' (Gal. i. 2). For the individual member, we use 'disciple,' 'Christian,' etc. (Acts xi. 26; 1 Peter iv. 16).

The Lord's Supper

We celebrate this ordinance every first day of the week (Acts xx. 7; 1 Cor. xi. 17-34). We regard it as among the 'all things' to be observed by those who have been disciplined and baptized (Matt. xxviii. 19, 20), and therefore feel that we have no authority for admitting to 'the table of the Lord' any but baptized believers.

The Ministry

We believe the New Testament provides for a twofold order of ministry—Elders (or Bishops, or Pastors) and Deacons. Through these duly appointed ministers the spiritual and temporal needs of the Church are directed, and under them all the members according to their gifts are to be used in all departments of the Church's ministry.

The Means

The expenses of evangelization and worship, and also of help to members when in need, are met by the freewill offerings of the Church only.

The Plea for Union

It is held that Christ wills all believers to be visibly united—one in Him (John xvii, 21). In New Testament days this was so (Eph. iv. 4-6); variety of opinion outside

clearly revealed things not being regarded as breaking the Unity. (Rom. xiv).

These Features

of our plea, while exhaustive, show how division can be done away, and a real unity of believers, in obedience to the will of Christ, take its place. We submit that a return to New Testament Christianity affords the only true BASIS OF CHRISTIAN UNION.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Luke x. 25 to xi. 54

The Parable of the Good Samaritan (x. 25-37).—A lawyer is a teacher and expounder of the Mosaic law—if a Pharisee, by faith, believing that obedience to that law guarantees life beyond the grave. He would not think or expect Jesus to know the way of life any better than he did. His question was an effort to nonplus the one he addresses as 'Teacher' (a better rendering perhaps than 'Master' for us moderns). To tempt is to try, to test—'putting Him fully to the test.' It may not have been with the malicious intent developed in xi. 54.

Little did he expect the double rebuff, given with the consummate skill of the Divine Mind. His question was turned back upon him with a scribal formula: 'How readest thou?' and his heart was searched with so simple and yet so subtle a story. He came to test, and he was himself put to the test, nonplussed. Finally, the masters of religious argument and sophistry were brought to the point where 'no man durst ask him any more questions.' (Matt. xxii. 46.)

The tradition of these folk was 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour and hate thine enemy' (Matt. v. 43), but they hated their Samaritan neighbours, and their hatred was warmly reciprocated. The Saviour knew this well (Luke ix. 52 and 53). He took hold upon this wicked attitude and brought home the lesson by exhibiting a contrast in behaviour of Levite and priest with a good Samaritan.

There are many points about the parable which might call for notice. We have

no sympathy with the interpreters who say the figures represent this and that, but everything in the story seems to carry a lesson. For instance, the overflowing generosity of the succourer; he bound up the wounds; he poured in oil and wine; lifted on to his own beast (and therefore himself walked); 'took care of him'; finally left enough money, and promised more for complete recovery. 'Samaritan' funds, societies, hospitals, institutions, testify to the influence of this little story packed into five verses of Scripture.

Martha and Mary (x. 38-42).—We should read John's Gospel, chapter xi. and a few verses of xii. in connection with these verses in Luke. The picture of the sisters in the hospitable and beloved household is full of instruction. The literal meaning of 'cumbered' is 'dragged in different directions': 'distracted.' She was so anxious to do the 'serving' well that she forgot the more important duty, which should also have been her delight, of listening to the Saviour's words.

It was not wrong to be concerned about His physical welfare, but it was wrong to be so distracted by the work as to grow petulant about her sister's absorption. In these lines we might with advantage replace 'heard His word' with 'was listening to His discourse'; for 'came to Him' (Martha) read 'suddenly coming up'; for 'that good part,' 'that good portion' (as food, almost 'helping').

Teaching on Prayer (xi. 1-13).—Had Jesus prayed audibly? If so, hearing His prayer made the disciples long to pray acceptably. If not, they could see the blessing that prayer was to Jesus, and earnestly desired the same for themselves. Jewish teachers, we are told, gave their disciples forms of prayer. We strongly deprecate the use of this prayer as a form. All the thoughts expressed in it have their place in our prayers though circumstances alter the petitions in meaning, and the exaltation of Jesus to His Father's right hand changes its form somewhat. We must pray in the name of Jesus, realising that He is our Daysman, Mediator, Intercessor. The kingdom for which the disciples prayed came in power on the Day of Pentecost. The final triumph is still to come. The forgiveness of sins is through the blood of Christ, yet we cannot expect that unless we do forgive those who sin against us.

We are so prone to resent injury—yes, and avenge it even. 'O for grace our hearts to soften, teach us Lord at length to love'—really love.

The heavenly Father's love, combined with His unlimited power and supreme wisdom, waits to grant us the supreme gift—nay, He gave it at Pentecost and continues to give continuously, but do we really want Him? The gift is vain unless we do, and therefore it must be sought by asking, seeking and knocking, like the importunate man in the parable. The reference to the Holy Spirit may have been particularly related to the Pentecostal gift, but the promise is to all fulfilling the requirements (Acts ii. 38 and 39). Bear in mind that Holy Spirit means holy spirit, the One involves the other.

Casting Out Devils (xi. 14-26). — For another example or the same incident, in detail, see Matt. xii. 22. There were those among the Jews who claimed and did in some degree exorcise devils, but the power of Christ over them was so obvious—made obvious in many cases by the devils themselves—that the people were astonished beyond measure. Some now question whether there are devils at all, but they have to deny the records and the Christ if they do so. We cannot deny one without the other, and what then? But here is another ingenious suggestion: Christ uses the power of the prince of devils in order thus to defeat him. As though this great exercise of divine power, and all the grace and majesty of His person, the divine tenderness and patience seen in thought, word, and action, could proceed from the depths of hell. Little wonder that this refusal to acknowledge truth is the unforgiveable sin (Matt. xii. 31), and I take it this is what the Saviour had in view. The same critics who approved of what their own exorcists did—so obviously inferior in power—now seek to attribute evil to the One, in whom they could find no sin. He gives a solemn warning that the only power superior to Satan is that which Jesus Himself exercised, triumphing over Satan before their eyes. The inference from the parable He further told (though it is more than a parable) is that unless He takes possession and fills the heart, its cleansing from evil is in vain.

The Greatest Privilege (xi. 27 and 28).—We sympathise warmly with the womanly cry. Yet we have a greater privilege our-

selves within reach. May we have grace to endure 'Lest these poor eyes that never saw Thine earthly day, should miss Thy heavenly reign.'

Seeking a Sign (xi. 29-32).— This teaching perhaps arises from the effort mentioned in verse 16. Not satisfied with irrefutable evidence, a special wonder was requested. It was refused, as it was to Satan (iv. 19-12). To those who sought insincerely, a sign would have been useless to them: 'Blind unbelief is sure to err, and scan His work in vain.'

Note the Saviour's claim to be greater than Jonah and Solomon. Most folk would regard Solomon's wisdom and worldly greatness as giving him a very high place, and the marvel of Jonah was the success of his preaching. Nineveh was a real place and Jonah a real personage—otherwise we make nonsense of this passage and others. Seeing Christ in the flesh involved men in a great responsibility.

Light and Darkness (xi. 33-36).—When we have light we must use it to the full. This seems the obvious meaning to the parable. The light of Solomon's wisdom and Jonah's preaching were very dim in comparison with the Christ. The light of the generation which rejected Him was darkness. They refused the light which lighteth every man. May our souls be lighted up with the wisdom from on high.

The Condemnation of the Pharisees (xi. 37-54).—Washing and other outward observances imposed by tradition were meticulously followed by Pharisees. But the Saviour on this occasion deliberately did not comply. That may have been to give opening for His denunciation of the sins of these eminent folk. He denounced their hypocrisy. They attended to the ceremonies but neglected the heart of the law, which really underlay them. The practical evidences of justice, love, and giving of alms were notably absent. Men were unconsciously contaminated by them (verse 44).

The Scribes or Lawyers were in a separate class, distinguished by their knowledge of the law, but they were no nearer to the divine intention. The interference of one of them led to further home truths. They paid lip-service to the law but as events proved they were enemies of truth, obscuring rather than elucidating the law. It was inevitable

that their wrath should be kindled, and we see their undignified and unworthy enmity immediately exercised.

R. B. SCOTT.

—♦—

Transubstantiation Tested.

(A true incident—locality, North-West Ireland)

A PRETTY maid, a Protestant, in ignorance was led
To think she might with comfort live,
though to a Papist wed;
But Rome decrees no peace they'll have
who marry heretics,
Until their households have been made
submissive to her tricks.

It sorely grieved the husband that his
wife would not comply
To join 'the mother Church' of Rome,
and heresy deny.
Day after day he flattered her, but still
she held it good
That man should never bow the knee to
idols made of wood.

The mass, the priest, the miracles were
made but to deceive,
And Transubstantiation, too, she never
could believe.

The husband went unto his priest, and
told him his sad tale:
'My wife's an unbeliever, sir; try if you
can prevail:

'You say you can work miracles—she
says it is absurd;
Convince her and convert her, and great
is your reward.'

The priest went with the gentleman—
he thought to gain a prize—
He said: 'I will convert your wife, and
open quite her eyes.'

So, when they came into the house, 'My
dear,' the husband cried,
'The priest has come to dine with us.'
He's welcome,' she replied.
The dinner being ended, the priest to
teach began,
Explaining to the lady the simple state
of man—

And the kindness of our Saviour, when
for our sins He bled.
The lady gave assent to this, but when
he further said—
'Christ, by His priests, still offers up Him-
self to sacrifice.'
The lady only answered by expressing
great surprise.

'I will return to-morrow, prepare some
wine and bread,
And then dispense the sacrament; be
ready, ma'am,' he said.

'I'll bake the cake,' the lady said. 'You may,' responded he; 'And when you see this miracle, convinced I'm sure you'll be.'

The priest returned accordingly, the bread and wine did bless;
The lady asked, 'Sir, is it changed?' His reverence answered 'Yes!
It's changed now from bread and wine to real flesh and blood;
You may depend upon my word, that it is very God.'

Thus having blest the bread and wine, to eat he did prepare;
The lady said unto the priest: 'I would have you take care,
For one-half ounce of arsenic I have mixed in that cake;
But as you say you have it changed, it may no difference make.'

The priest stood all confused, and looked as pale as death,
The bread and wine fell from his hands, and he did gasp for breath;
'Bring me my horse,' his reverence cried, 'this is a cursed place!'
'Begone! Begone!' the dame replied, 'you're of a cursed race!'

Her husband looked confounded, and not a word could say.
At last he spoke, 'My dear,' said he, 'the priest has run away.
Such mummery and nonsense no Christian can approve;
Thank God! I've seen this shameful trick unmasked by you, my love.'
—Selected.

CHARITY begins anywhere, and should have no end.

'THERE is no virtue so truly great and godlike as justice.'—Joseph Addison.

'THE great use of a life is to spend it for something that outlasts it.'—William James.

'MAY we not hesitate to be different when we know we are right.'—A. R. Neptune.

'A HOLY life will produce the deepest impression. Lighthouses blow no horns; they only shine.'—D. L. Moody.

'THE next great task of humanity is not deliverance by the sword, but deliverance from the sword.'—David Lloyd George.

'A TRUTH that's told with bad intent Beats all the lies you can invent.'
—Blake.

IMPORTANT! WIGAN CONFERENCE

FURTHER notice of coming Conference to be held under the auspices of the Church at Albert Street, Wigan, Lancs. on Saturday, September 18th.

The Conference will be held in the Congregational Meeting Place, Market Street, Wigan (five minutes' walk from railway stations). Cars and saloons can be parked on the Market Square. There are cafes and snack bars nearby for those arriving in the morning.

Afternoon business session will be from 1.30 p.m. to 4.30 p.m. First table for tea will be at 4.30 p.m. and the second at 5 p.m. (Only 160 can be accommodated at one sitting). Chairman of afternoon meeting will be Bro. C. Limb, of Eastwood, Notts.

Evening Meeting will be at 6 p.m. and will close about 8.15 p.m. (An undertaking has been given to leave the premises by 8.30 p.m.). President will be Bro. W. Steele, of East Lothian, and the speakers, Bro. R. B. Scott, of Kentish Town, London, and Bro. C. E. McGaughey, of U.S.A. (if in the country at the time).

We expect a record gathering and a time of rich fellowship. Brethren and Sisters staying over week-end are asked to make early application for accommodation as hospitality is limited. Applications should be addressed to Bro. Smith, 262 Scot Lane, Marsh Green, Wigan. Visitors who can make their own arrangements are asked to do so.

Will Church secretaries and all intending to be present kindly notify Bro. Smith, as this will help considerably in catering arrangements.

All interested in the old plea of Churches of Christ, and wish still "to contend for the faith once for all delivered to the saints," are asked to make a real sacrifice to be present.

Come in crowds, and pray for the success of the gatherings.

W. B. JEPSON.

WIGAN CALLING TO THE CONFERENCE

THE Church at Albert Street, Newtown, gives a hearty welcome to all brethren and sisters from near and far to come and help make this gathering a time of rich fellowship and mountain-top experience: to enable us all to awaken to the great task which faces us in the future. We hope to make this gathering a record one, and trust you will help us by your presence and support on Saturday, September 18th, 1948.

Visitors should ask to be directed to the Market Square. On the Square is the Ribble bus station, across the road from this is Hope Street Congregational meeting place, in which the conference will be held.

Church secretaries are requested to include the above in the notices of Lord's Days, September 5th and 12th.

W. SMITH,
Secretary.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE EVANGELIST FUND

No.'s	£	s.	d.
853	5	0	0
4	20	0	0
5	2	0	0
6	5	0	0
7	5	0	0
8	1	0	0
9	40	0	0
860	7	0	0
1	20	0	0
2	2	0	0
3	1	0	0
4	5	0	0
5	2	0	0
6	10	0	0
7	2	0	0
8	20	0	0
9	2	0	0
870	5	0	0
1	5	0	0
2	5	6	0
3	10	0	0
4	2	0	0
5	10	0	0
6	3	0	0
7	70	0	0
8	20	0	0
9	5	0	0
880	15	0	0
1	5	0	0
2	10	0	0
3	2	0	0

R. McDONALD, Treasurer.

If We Knew.

COULD we but draw back the curtains
That surround each other's lives,
See the naked heart and spirit,
Know what spur the action gives;
Often we should find it better,
Purer than we judge;
We should love each other better
If we only understood.

Could we judge all deeds by motives,
See the good and bad within,
Often we should love the sinner
All the while we loathe the sin.
Could we know the powers working
To o'erthrow integrity,
We should judge each other's errors
With more patient charity.

If we knew the cares and trials,
Knew the effort all in vain,
And the bitter disappointment,
Understood the loss and gain—
Would the grim external roughness
Seem, I wonder, just the same;
Would we help where now we hinder,
Would we pity where we blame.

Knowing not the fount of action,
Ah! we judge each other harshly,
Knowing not life's hidden force,
Is less turbid at its source.
Seeing not amid the evil
All the golden grains of good;
Oh! we'd love each other better,
If we only understood.

THE LITTLE CHAP WHO FOLLOWS ME

A CAREFUL man I want to be:
A little fellow follows me.
I do not dare to go astray,
For fear he'll go the self-same way.

I cannot once escape his eyes,
Whate'er he sees me do he tries.
Like me, he says he's going to be:
That little chap who follows me.

He knows that I am big and fine,
And believes in every word of mine.
The base in me he must not see,
That little chap who follows me.

I must remember as I go
Through summer suns and winter snow
I am building for the years to be
That little chap who follows me.

—Selected.

A MODERN PREACHER DESCRIBED

'ONE of those fellows with pink tea instead of red blood in his veins. Hadn't any opinions except your opinions until he met someone else. Preached pretty, fluffy little things, and used Eau de Cologne as his language. . . Didn't preach much from the Bible, but talked on the cussedness of Robert Elsmere, and the low-downness of Trilby. Wat always wanting everybody to lead the higher life, without ever letting on what it was, or at least so anyone could lay hold of it by the tail.'

G. H. LORIMER.

HOW TO KILL A CHURCH

DON'T come. If you do, come late.

Stay at home if you have company.

Take no part in the song service.

Give the smallest coin in your purse.

Find fault with the leaders. Object to every proposal and offer nothing constructive.

Never invite anyone to attend Church with you.

Do not attend Sunday evening, or the Wednesday evening service.

Do not attend your Bible class.

'REVIVAL'

JESUS said: 'Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.'

Here is a glorious opportunity to share in the task of preaching by the printed word. Distribute 'Revival' door to door, send to friends, place in letters, advertise our plea and position.

Thirteen Churches had supplies of August issue, but, like Oliver Twist, we want more. Sample bundles of ten sent free, anywhere. Send a card to L. Morgan, 44 Lord Street, Hindley, Lancs.

Prices: 50 for 2/6; 100, 5/-; 250, 12/6; 500, £1 5s.; 1,000, £2 10s.; after first 1,000, £1 13s. per 1,000.

MARRIAGE

Eastwood, Notts. — On Saturday, July 24th, in the meeting-house, Bro. John Diggle, only son of Bro. and Sister Jack Diggle, to Winnie Sheldon, youngest daughter of Bro. and Sister Fred Sheldon. The service was conducted by Bro. A. E. Winstanley.

NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Kirkcaldy (Rose Street).—Secretary, D. Mellis, 149 Beatty Crescent, removed to 117 Strathkinnes Road, Kirkcaldy.

Belfast, Bloomfield Avenue. — Bro. Andrew Gardiner has recently completed three months' service with the Church, a time which has been a source of great benefit to, and much appreciated by, old and young alike.

Alison Ard was baptised on July 11th by Bro. W. Melville. Alison is third of three sisters to become members of the Church, and is a niece of Bessie Melville and a grand-daughter of the late W. B. Melville, for many years a prominent member of the Church in Belfast.

We have recently had the pleasure of a visit from Bro. and Sister G. L. Page, of the Church in Nelson, New Zealand. From them we learned much of interest regarding our Churches out there.

A. M. FORREST.

Bristol, Bedminster.—We wish to place on record our appreciation of the sterling services rendered to the Church by Bro. McGaughey, of Washington, U.S.A., during the week commencing July 5th, and concluding with the anniversary services on July 10th and 11th, when our brother addressed the largest gatherings we have ever had. Our brother made a great impression on many present. We thank him for his untiring services while with us.

F. W. WILLS.

Capetown, Woodstock. — 'My word . . . shall not return unto me void . . . it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.' Again we have proved this. On July 13th a young man confessed the Lord Jesus, and was united with Him in baptism.

The service was conducted by Bro. Kannemeyer. Bro. Gray, of the Woodstock assembly, spoke words of encouragement for the candidate, and to visitors he showed the importance of baptism, and what it means to a repentant sinner. The service, with bright singing, was a time of spiritual refreshing. We pray that this may urge us forward with greater zeal for the extension of the Lord's kingdom.

T. HARTLE.

Dewsbury.—We are happy to report the addition of Bro. and Sister Robert Young to the Church here. They have been under the influence of Bro. and Sister Murphy for some time. They attended the meetings addressed by Bro. C. E. McGaughey, and decided to surrender to Christ. They were immersed at Morley. We earnestly pray that they may be a real help to the Church here.

We should like to take this opportunity of thanking the Morley and East Ardsley brethren for their support.

R. McDONALD.

East Ardsley.—The Church reports with joy the addition of another soul to the Lord's vineyard. Our Bro. Leonard Morgan, of Hindley, was our speaker on July 17th and 18th, and after Sunday evening service our brother, Dick Proud, decided to put on the Lord in His own appointed way, and was baptised on the Wednesday following by Bro. Ernest Worth. We trust God will bless him and guide him to follow in His steps.

E. WORTH.

Morley.—The Church has just had the great joy of receiving into fellowship Bro. Sidney Beale, who was immersed into the name of our Lord on June 29th. Our brother, whose home is at Scarborough, could not be received into the Church immediately, but joined us at the first opportunity, July 18th. He works in Morley and intends settling down here, and we are hopeful of him being a good worker.

An ex-Salvationist, he knows his Bible. He only attended our meetings twice, but learning the way of the Lord more perfectly, he desired to follow 'all the way.' One by one the Lord is adding to our numbers. We pray for further blessings.

H. BAINES.

Morley.—The Church has just been favoured with a visit from Bro. C. E. McGaughey, of Washington, U.S.A. and a grand and glorious time we have spent with him. He shared a fortnight's mission with us, Dewsbury and Ardsley, the former having two decisions.

We had meetings practically every night, and one feature of his meetings was the opposition he caused by his forthright exposition of New Testament Christianity, and we make no apology, for every word he spoke was utterly true. Much interest has been aroused, for many strangers came to our meetings and altogether the outlook in Yorkshire is much brighter as a result of his visit amongst us.

In preparation for his visit, we distributed over a thousand handbills, and five-hundred "Revivals," and can thoroughly recommend Bro. Leonard Morgan's paper to any Church engaging in special missions.

We thank our heavenly Father for his blessings and pray for continued success in the Lord's work. Our Brother has done much for us, we wish him God-speed.

H. BAINES

Obituary.

Hindley.—The Church here shares the sorrow of two of our sisters who have been bereaved of loved ones. Sister Mullen and Sister Mason have both lost their husbands after a long period of illness in both cases. Our hearts go out to them at this time, and we commend them to the care of an everloving Father, who can strengthen and uphold them in this time of sore trial.

L. MORGAN.

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Secretary of Conference Committee: W. B. JEPSON, 26 Pearl Avenue, East Kirkby, Notts.

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