

# The SCRIPTURE STANDARD

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

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JANUARY, 1966

## INSPIRATION FOR 1966

**"You know what this Crisis means, you know it is high time to waken up;  
for Salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed. It is far on  
in the night, the day is almost here . . ."**

Moffatt's translation of Romans 13: 11-12.

## *The Shortness of Time*

AT the turn of the year thoughts turn inevitably to the swiftness of time. Those times to which we looked forward, and which seemed as though they would never come, have come and gone before we realise. The older we grow the swifter time seems to fly. There may be a "mathematical" reason for this—a matter of relativity, so to speak. The more years we have passed, the shorter in comparison does another one seem to be.

We remember how, as schoolchildren, to look forward from that Monday morning to Friday afternoon, when again we should be free from the trammels of school discipline, seemed an eternity. In more recent years that holiday we had so longed for and which seemed such a time in coming has gone and is only a memory of the past.

The mythical Greek God of Time, Kairos, was represented as having a long forelock but as being bald at the back. Thus we have the proverb to "Take time by the forelock." The poet Andrew Marvell wrote,

"But at my back I always hear  
Time's winged chariot hurrying near."

### PAUL'S SENSE OF URGENCY

But in the passage quoted above Paul's thought is more than of the shortness of time. He expected a crisis of world history, nothing less than the final coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. Taught by Paul, the early church expected this at any moment. Not only had Paul warned and exhorted the Christians of his day to be ready for this crisis, but Jesus Himself had prepared His disciples for it. They must never slacken or sleep, but must be ever on the alert (Matt. 24:42-44).

Paul's language here is very similar to what he writes in 1 Thess. 5—another great passage on the "last things", the things at the end of time, of eternity. Such a passage we designate "eschatological," the things concerning death, resurrection, final appearing of Christ, judgment, everlasting life and bliss, everlasting punishment, heaven and hell. In Rom. 13 we have the same words appearing as in 1 Thess. 5—times, sleep, waking, night, day, darkness, light.

In the setting of the New Testament Christians were living on the edge of the Age to Come, therefore they must never relax. "Now is our Salvation nearer to us than when we believed." Moffatt's spelling of Salvation with a capital "S" stresses that this is not individual salvation, but a universal event, the Crisis to which the ages have been speeding, the consummation of God's final redemptive act is near. This consummation is termed "the completion of our salvation" in Heb. 9:28.

In the great eschatological passage in Rom. 8: 19-24 Paul enlarges on the tremendous events of this coming and final crisis. Read in conjunction with the two other passages in Rom. 13 and 1 Thess. 5 we learn that the age of this world has almost run its course and that the Age to Come is very near. Modernist expositors of scripture explain that the early church, Paul and even Christ Himself were mistaken in their belief that His final coming was "at the door," and in seeking to order and prepare themselves for that great event. But we believe that they adopted the right attitude in being ready at any moment, constantly looking, working and praying for the "consummation of all things." For once let go this expectancy and there comes a rapid decline in belief and in earnestness and urgency in doing the Lord's service. There follows a centring of interest on the things of this life and world and a relinquishing of belief in the things of God and eternity. We become worldly-minded and cease to be spiritually-minded. Paul stresses the Crisis to inspire to seriousness and earnestness on the part of Christians.

#### ARE WE INVOLVED?

Is this of any concern to us? Does it affect us? Is there any meaning in it for us? Or is it all of mere academic or historical interest? We are vitally involved in it. If in Paul's time the Salvation was nearer than when his readers first believed, how much more so in ours, 2,000 years later? The events in the world today all point to a rapidly accelerating great crisis. The struggles and troubles of nations, the growth of nationalism, the setting up of mighty forces against each other, the disbelief in God's revelation, the materialism, the indifference to Christ and His cause, the wordliness, the crime, the destroying of moral standards and the sin, wickedness and cynicism now so apparent are all working to that last great Crisis which shall usher in Him who alone is the answer to the world's troubles, and the Saviour of men. Definitely these ageless teachings of the Bible apply to us, and we do well to take them to heart that we may profit thereby.

Let us look back over the past year 1965—the things we hoped or intended to do in Christ's service, and the few we have fulfilled; the little serious effort we have made to take the gospel to the world; the lack of exertion and assertion as soldiers of Christ. We have looked far more to our own needs than to those of the world in its need of or hunger for food and clothing for the bodies and souls of men; the time we have wasted rather than used profitably; the little money we have spent on God's work and the much we have devoted to ourselves. The result—frustration and apathy.

But there are hopeful signs, more hopeful and, please God, with better prospects of being realised than for many years. We are at last alive to the need for aggressive evangelism, for scriptural government, for personal ministry, and for going to people with the gospel.

So long as Christ "delays His coming" in 1966 let us spend every moment and ounce of our energy and abilities in trading with what Christ has committed to our care, that, whenever His appearing, we may yield to Him not only what He gave us, but may be able to meet Him with joy and confidence because, through our faithfulness, "Thy talent has gained others."

EDITOR.

#### "Restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness" (Gal. 6:1)

Any brother may be overtaken by a trespass at any time. To restore a brother who has fallen is vital Christian service. God is always seeking volunteers for such work, but only the spiritual Christian has the needed qualifications to serve effectively. The carnal Christian would likely provoke the sinner to anger and make his restoration even more difficult (1 Cor. 3:1-4). Sin is like a festering boil. It must be handled gently. Only those with the spirit of the "Great Physician" can properly sympathise and convert the sinner "from the error of his way" (James 1:19). Only those with his love can know how much of another's burden to share and how much it is best for him to bear. Those who think too highly of themselves would likely annoy and discourage the one in error. We should seek to restore all those guilty of sin, but we should do it in a spirit of humility and gentleness.

# Training for Service

## V: THE OLD COVENANT

*Definition of Covenant:* Among other dictionary definitions are: compact, bargain; (Law) contract under seal; (Biblical) dictation between God and Israelites.

None of these definitions, not even the so-called Biblical one, contains exactly what is meant by "covenant" in the Bible. We shall show that the Old Covenant was between God and the Israelites, but that is not its only Biblical meaning. For there is the New Covenant, between God and all people who acknowledge Jesus Christ as His Son and their Saviour.

### Examples of Covenants in the Bible

As between men a covenant was a solemn and binding agreement, sometimes involving (ratified by) drinking each other's blood. Such a covenant, upon any subject, involves (1) a statement of terms; (2) an oath to observe such terms; (3) a curse for breaking the covenant; and (4) ratification by an act (for example Gen. 15: 9-18; Jer. 14: 18).

*Instances of covenants between men:* David and Jonathan (1 Sam. 18: 3; 20: 8; 23: 18); between leaders of tribes on behalf of their people: Abraham and Abimelech (Gen. 21: 27, 32, and there are eighteen other instances in the N.T.); between a king and his subjects: David and the Israelites (2 Sam. 3: 12 etc.).

### Covenants between God and men

The covenants mentioned above were between men as equals, on equal terms. Covenants between God and men, however, are not between equals. God is superior, He takes the initiative, His terms are Divine ordinances. He gives His promises, and His blessings are conditional upon men's obedience.

*God's covenants with Noah,* before the Deluge (Gen. 6: 18) and after (Gen. 9: 8-17). These are God's covenants: He says, "I will establish my covenant with you" and in Gen. 9 God speaks of "My covenant" no fewer than nine times in nine verses. On the one side we have God's sovereign favour, on the other men's obligation.

*The covenant with Abraham.* Here again we see the same characteristics as in those with Noah. It is not an agreement with Abraham, but God's statement of His intentions, His will towards Abraham and his descendants. This covenant consisted of three promises: (1) the possession of Canaan (Gen. 12: 7; 13: 14-17); (2) multiplying of Abraham's descendants (Gen. 15: 5; 17: 2; 22: 17); (3) through Abraham's seed all men to be blessed (Gen. 12: 3: see Paul's exposition of this promise in Gal. 3: 16).

The covenant with Noah after the deluge was to all men; with Abraham it was to his descendants through the God-appointed rite of circumcision (Gen. 17: 9-14).

But the covenant with Abraham was much more than the Old Covenant, as we shall see in the next study on the New Covenant. The covenant with Abraham contained the New Covenant, the gospel, in that there was the promise of the One who was to be a blessing to the whole earth, the Redeemer, Saviour, the One set before us in the N.T. as the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Thus Paul goes so far as to say, "God preached beforehand the gospel to Abraham" (Gal. 3: 8). We often speak of only the N.T. containing the gospel, and insist that we cannot turn to the O.T. to preach the gospel. Yet here, 2,000 years before that Pentecost when we say that the gospel was preached for the first time, God preaches, in promise and prophecy, the gospel to Abraham!

*The covenant with Moses,* with Israel as the people of God. This was expressed in laws and commandments, necessary for Israel to keep (Exod. 19: 5, 6; 24: 7, 8), and is often termed The Law. This Law could only show what sin is, but could give no strength to overcome it. It was like a doctor who tells a patient "I can diagnose what is wrong with you, but I cannot do anything for you." So that, even by fulfilling the law, one could not justify himself before God, for the Law is unable to save or justify. It shows man his sinfulness and that he is condemned; but for his salvation man must look elsewhere than to the Law—to the sin-offering, Jesus Christ. Here in a word is the difference between righteousness by the Law and righteousness by faith; salvation through works and salvation by grace; the Old Covenant and the New.

*The covenant with David* (2 Sam. 7: 12-17; Psa. 89: 3, 4; 132: 11-18). This covenant referred to the Messiah, who was to be a descendant of David, as is made clear by Isa. 42: 1, 6; 55: 3, 4; Luke 1: 32, 33; Acts 2: 30-36. This Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ, fulfils, gives its meaning to, the Old Covenant: the provisions for and

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blessings of Israel are bound up with the Messiah, and the blessings of the New Covenant are embodied in Him. He is not only David's son; He is David's Lord (Matt. 22: 41-45).

This brings us fittingly to **next month's study:**

### The New Covenant.

#### QUESTIONS

1. What is the great difference between a covenant of men with men and a covenant of God with men?
2. State briefly, from scripture, what were God's covenants with Noah (a) before the Flood and (b) after the Flood.
3. Show how Jesus Christ is foreshadowed in God's promises to Abraham.

## *The Great Commission and You*

WHEN Christ gave His great commission to the apostles (Mt. 28: 18-20; Mk. 16: 15-16; Luke 24: 46-47), He placed upon every scripturally baptized believer the individual obligation of teaching others. Jesus said those who are immersed are to be taught to do what Christ told His apostles to do. He told the apostles to teach and baptize, therefore, every Christian who is properly taught should also teach and baptize.

Paul instructed Timothy in 2 Tim. 2: 2 saying, "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." The Greek word here translated "men" is anthropos and it is a generic term including the whole of the human race—men and women, boys and girls.

The exhortation in 1 Pet. 3: 15 to be ready always to give an answer for the reason of our hope, is directed to the individual Christian, and there is no more urgent need in the church today than for Christians who can and will talk to people about their souls' need and about the Christ of the gospel who satisfies that need.

Every Christian, regardless of sex or age, should feel the same burning passion for men's souls that Jesus and the first century Christian felt—every Christian, regardless of sex or age, should feel the intense desire for men to be saved because they are lost.

Jesus is pictured by the inspired evangelists as a great Preacher and Teacher and although He is often described in this role among the multitudes, the writers never lose sight of the personal interest He expressed in the individual. His work was always personal, individual, even among the multitudes, and His parting words upon ascending back to heaven cry out to the individual today: "GO . . . TEACH!"

#### Whom Shall We Teach?

EVERYONE, irrespective of race or religious affiliation. Paul, the greatest evangelist the world has ever known, taught the Jew in the synagogue and the Gentile on the street; he went from house to house, and he invited people into his own hired house. Christianity has no bounds. God is not willing that any should perish (2 Pet. 3: 9) but will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth (1 Tim. 2: 4).

#### How To Make Contacts

Nearly everyone now-a-days lives in some kind of a house. It may be a semi-detached, detached, or a flat—nine times out of ten there is a house next door to you—in the majority of cases there is a house on each side of you—and the possibility is great that there is a house across the street from you. People live in all these houses and you probably know the names of many of them.

Write their names and addresses on a piece of paper—one name to a paper—and then sit down and think. Ask yourself this question: "Can I talk to this family about their souls, or should I ask someone in my assembly to approach them? Once your decision is made, ACT.

If you feel you cannot make the call yourself, you need not feel badly. Did not our Lord say "a prophet is not without honour, but in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house" (Mk. 6: 4)? Sometimes our neighbours and kin are hardest of all for us to teach, however; this does not mean that they are not potential children of God. Our own personality may not reach them, but

we will never know whether or not another's will, until it has been TRIED! So, if you feel you cannot approach them, ask another to do so, and YOU take the name of the family your Christian brother or sister feels they cannot call on. In this manner, ALL FAMILIES in ALL NEIGHBOURHOODS will be approached.

Approached by a "stranger?" What of it? Everywhere Paul went, he went as a "stranger." The Gospel is MOST OFTEN carried by a "stranger." When the great persecution arose against the church at Jerusalem, the Scripture says that "they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word" (Acts 8: 1-4), and they went as "strangers."

Assuming now that you have written the names and addresses of your neighbours on a piece of paper, and assuming that you have made your decision about whether or not you can make the call, next week, we shall consider HOW to make the call.

#### A Special Note To The Ladies

Are you working in the Lord's vineyard? If not—why not? What reason will you give your Saviour when you stand before Him in the judgement day? Because, just as surely as you read this today, just that surely you shall stand before Him in the final judgment and give an account of yourself (Rom. 14: 11-12).

Perhaps you are not working because you do not know what you can do. The questions are often asked: "What is a woman's work in the church? What work can a woman do?" The answer is simple and it is clear. A woman can (and must) do any work a man can do, except take the place of leadership. The headship of man is absolute, and it is his by virtue of priority in creation (1 Tim. 2: 13), and by virtue of the woman being first deceived (1 Tim. 2: 14).

However, Scriptural subjection does not involve superiority in point of ability; dependence does not indicate inferiority; and difference in function does not mean difference in status. Paul's words in 1 Tim. 2: 12 are a clearly expressed declaration of woman's ability to teach, as well as a clearly expressed declaration of the headship of man—"A woman will not usurp authority over a man."

It is not TEACHING that is forbidden in this passage, but teaching "over a man". A woman "CAN" teach (has the ability), and she is commanded to teach (Tit. 2: 3-4), but she is commanded not to teach over a man.

In short, a man's place is one of "authority," and a woman's place is one of "loyalty," and the woman who is not at work in the church, whether she be teaching, helping the sick, feeding the hungry, clothing the naked—is not loyal to the man nor to the Christ. And the man in a local assembly neglects or refuses to join hands with a woman in a local assembly and all go to work for Christ, is guilty of failing to exercise his God-given authority. He is closing his eyes to the greatest working potential he has and in the final analysis, he is hindering the cause of Christ!

SELECTED.

## SCRIPTURE READINGS

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|                     |                     |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| 2—2 Kings 6:3-23    | Luke 18:35 to 19:10 |
| 9—Jeremiah 7:1-15   | Luke 19:11-28       |
| 16—Zechariah 9:9-17 | Luke 19:29-43       |
| 23—Isaiah 5:1-13    | Luke 20:1-18        |
| 30—Exodus 3:1-15    | Luke 20:19-40       |

### "JESUS WEPT"

(Luke 19:41)

WE know that these words (John 11:35), compose the shortest verse in the Bible. And how important they are, giving us, so to speak, a glimpse of the divine compassion, which in fact the whole life of Jesus portrays. However we want to understand more than one reason for the Saviour's sorrows. It was written of Him centuries before He came and dwelt with and died for mankind, "A man of sor-

rows and acquainted with grief" and "He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows" (Isaiah 53:3 and 4). We might like to have a record of "Jesus laughed," and some have imagined this, but the record has not been given. If we wish for justification for our humour we cannot find it in the Word. To make people merely enjoy themselves carries no credit with the Holy Spirit, though the "wise man" assures us "There is a time to laugh" (Ecc. 3:4). However, the issues of life and death are too important for that, and genuine happiness must be the fruit of, or consistent with, belief, repentance and obedience, or it is simply "living in a fool's paradise" and then perishing amid "weeping and gnashing of teeth." Christians are required to live "not with foolish talking or jesting, which are not befitting: but rather giving of thanks"

Men rarely weep. They have an instinctive feeling of shame at such an exhibition, thinking tears only permissible for women and children. It may be that the shame be that men do not feel any-

thing deeply enough for tears—and this only shows selfishness and hardness of heart. The Psalmist wrote "My tears have been my meat day and night" (Psa. 42:3) because he could not go to the Tabernacle to worship. Our Saviour Jesus "offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears," expressing in human measure the immeasurable agonies of Gethsemane. God knows there is reason for weeping for the church with its weakness and division, let alone the world outside with its great load of suffering, starvation and death. So it may be wrong not to weep sometimes; but like the nurse and doctor we have to repress our feelings or we would not be able to cope with our duties.

We can enter into the Saviour's feeling somewhat at the time of which we are thinking by considering some other words of His on the same subject, recorded by Luke in chapter 13:33-35. The Pharisees were trying to get Him to hide from Herod, probably to get Him out of their way, or accuse Him of cowardice, but He refused to be disturbed or turned from His purpose of journeying to Jerusalem. He said these striking words: "It cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem," as though to indicate that the place where Jehovah had chosen to put His Name and signify His very presence in the midst of His own people must be the place where the worst crime against Him and His terrible judgment are also to be. How significant this is of the grave responsibility of those who receive the greatest blessings. The yearning of the Father's heart for their repentance and restoration is expressed in the figure of the hen protecting her brood. Jerusalem was about to reject the last opportunity after centuries of divine mercy, chastisements and prophetic entreaty: "and ye would not."

Other words of Jesus are found in chapter 21. and again while He was actually on the way to crucifixion indicating His foreknowledge (Luke 23:28-31) of the fearful days of divine retribution brought on by the developing and dreadful wickedness of the city and its people. The day they said "We have no king but Caesar" and "His blood be upon us and our children" their doom was sealed, and the deepest sorrow of the Saviour's life more than justified. His tears at the grave of Lazarus manifested the tender sympathetic love of a very dear friend, perhaps also grief at the doubt of His love expressed in the words "If Thou hadst been here my brother had not died" (John 11:21 and 32), or perhaps even at the attitude to death taken by those who knew Him so well. We can only be sure that the motives working in His heart were the purest and holiest. But is not the greatest grief that sinners will not turn to God, accept the offer of His salvation and live?

Surely if anyone was ever entitled to enjoy life it was Jesus. It was not a case of the righteous being scarcely saved (1 Peter 4:18) for He never sinned in thought or word or deed. Of course we know why He suffered—to save sinners. Undoubtedly He must have experienced great joy. Indeed this is recorded (Luke 10:21) when He received the report of the seventy of their triumph over the demons; and His presence at the wedding feast (John 2) shows His sympathy with human joys. Yes; and we think every time He healed the victims of disease He rejoiced with them. And was not His heart warmed when Bartimaeus, for instance, glorified God and followed Him, and the people gave praise to God (Luke 18:43)? Then there was the close association with those humble men who were afterwards to render up their lives to His service, and even the robber who repented on the cross.

Let us see that we "grieve not the Holy Spirit of God" (Eph. 4.30).

**CORRECTION OF PRINTER'S ERROR IN DECEMBER NOTES.** Page 138 second column line 20 should read:— as far as we allow these to rule our hearts. We must feel our own weakness and liability to think and say harmful things.

#### KINDLY EXCUSE

W. BARKER in an apology for not having completed the article "The Day" as promised in December issue, writes: "We have all the usual end-of-year work to do and moreover, the article itself grew in such long lengths that it needs a great deal of cutting before it can be made fit to be printed in the magazine.

"We consider this new reading as most important—worthy of the closest study of every Bible student. So important indeed, that, if pressed to their proper end discussion would revolutionise the teaching of our Christian Churches. Baptism is important and peace within the Christian system' is in effect its subject. May brethren study it for themselves, is my suggestion and wish.

If God wills, February issue shall have some thoughts on the subject matter it contains."

#### NO PLACE FOR IDLENESS

Work, for I am with you.

Hag. 2, 4.

The life that gets in touch with Christ says goodbye to idleness. There is ample work to do at one's own door. It is good to lift up the eyes to distant fields. But look through your own window and you will see need all around you. Don't dream of working for God—work. Don't talk of working for God—work.

Mrs. Bessie Player.

# Churches of Christ in Former Years

## A Glimpse into the Past.

QUESTIONS have been asked many times, not only of the writer but no doubt of many of our readers, "When did Churches of Christ come into being? Where did they originate? Who was their founder? For what purpose did they come?"

Such questions are quite legitimate for interested persons to ask, and merely to assert that we originated from the New Testament is not the answer enquirers expect nor are they satisfied with it. To affirm also that we are not a denomination is again not sufficient for the enquiring mind.

It is to try to meet this situation that these articles are being written—that readers, old and young, may have a little insight into our history and the purposes for which we exist as a separate religious body.

Strange as it may seem, churches of Christ, as we know them, and so far as Great Britain is concerned, came into being simultaneously in various parts of the British Isles, and without any leader, round about 1809-10. It is more than a coincidence that similar bodies sprang up in America at about the same time: it appears that some thinking men and women, tired of the many sects and creeds that cluttered up the churches, had turned to the Bible and, as many of their predecessors had before them, realised that the only satisfactory way of the Christian life lay in an unadulterated faith in the written Word of God.

It is in the writer's knowledge that this has happened in other parts. A missionary friend, some thirty years ago, testified to finding a church of New Testament order in the heart of Africa, where—as far as he knew—a white man had never been before. It transpired that in former years a head man of the tribe had come into contact with a Christian preacher, had been given a bible, taken it home, taught his family, who, taking that one bible as their guide, had established a church as near the New Testament as any within the missionary's knowledge.

## Beginnings of Restoration

It will be of interest to our readers that what were known as churches of Christ were in existence as far back as 1644. Records available testify that there were churches at Fenstanton and Warboys in Huntingdonshire, and at Hexham in Northumberland. The founder of these churches was Henry Denne, who served in Cromwell's army at the time of the Civil War.

This Henry Denne soon revealed himself to be a man of the Book, and engaged in a public debate with a Dr. Gunning in St. Clement Dane's Church in the Strand, London. He and his brother elder were evidently strict in their government of the church. He and Edmond Mayle had cause to take to task on one occasion a John Eppings, in the Fenstanton Church, who had committed the grave error of baptising two infants in the Church of England faith. "For shame," said John Denne, "revoke this wicked error, this unnatural sin, to congregate and join your children to a false church," and similar terms he used.

It is a commendable feature of these records that church discipline played a great part in combating and removing error. For instance a sister was sharply reproved for contemplating marriage outside the church, and her insistence on going through with it was further admonished and eventually removed from church membership.

Their quaint English is interesting in recording another instance of church discipline: an absent member was interviewed as to the reason for his absence; and when that was ascertained he was reproved for "his heinous crime of, Firstly, forsaking the Church of God; Secondly, running frequently upon the first day of the week; and at other times, to the vicious assemblies of the world, joining with them in their sports and pastimes and excess of riot." He too found himself cut off from fellowship.

It was at about this time—the mid-seventeenth century—that a church at Peterborough was established and soon communicated with these other churches which were found to be also established. In 1656 a meeting was convened to send two evangelists into the west of England. It will be of interest to our present day evangelists that six brethren were appointed to visit the evangelists' wives in their husbands' absence, to take care of them in what they required. The following Resolution from the records is revealing: "That our beloved brethren aforesaid shall have twelve shillings a week for themselves and their families."

In case we think these good folks were niggardly let us affirm they were more generous than we are, for the average wage in 1686 was six shillings a week for a

hand loom weaver; yet thirty years before these brethren gave twice that sum to their evangelists. How many of our preachers to-day get twice the sum of the average worker in the congregation? It is worthy of note that agricultural labourers got only four shillings a week, but no doubt they had access to produce to help out their wage. In fact a socialist minded poet apparently born before his time composed a poem in which a master weaver says,

"We'll make them work hard at sixpence a day,  
Tho' a shilling they deserve if they had their just pay."

Another interesting entry in these records concerns the baptism of a young brother in the sea at Spalding, Lincolnshire on January 19th, 1694, and the record goes on to say that was at a time of frost and deep snow; but no harm ensued. He continued, "Let none be afraid to venture into the water when the season is cold, lest they be laid in their graves before the weather is warm." What these hardy souls would think of us with our centrally-heated buildings and warmed baptisteries we shudder to think.

It would be profitable here to note that the churches of Christ, as we know them, were not the only people to advocate reunion. Conferences were arranged at Hampden Court with the object of bringing about reunion based on New Testament Christianity. Such great men as John Wycliffe, in England and John Huss in Bohemia all had in the 14th century taken up this same position.

In 1637 William Chillingworth produced his book that became famous—"The Religion of Protestants is the Safe way to Salvation." In it he stated: "The Bible, I say; the Bible only is the religion of the Protestants." In 1659 Stillingfleet, later Bishop of Worcester, stated in his book "Irenicum", "For the Church to require more than the Christ Himself did, or make the conditions of her communion more than our Saviour did of Discipleship, is wholly unwarranted." Also about this time a Rupertus Meldinios originated the famous phrase that has become a classic: "In essentials unity; in non-essentials liberty; in all things charity."

### THE MOVEMENT IN SCOTLAND

The Union of the English and Scottish Parliaments in 1707 brought many changes in the religious, political and secular life, especially in Scotland. Of fundamental importance to us today is the record of the forming of the Glasites round about 1730. John Glas, a minister of the Church of Scotland, was deposed from his ministry, and formed the sect that bore his name. By 1734 churches were formed by him in Dundee, Perth and Edinburgh. Yet they never grew to be a large body, never reaching more than forty churches. Gradually they died out. But what was significant about the Glasites was the similarity of their teaching to that of the churches of Christ, as outlined in the following statement:

"That the Scriptures of the Old Testament as Christ and His Apostles received them from the Jews, and gave them to Christians, with the Scriptures of the New Testament, as we have them handed down to us, contain the complete revelation of the whole counsel of God, and are the perfect rule of the Christian Religion, which is still to be found pure and entire in these."

He also insisted on a plurality of elders in each congregation, repudiated the idea that ordination conveyed any priestly status, acknowledged no distinction between "clergy" and "laity," and strongly objected to indiscriminate admission to the Lord's table. There are those who feel John Glas was born before his time. Yet his followers soon became a spent force, possibly because of the retention of the name of their founder instead of the Christ they sought to honour.

About the year 1761 the Scotch Baptists came into being, obtaining many followers from the now failing Glasites. We mention this body because while they have much in common with our movement, many of our critics have affirmed that we get much of our doctrine from them. But as far as the writer has been able to ascertain this is definitely not true; the fact that they advanced similar teaching is understandable, as both are drawn from Scripture. It has been said that the British churches inherit their views on a "closed communion table" (i.e. only the immersed being allowed to partake) from the Scotch Baptists. But this is untrue. As far as the writer is concerned, we studied the Word of God and came to accept this view long before we ever heard of the Scotch Baptists, and so did many of our contemporaries; and our continued studies have only served to confirm that view that only those who have accepted the Lord and been immersed into his name for the remission of their sins have any right to be admitted to His table, and all others should be excluded. The New Testament knows nothing of "Guest Communicants" or the "Neither invite nor debar" attitude.

From this time until well into the 1800's the Scotch Baptists continued to grow, but, as is inevitable with man-made denominations, differences arose and soon there were two sections of them. The differences were so acute that eventually the two



bodies refused to fraternise, a factor which largely helped in the growth of the churches of Christ.

About this time (the late 18th century) other bodies arose among the many dissentients from the Church of Scotland: we refer to the Old Scots Independent movement, and the Haldane movement, the latter started by the wealthy brothers Robert and James Alexander Haldane. These two brothers believed in what, for lack of a better term, we refer to as the "Lay Ministry"—the training of young men to preach while following their secular occupation. Robert Haldane spent £70,000 in twelve years out of his private fortune for this purpose, which speaks much for his zeal and enthusiasm for what he believed. However, by 1808 this movement began to go the way of the rest, which again goes to prove, "Except the Lord build the house they labour in vain that build it." In the welter of "Restoration Movements" of the 17th and 18th centuries the churches of Christ seemed to stand out in the uniqueness of their plea, relying as they did on the New Testament and that alone.

(To be continued).

## *Let it Pass!*

LET it pass—that angry word uttered in a moment of temper—that spiteful expression used in a fit of anger!

Don't retaliate—don't try to hit back—don't say, "I'll give him a dose of his own medicine." Let your resentment subside.

Remember how Christ, when He was taunted, mocked and falsely accused in the court of Herod, said nothing.

Imitate His heroic silence—imitate His Divine restraint. (Matt. 27: 62-63).

After all, there is nothing smart or clever in giving back insult for insult, sneer for sneer, or cut for cut.

Any simpleton can throw stones or fling mud. You only lower yourself if you take part in a competition of that kind.

But to curb and control the tongue that is itching to lash out—that needs the courage which comes from a well-regulated and disciplined life.

You have, perhaps, the power to inflict a wound far deeper than the one you have received but leave the matter in the hands of Him Who said, Revenge is mine, I will repay. (Rom. 12: 19).

In order to get along in the world pleasantly we have to overlook a great deal and often turn a deaf ear.

So long as our common humanity is so frail and imperfect, we must be prepared to swallow our offended pride—we must be willing to forgive and forget—to take no notice.

Don't take part in uncharitable gossip. Either change the subject, or else put in a good word in favour of the person attacked. You can point out that it is unfair to blast a man's character for the sake of a single wrong step, and that there may be in the lives of the accusers themselves some incident which they would not like to be exposed to the glare of publicity. There is some spark of goodness in even the worst of sinners—draw attention to it.

Besides, most of the scandalous tales you hear are either grossly exaggerated, or they are devoid of all foundation.

The truth of any venomous story that has gone through two or more tellings should be suspected. It grows like a snowball with each repetition. The molehill becomes a mountain.

You yourself may one day become the target of gossip. An evil interpretation may be put on your best and kindest actions. Jealousy and malice may even strive to encompass your downfall.

But don't go off at the deep end. Remain calm and observe a dignified silence. Put all your trust in God, Who will help you to defend yourself at the right time and in the right way. Meanwhile, carry on quietly—doing your duty to God, to your neighbour and yourself, just as if nothing had been said. Let it pass.

It may be God's will to allow your character to be tested and strengthened by what appear to you to be undeserved humiliations.

But don't let black clouds blind you to the silver lining of His presence.

Danger brings Him close to your side, if you appeal to Him.

He is never so near as during the darkest and most critical hours of your life, when you most need His help.

Place your troubles at the foot of the Cross and be content to leave them there.

By a glance or a word, God can still the tumbling waters, and abate their fury, and turn bitterness into sweetness, and hatred into love.

But you must be patient, and leave it to Him to choose His own time and His own way to right the wrong.

He is the one changeless Friend, who will never let you down, who will stand by you, guide and console you, and bear you up in the fiercest of storms and in the cruellest of ordeals.

Don't indulge in self-pity or in vain regrets. Above all, don't lose your temper.

The man who knows that he is right is unruffled. Insults will have no more effect on him than water on a duck's back. With the help of God's grace, he can face the malice of enemies with a smile, with fortitude, and with supernatural calm.

Try and follow this advice, and you will then convert yesterday's knocks and blows into to-morrow's triumphs.

Selected.

## *The Law of Love*

TWO statements by the apostle Paul are a fitting introduction to this study: "For though I was free from all men, I brought myself under bondage to all, that I might gain the more" (1 Cor. 9:19). "In all things I gave you an example, that so labouring ye ought to help the weak, and to remember the words of the "Lord Jesus, that he himself said, It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35). In the sixth chapter of Galatians Paul gives some practical applications of these principles.

### **"Communicate unto him that teachest in all good things" (Gal. 6:6)**

The one taught has an obligation to his teacher not of law but of love. "Yea, it hath been their good pleasure; and their debtors they are. For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things they owe it to them also to minister unto them in carnal things" (Rom. 15:27). There will always be hirelings who preach the gospel for money and we are warned against them. But there are also carnal Christians who would like to hear the gospel at another's cost, while they sow unto their own flesh (Gal. 6:8). Both are displeasing to God and lacking in love for their brethren.

### **"Especially toward them that are of the household of the faith" (Gal. 6:10)**

"So then, as we have opportunity, let us work that which is good toward all men, and especially toward them that are of the household of the faith" (Gal. 6:9, 10). The Christian who has been made free by Christ is a debtor to all men (Rom. 1:14). It is a debt to grace and love but it is a debt nevertheless (Rom. 13:8). Though free, the Christian has a special obligation toward them that are of the household of the faith because they are his brethren. But whoso hath the world's goods, and beholdeth his brother in need and shutteth up his compassion from him, how doth the love of God abide in him?" (1 John 3:16, 17).

### **"I resisted him to the face" (Gal. 2:11)**

Free Christians can and often should make concessions for the sake of the brethren (1 Cor. 8:13). But there may come times when we must resist our brethren to the face as Paul did when the occasion demanded. Paul did not hesitate to resist and rebuke even the apostle Peter and those that were with him "when he saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel" (Gal. 2:14). But he did it in love and there was no schism or breaking of fellowship. Paul steadfastly refused to circumcise Titus even when pressed to do so by his brethren (Gal. 2:2-5). But he circumcised Timothy voluntarily because in doing so he sacrificed no principle of Christian liberty, and he thought that through showing such love he might the better reach the lost Jews (Acts 16:3). The rule that governs in all similar cases is the glory of God and not the approval or disapproval of the brethren (1 Cor. 10:32, 33).

## His Abiding Presence

"HE hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" (Heb. 13:5).

Several times in the Scriptures the Lord has said this. He has often repeated it to make our assurance doubly sure. Let us never harbour doubt of it. In itself the promise is specially emphatic. In the Greek it has five negatives, each one definitely shutting out the possibility of the Lord's ever leaving one of His people so that he can justly feel forsaken of his God. This priceless Scripture does not promise us exemption from trouble, but it does secure us against desertion. We may be called to traverse strange ways, but we shall always have our Lord's company, assistance, and provision. We need not covet money, for we shall always have our God and God is better than gold; His favour is better than fortune.

We ought surely to be content with such things as we have, for he who has God has more than all the world besides. What can we have beyond the Infinite? What more can we desire than Almighty Goodness?—Selected.

**I have chosen you, and ordained you.**

John 15, 16.

As we remember the mother God chose, dare we not believe that He may be choosing us for His service? We do not ask that our way be easy or that we always understand all that happens. We only ask that we be strong to give our best and to remain ever true, even as Mary was.

C. L. Allen.

## CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Mr. Editor,—Bro. Eric Winter came to meet members of the Wigan churches at Cleveleys. After some consideration it was arranged that preaching brethren from Wigan and Blackburn should go to help. Brother and Sister Stanton, myself and Sister Breakell took the first Sunday, and Brother and Sister H. Davenport also attended the morning meeting. It was quite apparent to us that this kind of help was insufficient and we asked Bro. Eric to get in touch with the existing Evangelistic Committee and ask for advice and help in a venture to build or buy a building for retiring brethren to live or for holiday periods that would help to swell numbers, and give encouragement to this small assembly.

Failing help from this source we felt that if 100 brethren would invest £50 each there would be enough to commence such a scheme.

We have several brethren who could advise in such a venture. If any are interested enough, we could arrange a meeting. Will any interested church or brethren please contact me and I will advise the local brethren accordingly.

JOHN BREAKELL.

21 Wellcross Road,  
Up-Holland,  
Wigan, Lancs.

## NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

**Motherwell.**—The church has had the joyful experience of witnessing the "good confession" of John Wharie, and his burial with his Lord in baptism. The church feels strengthened by the addition of this young man and we hope and pray that he will remain faithful unto the end. To God we give the praise, honour and glory.

L. PURCELL.

## OBITUARY

**Bathgate.**—The church mourns in the passing of Sister Williamson on November 23rd. Sister Williamson was the wife of the late Bro. Williamson, who was an elder in the Church in Bathgate. She was quiet but well liked by all who knew her. She had been ill for some time. We commend to God those of her family knowing He will bear them up in their time of trouble.

H. HOUSTON.

**Kirkby-in-Ashfield, Beulah Road.**—We mourn the passing of Sister Annie Hitchens, wife of Bro. Charles Hitchens, on November 23rd at the age of seventy-five years. Our sister was immersed into Christ over forty years ago when the church met at Nuncargate, and had been a constant, untiring worker until her last illness. She endured her long illness with fortitude and with unwavering faith and we know she was prepared to meet her Lord, in whom was her joy and hope. Our sympathy goes out to her husband and daughters and all who grieve for her passing, and we pray they will find comfort and consolation in our heavenly Father. We might fittingly quote the old hymn, "Sorrow vanquished, labour ended, Jordan passed."

Our sister was laid to rest on Saturday, November 27th, Bro. Robert McDonald conducting the service in the meeting-room and at the graveside.

T. WOODHOUSE.

## COMING EVENTS

**Ince-in-Makerfield (Wigan).**—Holiday week-end special meetings April 8th-11th, 1966. Lectures, discussions, Gospel meetings, etc. Accommodation gladly provided for visitors. These special meetings will mark the beginning of a gospel mission to be conducted by Bro. C. P. Slate, of Wembley. Meetings nightly from April 8th to 17th, 1966 (D.V.). Fuller details later.

**Aylesbury.**—Gospel Campaign, April 17th-24th. Preacher, Bro. W. N. Jackson (Ipswich). Meetings every evening. All brethren who are able to come are invited to assist us in this campaign.

Young People's Week-end, May 28th-30th. Special programme on the Saturday; a recreational programme on the Monday.

Bible School, July 24th-August 7th. Lectures and classes, Monday-Friday of each week.

Further details of the above will be given later.

**Loughborough.**—The church intends to conduct an intensive CAMPAIGN FOR CHRIST, the Lord willing, during the period Saturday, March 5th to Lord's Day, April 3rd, 1966. Preachers in this campaign will be Donald Daugherty (Paris), and Andrew Gardiner (Edinburgh).

The purpose of this notice is to beseech you brethren, to remember this effort often in your prayers, that it might bear fruit in the salvation of many souls. We also urge any who can to make plans to come and be with us, and to work in the effort to extend the Kingdom of Christ in Loughborough.

If you can come please let us know at once. Write to Mr. T. Stones, 34 Holefield Avenue, Loughborough, Leicestershire, England. Fuller details will be announced later. Tom Stones.

## PALESTINE TOUR

In response to a number of requests, a tour of Palestine is being organised. The tour will be for 15 days: either May 3rd-18th or May 12th-27th, whichever is the more convenient for the majority of the members of the party. Travel will be by Britannia aircraft, from Gatwick Airport, London. Only first-class hotels will be booked. The tour will include visits to most of the major sites in Jordan and Israel, and will be by private cars in Jordan and by coach in Israel. The charge, inclusive of air travel and hotels will be 112 guineas. There will be three optional extras, including a visit to Petra. No other expense will be incurred except a small charge for visas, and of course personal spending. Will those interested please write as soon as possible, indicating which of the two periods they would prefer, to: L. H. Channing, 10 Mandeville Road, Aylsbury, Bucks.

## CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Geoffrey Lodge, "Ash Villa," 11 Grosvenor Road, Batley, Yorks. Tel. Batley 4089.

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