

The SCRIPTURE STANDARD

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

VOL.40 . No. 3

MARCH, 1973

(The article which follows was sent by Bro. Allan Ashurst of Stretford. It appeared in the *Manchester Evening News* of December 18th 1972. We were so impressed by its truth and simplicity that we thought it would be of interest to S.S. readers. The cause that the S.S. stands for cannot be more clearly and succinctly stated than in what the Archbishop writes. We ourselves try continually to plead for New Testament truth, but it is encouraging and gratifying to find this truth set forth by the head of the Church of England.

We wrote the Archbishop to ask his permission to reprint his article in the S.S. He replied in a gracious note giving such permission, asking only that we should say that it was "a talk given on the Radio 4 programme "Thought for the Day". This acknowledgement we gladly make, with our warmest thanks. Many of us heard the talk when it was given a few months ago. EDITOR)

THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY REMINDS US THE CHURCH IS REALLY THE PEOPLE

WHAT do we mean by the word Church?

The word Church probably suggests to most people a kind of building. We talk about "going to Church". But the original meaning of the word, and its basic meaning still, is different.

It means the people, the Christian people, the fellowship of those who adhere to Jesus Christ.

The earliest Christians didn't meet in great buildings like cathedrals; they met in one another's houses or perhaps in the open air.

They shared, as Christians everywhere still share, a common belief, expressed in a simple sentence, Jesus is Lord, and this meant the belief that Jesus is alive today, Jesus is divine and Jesus claims lordship, sovereignty over all human life.

Besides a common belief the members of the Church were, and are, pledged to a way of life—unselfishness. brotherhood. mutual forgiveness. compassion. justice.

How does one join? By baptism. The converts used to be brought to a stream or river and, after professing their belief that Jesus is Lord, they would plunge under the water and step out into a new life, the Christian life.

How were the members held together with Jesus and with one another? Every week there is the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, also called the Holy communion or the Eucharist. In this symbolic rite with bread and wine the Christians feed upon Christ's own life, receive Him into their lives and are joined closely to one another.

It is the people who are the Church: Christ's people, wherever they are, in their homes or at their work or on their journeys. And while through history the Church has taken various institutional forms, with complex organisations and buildings, it is always the people who are the Church: you, if you are a Christian, just where you are, having a meal or whatever you are doing.

But while Christians are the Church, what makes them so? One thing makes them so. The presence of Christ whose Church it is. Christ with His people, Christ in His people: that is what makes the Church.

So one of the great metaphors for the Church is, The Body of Christ. You see how literal this is. Jesus risen from the dead and alive today has a body through which he lives and works and makes himself known and this body is the Christian people. "You are the body of Christ," says the apostle. What effect has this? We shall think about that tomorrow

GREAT DOCTRINES OF SCRIPTURE

III: THE GRACE OF GOD

WHAT IS GRACE? The word grace, although a beautiful and wonderful word, is not easy to define. It is in common use in the religious world, yet few, if asked to do so, could give a clear and exhaustive definition. All are sure of its meaning to a certain extent; but that is all. This is not to be wondered at when considered in a study of the Scriptures.

In the New Testament the word is a translation from the Greek word *charis*. It occurs 156 times, and in the A.V. is variously translated grace, favour, thanks, pleasure, liberality, benefit, gift, joy, etc. Apart from grace, thanks, favour, and pleasure, the other translations are given only once. In defining grace A.T. Pierson wrote:—"Grace is favour without respect of merit. It includes the idea of rejoicing and thanksgiving such as is natural when the good bestowed is both without regard to the desert of the recipient, and without measure on the part of the bestower. All these thoughts belong to the Biblical conception of grace, which thus points at once to the boundless liberality of the giver, and the boundless unworthiness of the receiver."

The word grace is so prominent in the New Testament that the Gospel is called "The Word of his grace" (Acts 14:3) and the Holy Spirit "the Spirit of grace" (Heb. 10:29), and God himself the "God of grace" (1 Peter 5:10). The main emphasis, however, is on

The Abundance of the Grace of God

To give expression to this, human language is taxed to its utmost as the inspired writers write to Churches and individuals of the "riches of His grace" (Eph. 1:7) suggesting an infinite and inexhaustible supply. Paul in writing to the Church at Corinth (2 Cor. 9:14) uses the term "exceeding grace of God", showing God's grace goes beyond the limit, excels, or boils over. In 1 Peter 4:10 Peter writes of "the manifold grace of God" — that His grace has countless forms of manifestation, and is suited to every need. In Eph. 2:7 the words "exceeding" and "riches" are combined in "the exceeding riches of His grace", so giving an ascent in emphasis. It is *grace*, *riches of grace*, *superabounding riches of grace*.

This Paul further emphasises when writing to Timothy regarding his conversion and apostleship, in the words "and the grace of the Lord was exceeding abundant" (1 Tim. 1:14), meaning the grace of God was excess beyond excess: not simply an overflow, but, like the Deluge in Noah's day, an over-overflow.

The Grace of God made Manifest

From the beginning of time God was gracious, showering favour on all who sought to do the right: "A good man obtaineth favour of the Lord". (Prov. 12:2; Ex. 34:6; Ps. 5:12). If one is in need, "when he crieth unto me, that I will hear, for I am gracious" (Ex. 22:27). Noah in seeking to do the will of God "found grace in the eyes of the Lord" (Gen. 6:8) So did many others (1 Sam. 2:26 etc.).

Despite the freeness of God's favours in Old Testament days, His grace to mankind excelled all others in the giving of Christ Jesus as an atonement for man's sin. Man was lost in sin of his own doing - "Dead in trespasses and in sin" (Eph. 2:1). God had decreed "The soul that sinneth shall die" (Ezek. 18:4,20). Man could provide no escape from the terrible consequences of his own sin; but God in His love and mercy "freely delivered him up for us all" (Rom. 8:32), "to die, the just for the unjust" (1 Pet. 3:18). Thus God manifested His grace in doing for man what man could not do for himself, in providing a sin offering in His own Son (Jn. 3:16).

As well as being lost in sin, man needed to know of God's love and His wonderful sacrifice in Christ in succeeding generations. "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps", (Jer. 10:23) but in Christ, God not only provided in His grace the means of procuring man's salvation, but a means whereby it can be made known to man in the Truth: "Grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ" (Jn. 1:17,14), the word of God being the truth (Jn. 17:17). In the Bible we have a further manifestation of God's grace: a means whereby man can be guided out of the wilderness of sin. It expresses the course of mercy by which man is "called" by the gospel (2 Thess. 2:14; 1 Pet. 5:10 etc.), "saved" (Eph. 2:8), "justified" (Rom. 3:21-24), "enabled to live aright" (1 Cor. 15:10) and to find this grace "sufficient" for him (2 Cor. 12:9). So that salvation has not only been made possible by the grace of God in Christ, but has been made known by the grace of God in the Bible (2 Tim. 3:15-17).

The Grace of God and Salvation

"For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. 2:8,9). While religious bodies differ in many ways on this subject, with few exceptions all rejoice in believing that salvation is by "grace". The differences arise over the appropriation of the grace of God in salvation. The belief of many is that nothing can be done by man in this direction: God has done it all. It is averred that if man had anything to do, his salvation would be of works, but it is "not of works lest any man should boast". No thought is given to what the "works" refer to in this statement, or what the writer through the Holy Spirit is teaching. The "works" referred to are the commands of the Law of Moses which needed perfect men to keep; if kept, man could have boasted of his righteousness. Salvation for man under Law was impossible, "for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23) and so God, by His grace and mercy in His Son, introduced a Salvation which all could appropriate (Tit. 2:11;12).

The Scriptures teach that salvation is through "faith" (Eph. 2:8 etc.) and "he that believeth not shall be condemned". (Mark 16:16). The fact that "man with the heart believes unto righteousness" (Rom. 10:10) clearly shows that under the Gospel, while salvation is through the grace of God, man has something to do to receive it. Faith or belief in one sense can be called a "work", because the mind is active (Jn. 6:29) and work can mean activity of any kind; yet it cannot be said man in believing is giving something of equivalent value to what he is receiving. Truly it has been said "it (salvation) is the gift of God" (Eph. 2:9).

Like most free gifts, to appropriate them obedience to the conditions attached are necessary. While the conditions are usually valueless in themselves, and the gift offered can be said to be by the grace of the giver, to receive the gift there is the need for action according to the desires of the giver. It is the same with the Free Gift of Salvation. The Giver (God) has laid down conditions whereby we can appropriate the Gift of Full and Free Salvation through "believing" (Acts 16:31 etc.) "repenting" (Lk. 13:3,5), "confessing" (Rom. 10:10; Matt. 10:32), being "Baptized" (Mark 16:16 etc.) and "continuance in His love" (Rev. 2:10 etc.).

While in a sense we "save ourselves" (Acts 2:40) and so "work out our own salvation with fear and trembling" (Phil. 2:12), in its appropriation the whole Scheme of Redemption is by the Grace of God

"Amazing grace how sweet the sound
that saved a wretch like me;
I once was lost, but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see.

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears relieved;
How precious did that grace appear,
The hour I first believed.

Through many dangers, toils, and snares,
I have already come:
'Tis grace that brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home."

DAVID DOUGALL.

(From WIGAN OBSERVER, Friday January 26th 1973)

CHURCH NEWS

AXED — FOR THE SAKE OF PROGRESS

"THE Jackson's Square Church of Christ is to be demolished under the Greenough Street—Scholes Redevelopment Plan and work has begun on a new church 200 yards away behind the Health Clinic in Scholes and adjoining Great Acre Bowling Greens.

"The first building on the Jackson's Square site was erected in 1830, and as far as can be traced it was used as a residence for the Jackson family, who were candle manufacturers. It was later used as a centre for temperance work and teaching.

"In 1882 the building was purchased as a place of worship. The first congregation was composed in the main of members of the Church in Rodney Street, who were responsible for establishing and carrying on the work, together with a few members from News Springs, Whelley and Platt Lane districts, A vigorous church and Sunday School grew steadily.

"In 1930 part of the roof fell in just before a prayer meeting was to commence. The central portion of the hall was cordoned off while the roof was repaired and a false ceiling built.

"To celebrate its fiftieth anniversary in 1932 the church held a week of special meetings. Again, in 1950 the meeting-house was largely reconstructed.

(One of the elders) "Carlton Melling states: 'In its ninety years the Church of Christ in Scholes, has experienced much hardship, many difficulties and struggles. There has never been a large congregation and there have been few outstanding names. The congregation has always consisted of poor working men and women, with little opportunity of education.

“For the teaching and preaching in the church and Sunday School it depends upon the unpaid service of willing workers from its own and sister congregations.”

“The distinctive witness of the Church can be stated as : Pleading for a complete return to Christianity as taught by Christ and His apostles in the New Testament, in faith and practice.”

“Believers are added to the Church through immersion, following confession of faith in Christ and repentance towards God.”

“The government of the Church is the responsibility of elders and deacons elected by the Church.”

“The Church of Christ in Scholes is happy in having a devoted number of men and women, young and old, who carry out these services. The congregation, though small, is one in Christ Jesus, and includes a specially live and active company of women.”

“The Lord’s Day school continues, in spite of struggles these days...”

“The new church is expected to be opened for use in August or September.”

CONSCIENCE AND ITS DESCRIPTIONS

LET us begin by defining conscience. William Hendriksen states, “Conscience is man’s moral intuition, his moral self in the act of passing judgement upon his own state, emotions, and thoughts, also upon his own words and actions whether these be viewed as past, present, or future” (*Commentary on I & II Tim. & Titus*, p. 62). W. E. Vine says, “That process of thought which distinguishes what it considers morally good or bad, commending the good, condemning the bad, and so prompting to do the former, and avoid the latter.” From this we see that conscience is both positive and negative. It approves and condemns. Paul wrote concerning the Gentiles, “Which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another” (Rom. 2:15).

The word, “conscience”, does not occur in the Old Testament Scriptures. However, the idea is found there. For example, it is said of Adam and Eve, “And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons” (Gen. 3:7). When God asked Adam, “Where art thou?”, Adam replied, “I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself” (Gen. 3:9-10). We see conscience pricking the heart of David when he said unto the Lord, “I have sinned greatly in that I have done: and now, I beseech thee, O Lord, take away the iniquity of thy servant; for I have done very foolishly” (2 Sam. 24:10). In the New Testament the term, “conscience”, occurs twice in Acts, five times in Hebrews, three times in 1 Peter and about twenty times in Paul’s letters.

R. L. Whiteside stated the meaning of conscience in a simplified way when he wrote that conscience is “that feeling of pleasure when we do what we think is right, and of pain when we do what we think is wrong. It is that which backs up our moral judgment” (*Commentary on Romans*, p. 59). Since our moral judgement may be wrong, it is imperative that we obtain the correct information in order to make proper, moral judgements. Saul of Tarsus always did what he thought was right, and therefore always had a good conscience. But, as Whiteside said about Paul, “his information was wrong, and therefore his moral judgement was wrong” (*Ibid.*, p. 59).

The source of information that is infallible and inerrant is the Bible, the Word of God. Whatever the Bible teaches about any matter, the Bible is right regardless of our preconceived notions or the voice of our consciences. Human conscience is

not the supreme law — the Word of God is. 'Let your conscience be your guide' may be a pleasant platitude, but it is dangerous and destructive as a philosophy of life. A far better epithet would be, "Let the Bible be your guide." This is in keeping with the Psalmist's statement, "Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory" (Psalm 73:24). The Psalmist further stated, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Psalm 119:105).

Descriptions of Conscience

There are various descriptions of conscience in the New Testament. We read of a good conscience, a pure conscience, a weak conscience, a seared conscience, a defiled conscience, a perfect conscience and an evil conscience. Let us briefly notice each of these.

A *good conscience* is one that is free from guilt or wrong doing. Peter wrote, "Having a good conscience; that whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ" (1 Peter 3:16). A good conscience may also be realized in what a person thinks to be right, although his actions be wrong (Acts 23:1). Paul thought he was right when he was wrong. He was not conscious of guilt. Hence, he had a good conscience.

A *pure conscience* is one that is clear, unhypocritical, incorrupt and sincere. Paul said, "I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers with pure conscience, that without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day" (2 Tim. 1:3). One of the qualifications of a deacon is that he "holds the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience" (1 Tim. 3:9).

A *weak conscience* is one that is lacking in moral judgement. It is ignorant. This type of person is not strong enough to distinguish clearly between things lawful for a Christian and things that are unlawful. We read in 1 Cor. 8:7, "Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge for some with conscience of the idol unto this hour eat it as a thing offered unto an idol; and their conscience being weak is defiled." This kind of conscience is to be respected and given every consideration by those who are strong and learned. 1 Cor. 12:8 says "But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ."

A *seared conscience* is one that is cauterized, calloused and hardened. Paul wrote to Timothy about some who would depart from the faith as "Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron" (1 Tim. 4:2). "By constantly arguing with conscience, stifling its warnings, and muffling its bell, they at last have reached the point where conscience no longer bothers them" (Hendriksen, *Op. Cit.* p. 146). Through rebellion and stubbornness, conscience is permanently seared. The truth of God has no effect upon the hearts of many because they have seared their conscience.

A *defiled conscience* is one that is polluted, contaminated by sin. Paul wrote "... and their conscience being weak is defiled" (1 Cor. 8:7). The word, "defiled", in this text literally means "smeared, as with mud or filth, befouled" (Vine). In a figurative sense, however, it indicates a conscience that is filthy by sin.

The writer of the Hebrew letter speaks of a *perfect conscience*. Heb. 9:9 reads, "Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience." A perfect conscience would be, therefore, the pardon of sins; the perfection of moral consciousness. The preceding verse shows that the Mosaic sacrifices could not procure this for mankind, but rather they were symbolic of our pardon and a foreshadowing of the sacrifice of Christ.

An *evil conscience* is simply a mind conscious of wrongdoing; or having sinned against God. Heb. 10:22 states, "Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water."

In conclusion, I want to suggest two things: (1) Maintain a good conscience. Do not abuse it. It serves an important function in your heart. (2) Realize that your conscience is not an infallible guide — that the Word of God (the Bible) is the infallible guide. The conscience cannot decide truth and error. Your intellect does that. The conscience simply acts in conjunction with what the heart believes to be right or wrong.

WELDON E. WARNOCK. *Truth Magazine*

SCRIPTURE READINGS

MARCH 1973

4—Daniel 7:1-14	Mark 9:2-13
11—Esther 4	Mark 9:14-29
18—Zech. 13	Mark 9:30-50
25—Genesis 2	Mark 10:1-16

THE TRANSFIGURATION

I wonder if this word actually came into our language to describe the event in the gospels to which it is applied! The word in the Greek for which it stands occurs only four times in the New Testament — twice so translated in Mark and Matthew, once translated "transformed" (Romans 12:2) and once "changed" (2 Cor. 3:18). The N.E.B. uses "transfigured" in the Corinthian letter, but retains "transformed" in Romans. Luke expresses the change in the Saviour's appearance with different words, indicating perhaps more graphically the greatness of the change which took place as the divine glory suffused the Saviour's face ("fashion of His countenance" — Luke 9:29). The change was not a transformation, but an access of spiritual effulgence (see Heb. 1:3 R.V.). The writers exhaust their words and ideas to describe a glory which is *indescribably* wonderful.

It is Luke who gives us the fact that Jesus was praying when the transfiguration took place. Evidently He had taken these three apostles up the mountain side for prayer and doubtless also to rest in quiet. The apostles were apparently sleeping when the glory came upon them. How natural it was that His glory should be manifested while He was in prayer with His Father! As with other incidents recorded by more than one of the evange-

lists, it is well to read all the accounts to get the full story. In this case we have Matt. 17:1-13 and Luke 9:28-36. However the occurrences of the word in Paul's letters is of special interest. He draws attention to the experience of Moses at the giving of the law. It was necessary, that the people of Israel should know that God was indeed with Moses. His divine authority was, so to speak, guaranteed to them by his shining face as he came from communion with God to deliver God's words to them. So his face shone while he delivered the commandments, and when he had passed them on he veiled the glory. The glory faded when he stayed away from the Presence (Ex. 34:29-35)

A homely illustration of transfiguration is the moon. She has absolutely no light of her own, yet she lights the earth brilliantly while and where the sun's light shines upon her. Paul dares to apply the example of Moses to every Christian. Seeing each one of us has received through the Spirit of God the story, the picture, the revelation of Jesus — God manifest in the flesh — we hold the possibility of absorbing His character in such measure that we reflect His image. This is surely a serious call to live a holy and devout life. We have the thought also, from Romans 12:2, of the renewed mind so transfiguring the bodies of Christians as preventing their being conformed to the world's fashions, and bringing them into line with God's will.

We note that this wonderful revelation was limited to the three chief apostles. Jesus must have chosen them out of the twelve because He could trust them best. All, under the leadership of Peter, had confessed their faith that Jesus was the Son of God. Their hopes of the exercise of power to establish a worldly kingdom would be greatly increased by a sight of

divine power; but their ideas had to be radically changed if they were to fulfil the real purposes of Jesus. The appearance of Moses and Elijah together with Jesus would stimulate national ambition and pride. So it was clear to Peter, James and John that the suffering and death of Jesus which He had so recently taught them (Mark 8:31) was the subject of conversation with the heroes of old. It may have seemed strange to them that they must exercise complete secrecy until the event they could not understand took place. It was doubtless still incomprehensible to them that Jesus could be taken and put to death. They needed indeed the revelation of divine majesty to uphold their faith through the days of agony and death, shortly to come.

We conclude with referring to the impression made upon Peter as shown in his second letter (1:17 & 18), and upon John (John 1:14 and 1 John 1:1). The breakthrough on the mount could never be forgotten by them, nor by us.

R.B. SCOTT.

WHEN thou prayest, rather let thy heart be without words than thy words without heart.

Bunyan

APOLOGIES

WE regret that this month, owing to the amount of copy in hand, it is impossible to find room for two regular features:

QUESTION BOX and

THE BIBLE AND THE MODERN WORLD Family and Home Part two.

We shall try to publish these as early as possible.

EDITOR

YOU MAY

HOPE for eternal life like the rich young ruler;

Give your means like Ananias and Sapphira;

Desire spiritual gifts like Simon Magus;

Wish to die like Balaam;

Bring an offering like Cain;

Be a gospel worker like Demas;

Build a temple like Solomon;

Have an angelic visitor like Lot's wife;

Make a good resolution like Felix;

Minister in the priest's office like Nadab;

Find no fault with Jesus like Pilate;

Be children of godly parents like Hophni

and Phinehas;

Have the lamp of profession like the foolish virgins.

AND YET NOT BE SAVED!

"SCRIPTURE STANDARD": BALANCE SHEET YEAR ENDING 31ST DECEMBER 1972

Income		Expenditure	
	£ p		£ p
Cash in hand at January 1st 1972	79.66	Printing (12 issues)	603.35
Cash in bank at January 1st 1972	217.13	Postages :	
Gifts in 1972	114.60	Printer's	£33.34
Subscriptions	<u>597.56</u>	Distribution	35.29
		Treasurer's	<u>14.95</u>
Total Income	712.16	Postal wrappers	<u>2.12</u>
		Scripture reading cards	<u>14.17</u>
		Total Expenditure	703.22
Balance b/f	<u>305.73</u>	Balance c/f	<u>305.73</u>
Grand Total	<u>1008.95</u>	Grand Total	<u>1008.95</u>

Audited by A. Scobbie, 20th January 1973.

P.JONES, Treasurer.

NO man ever got lost on a straight road.

SIN in satin is as great a rebel as sin in rags.
Spurgeon

NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

Slamannan District: Notes on the paper presented by Tom Nisbet, held over from last month's issue.

TOM NISBET

The role of the church in the world to-day From *'The Universal Bible Dictionary'*: "Why did the church come into existence Generally for the purpose of glorifying God (Eph. 3:10; 1 Peter 2:9) but specifically for fellowship between Christians, for testimony to the world on behalf of Christ, and for service in *extending the knowledge of the gospel*. Thus the church satisfied the social instinct and at the same time provided the means of *extending and establishing Christianity in the world.*"

What does the Bible say? Being the only authority, must be accepted.—

Jesus said that the 'gates of hell' would not prevail against the church, so it is intended to be a permanent institution. The eternal purpose of God for the church is to make known his wisdom to the world and glorify His name — (see Eph. 3:9-11) *Weymouth:*

"It is the stewardship of the truth which from all the ages lay concealed in the mind of God, the creator of all things — concealed in order that the church might now be used to display to the powers and authorities in the heavenly realms the innumerable aspects of God's wisdom. Such was THE ETERNAL PURPOSE which He had formed in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have this bold and confident access through our faith in Him" (Emphasis T.N.)

God's intention in keeping the mystery hid through the past ages was to let it be made known by the CHURCH.

"Manifold wisdom of God" — the many items include all the religious instruction that mankind needs for proper service to God:

kept from men and angels for four thousand years in order that it might fully be made known *by the church*. Any human organisation that pretends to give spiritual or moral benefits to man, is an infringement upon the exclusive rights of the church, for which God was making preparation through the centuries, and which He finally established through the blood of His Son" (E.M. Zerr Commentary).

To Offer Spiritual sacrifices and praises to God:

1 Peter 2:5

"Ye also, as *lively stones*, are built up a *spiritual house*, a *holy priesthood*, (What for) to offer up spiritual sacrifice, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ."

1 Peter 2:9:

"But ye are a *chosen generation*, a *royal priesthood*, a *holy nation*, a *peculiar people*, (for what purpose) that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light."

Worship

Jesus said (John 4:24):

"God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth."

Acts 2:42:

"And they (the saved ones—those added to the church and who were the church) continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in breaking of bread and in prayers."

The church must function in this very special way every first day of the week The Lord's Day

Acts 20:7

"And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread Paul preached, unto them." Together, every first day of the week, absolutely essential for christian fellowship. Do we sense a spirit of unbelief here, when some wilfully absent themselves when it is possible to be present).

It is the role of the church to find the money to meet the needs of the poor saints and the carrying on of the Lord's Work.

This money must be raised by her own members, not from the world; 1 Cor. 16:2:

"Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come."

No doubt this arrangement was to meet a special need at that time, but it is good and safe to follow the same method to meet the needs of the church to-day.

When the church comes together on the Lord's Day it is a good opportunity to lay by in store against such needs; absence from the Lord's Table should not be a means of saving money!

it is the role of the church to preach the good news and to teach and exhort (Matt. 28:20; Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 14:19-26 and many other scriptures).

Bride of Christ (see 2 Cor. 11:2; Rom. 7:4; 1 Cor. 6:15);

therefore must keep herself pure and clean, not giving way to schisms, strange doctrines, seducing spirits (Rom. 16:17)

The church must "endeavour to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph 4:3).

Administer the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper: encourage scripture reading (James 1:22; Col. 4:16; 1 Thes. 5:27).

Prayer (1 Cor. 14:14-16; Acts 2:42):
Singing (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16).

The role of the church in the world is to be a friend of all that is good, an opponent of all that is evil, hence evil men do not like the church; to give testimony to the world by preaching, teaching, worship: by the church christianity is shown to the world

What is the church for?

To hold Christ before the people. The church was not invented by men. Men have used it and mis-used it. But the Church was founded by Christ. Christ is the heart of the church, and its Lord. The church exists to bear witness to Christ, Christ himself, not the church, is the transforming power in men's lives. The mission of the church is to exalt Christ, so that He himself may do His own blessed work on the hearts of men!

(Bailey's Bible Handbook)

Ince-in-Makerfield: From January 20th to 25th the church conducted a mission with Bro Frank Morgan as speaker.

On Thursday, January 25th Angela Partington was immersed into Christ Jesus.

On Thursday, February 1st Eric and Rita Hallwell who are husband and wife, obeyed the gospel in baptism. On Friday the 2nd. Mrs Johnson, who had attended meetings for some time, requested to be immersed. Our sister is in her seventy-ninth year and we rejoice at her decision and those of our other new brethren.

The angels of Heaven are rejoicing: rejoice with us over these happy events.

JOHN PARTINGTON

Woodstock, Capetown: On December 14th 1972 Henry Dreyer was baptized into Christ. May God bless our brother as he endeavours to reach others.

Mr. & Mrs. A. Wagner were baptized on Lord's Day morning, 21st January. Our prayers are that God might bless them as they go forward into this new life, with a new hope.

T.W. HARTLE

OBITUARY

Buckie: On Lord's Day, 21st January our beloved Brother Samuel H. Hunter "fell asleep in Jesus". Our brother had not been well for a while, but his illness was borne with great patience, and was a wonderful example to many who had the privilege to know him, Sammy, as he was known by us all came from Belfast, and was associated with the church in Port-knockie before coming to Buckie. He was a staunch supporter of the Truth and was concerned for the church, serving as an Elder.

The funeral took place on the 24th from the meeting-hall, and was conducted by Bro. Andrew Gardiner (Edinburgh).

To his dear wife Pearl and all the family who grieve his passing we extend our deepest sympathy and commend her and them to the comfort of our Heavenly Father, knowing that Sammy has only gone on a little while before and that we shall all meet one day in that place where there are no more tears.

JOHN GEDDES

Slamannan: With sincere regret we record the sudden death of our Brother John Gibb who fell asleep "in Jesus" early on the morning of Lord's Day, January 14th 1973, at the age of 79. His remains were laid to rest in Polmont cemetery on January 17th. Bro. John Wilson, Slamannan, conducted the services at the home in Shieldhill and at the graveside where a large number of relatives, brethren and friends were assembled.

Bro. John, at one time a member of the Church of Scotland, came to learn the way of our Lord more perfectly through listening to the preaching of Bro. Walter Crosthwaite at open air meetings in Shieldhall, and was baptised here forty-five years ago. Since then he has remained faithful, being present every Lord's Day morning, evening and week night meetings. He endeared himself to all because of his kind and humble disposition and Christian character. He very often addressed the brethren to edification, when he loved to speak a word about the goodness of the Lord, and was ever anxious about the church and its welfare. Being held in high esteem with young and old he will ever be remembered by his Sunday School scholars for his patient endurance and quiet manner of speech.

Until a few years ago he was a very familiar figure cycling to and from his home, a distance of 4 miles, to worship with his brethren whom he loved.

Bro. Gibb was a pillar of the church, always ready to give a word of comfort and a warm handshake to all. He will be sadly missed. We trust he shall reap as he has sown and will hear that "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

"When the weary ones we love
Enter on their rest above,
When their words of love and cheer,
Fall no longer on our ear,
Hush! be every mourner dumb;
It is only "Till He Come!" "

M. NEILSON

(We sorrow with the church in Slamannan at the loss of Bro. Gibb. He was "a beloved brother and faithful minister and fellow servant in the Lord".

I first met him only three and a half years ago, when I served some of the churches in Slamannan District. I remember his kind, loving and sincere welcome he gave to me and my wife when he presided at the first meeting in Slamannan during that visit. He had a gentle, humble and quiet spirit, yet adhered wholeheartedly to the teaching of scripture. He enjoyed the talks we had together on "the deep things of the Spirit"! In his unassuming manner he was a great influence towards holy and consecrated living. "Blest be his memory, and blest his bright example be. EDITOR)

Wigan, Scholes: Sister Mary (Polly) Forshaw died suddenly during the night of January 18th-19th at the age of 76.

Sis. Forshaw was baptized in 1929. She was mother of a large family, six of whom — five daughters and a son — are living. She and her husband and family experienced a hard and poverty-stricken life, but held together in deep affection for their parents and each other.

Sis Forshaw was wonderfully strong and active for her age and her sudden death was a great shock. The Lord's Day before her death she was present in fellowship at the Lord's table, at which gathering she had been a regular attender for many years.

We offer the love and sympathy of the church to those who sorrow. We pray and work for their restoration to the Christ of their first love, whom once they served and followed. May they through their sorrow and love be won back to Him.

COMING EVENTS

Kirkcaldy, Hayfield Road: Annual Social Saturday 21st April 3.30 p.m. Speaker Bro. J. Mooney (Dundee).

Spring Conference and Rally: The church at Dewsbury invites you to the above on Saturday April 21st, 1973.

Business Session 2-30 to 3-30 p.m.

Devotional Session 3-30 to 4-30 p.m.

Tea Interval

Gospel Meeting 6-30 p.m.

Book the Day.

Lower Peel Street, Bradford Road,

DEWSBURY, Yorks.

THE SCRIPTURE STANDARD is published monthly by members of the CHURCHES OF CHRIST. It is not in any other respect connected with any religious body or organisation, but is completely independent of any such affiliation. It exists to try to forward the cause of the Church of Christ as revealed and recorded in the NEW TESTAMENT, in its teaching and practices. This aim is set out under the title of each issue of the paper.

ARTICLES AND OTHER LITERARY CONTRIBUTIONS are welcomed by the Editor.

NEWS ITEMS, REPORTS OF CHURCH ACTIVITIES and notices of COMING EVENTS are invited. The Editor is solely responsible for decisions as to the inclusion or exclusion of any such contributions forwarded for publication, whether by churches or individuals.

No payment other than necessary expenses is made to any who work on the magazine, or to contributors of articles etc. of any nature. The paper is supported entirely by subscriptions and gifts from interested readers.

THE SCRIPTURE STANDARD is published monthly.

PRICES PER YEAR

HOME COUNTRIES & COMMONWEALTH	1 Copy	2 Copies	3 Copies
(through Agent)	£0.90		
(posted direct)	£1.00	£1.88	£2.60
CANADA & U.S.A.	\$3.00	\$5.00	\$7.00
(payment in dollar bills)	1, 2 or 3 years pro rata in advance		

AGENT & TREASURER: PAUL JONES, 3 St. Laurence Crescent, Slamannan, By Falkirk, Stirlingshire. Tel. Slamannan 200.

EDITOR: CARLTON MELLING, 133 Long Lane, Hindley, Via Wigan, Lancs. WN2 4XD. Tel. 0942 (Wigan) 56301

DISTRIBUTING AGENT: CHARLES GRANT, 45 Kirkwood Avenue, Redding, Falkirk, East Stirlingshire, to whom change of address should be sent.

EVANGELISTIC FUND: Contributions to R. McDONALD, "Aldersyde," 10 Mardale Road, Bennett Lane, Dewsbury, Yorkshire.

CONFERENCE SECRETARY: TOM WOODHOUSE, "Jesmond," 8 Shoulder-of-Mutton Hill, Kirkby-in-Ashfield, Notts. NG17 7DX.

Hymn Book Agent and Treasurer: FRED HARDY, 73a Bridge Street, Morley, Leeds, Yorkshire. Tel. Morley 3255.

"The Scripture Standard" is printed for the publishers by Walter Barker (Printers) Ltd., Langley Mill, Nottm. Tel. 07737 (Langley Mill) 2266