

BRO. J. Carey

# *The* **SCRIPTURE STANDARD**

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

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## **THE MANNER OF SOME**

It seems that our Education Authorities are extremely worried about the scale of truancy in schools. I was amazed to hear, the other day, that absenteeism in our schools amounts, in the larger establishments, to some thirty per cent, and that in the London area it can be as high as fifty per cent. What chaos there must be in the classes where half of the pupils never turn up. It seems incredible but true. It's certainly a long time since I was at school but I can easily remember the drama and scandal in the classroom when it was discovered that even one pupil had dared to fail to turn up, or was even slightly late. A great sensation of excitement animated the whole classroom as we anticipated, with bated breath, the return of the culprit next morning, and the dire punishments which awaited his re-appearance. The buzz of agitation in the school lasted for days and certainly had a salutary effect on any of the other pupils who may, at any time, have given half-a-thought to skipping a class. Our school actually had an Attendance Officer, of military bearing and replete with bicycle, who used to visit the parents of any defaulters, and kept a firm control over school attendance.

Now, it seems, things are very different and these large percentages of pupils turn up at school only when they have nothing better to do, and playing hookey is not only common but even quite normal. I notice that in some of the larger cities the police have been asked to look out for truant schoolchildren and to give them a lecture on the dangers of wandering around in these violent times, and then to ferry them back home. One wonders what sense of responsibility such children will ever have as adults, when, in their formative years, they can indulge themselves in this way? What lessons in loyalty, dependability, attendance at one's post, can such children learn under these conditions; haunting cafes and cinemas when they should be in their places at school? It appears, however, that this malaise does not only affect schoolchildren, but many employers have to give special financial inducements and bonuses to employees contingent upon such workers attending work for the entire week, and especially for turning up on Monday morning. Indeed Britain, it appears, has acquired an international reputation for absenteeism and strikes, described by other countries as 'The British Disease.' Absenteeism must be most inconvenient to employers, but must be particularly depressing in schools and a source of great discouragement to teachers, headmasters and, parents. This being so, how about absenteeism in the church? How depressing and discouraging is it to other members: and how does God look upon it: and what does it tell about the absentee?

### BRITISH SUNDAY

At one time, amongst the general population, especially in Scotland, where the notion persisted (and still to some extent persists) that the 'Lord's Day' was 'The Christian Sabbath' (and most of the Sabbath rules applied to Sunday), nothing ever stirred on a Sunday, and that up in places like the Isle of Skye, no one would drive even a very sick person to hospital on a Sunday. To buy petrol on a Sunday was virtually impossible and could only be done very furtively from a 'rogue' petrol-station in secrecy akin to drug-smuggling. The last time I bought petrol in Skye on a Sunday, we had to sneak around the back of a shed and a young boy was posted, by the proprietor, as a look-out. Indeed it was considered entirely shameful to buy even foodstuffs on a Sunday; or to whistle; or to read anything of a trivial nature, like Sunday newspapers.

All that has changed radically now, of course, and Britain has a 'continental' approach to Sunday: so that Sunday is now much the same as any other day of the week. Most outings are particularly scheduled for a Sunday, nowadays, and all kinds of sporting events take place. Golf tournaments, bowling championships, soccer matches, running marathons, country rambles, etc. are more and more relegated to Sunday and many shops, hotels, pubs, markets and social clubs are always open to cope with the thriving demand.

There is, therefore, an increasing temptation for young people, and parents, to be caught up in these events and for parents to be pressurised to take the children to the beach; to the hockey match; the Youth Club outing; the Boy-Scouts week-end; the school games, etc. etc. Parents are loathe to disappoint their kiddies and so if the event can not be fitted in after church attendance, they are faced with the decision as to what they will do: go to join their brethren at the Lord's Table or join the throngs at the sea-side.

### EVERY FIRST DAY

Many denominational bodies observe the Lord's Table (the communion) only once in three months; six months or annually, but this was not always so. The original church spread the Lord's Supper every first day of the week (Acts 20:7) and this continued quite undisturbed until the fourth century when the R.C. Church decreed (Council of Agatha in Lanqueroc A.D. 506) that "none should be esteemed good Christians who did not communicate at least three times per year — at Christmas, Easter and Whitsunday." This became the accepted standard and indeed it was considered very presumptuous to commune oftener. This continued for 600 years until the Council of Lateran ruled that three times was too often and that once would be enough: "an annual communion at Easter was sufficient."

At the Reformation some of the reformers advocated a complete return to the pattern of the early church and that there be a communion every week. Even Calvin said, "Every week, at least, the table of the Lord should have been spread for Christian assemblies, and the promises declared by which, in the partaking of it we might be spiritually fed." In a sermon entitled "The Duty Of Constant Communion" the famous John Wesley said, "It is no wonder that men who have no fear of God should never think of doing this (constant communion). But it is strange that it should be neglected by any that do fear God, and desire to save their souls; and yet nothing is more common. One reason why many neglect it is, they are so much afraid of eating and drinking unworthily, that they never think how much greater the danger is when they do not eat or drink at all." Much more on this subject can be read in A. Campbell's "The Christian System." Brother Campbell ends his discourse of this theme with these remarks, "It does appear somewhat incongruous that arguments have to be submitted to urge Christians to convene weekly around the Lord's Table. Much more in accor-

dance with the genius of our religion would it be to see them over-solicitous to be honoured with a seat at the King's table, and asking with intense interest, might they be permitted so often to eat in His presence and in honour of His love . . . But as the want of appetite for our animal sustenance is a symptom of ill-health, or approaching disease; so a want of relish for spiritual food is indicative of a lack of spiritual health."

#### EVERY ONE OF YOU

We would surely have to agree with Brother Campbell. It does seem incongruous that arguments require to be submitted urging Christians to convene weekly around the Lord's Table. The early church continued steadfastly (consistently and constantly) not only in prayers, fellowship and the apostles doctrine, but also in the breaking of the loaf. And so we have the clear example of the early church. Luke, some **thirty years** after the institution of the Lord's Supper could say that (even these thirty years later) the disciples **came together upon the first day of the week to break bread** (Acts 20:7). They counted it as vitally important.

It was rightly regarded as important, because, after all, it was ordained of Almighty God. There are at least two Holy Ordinances in the Christian economy: one being water-baptism and the other being the Lord's Table. They were not devised by some synod or committee of men, but came from the very vaults of heaven. How then can we treat them lightly? To treat God's ordinances with a certain contempt, whether by casual neglect or studied indifference amounts to the same thing; and is sad, bad and serious.

We can (and should) worship God at any time; at any suitable moment; but we must **come together** to break the loaf. The early disciples separated to preach but came together to worship. We can not break bread in isolation or by proxy (and there seems no need for the elements to be taken to a hospital ward) but while we have health and strength we should be with the church when it assembles. We should be there, if physically able. The Lord expects us to be there for Paul, concerning the collection, instructed, "that upon the first day of the week let **every one of you** lay by him in store, as God has prospered him. . . ." "Every one of you" is expected to be there.

The Lord's Table is a commemorative institution and by our personal attendance at it we have an opportunity to show (declare, preach or proclaim) the Lord's death until He comes. Paul, who was not present at the institution of the Supper, received nevertheless an account of it from Christ almost verbatim to that given in the gospels, thus indicating the sheer weight of importance ascribed to every detail of it. During Paul's rehearsal of the details of the institution he added these words, "For as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup **ye do show the Lord's death** until He come." This is something that WE can do; and something we do by virtue of our attendance and participation. Such opportunity is given to us **now**: until He comes or until we leave this earthly scene. John Brown of Haddington (born 1722) author of *Dictionary Of The Bible*, and the *Self-interpreting Bible*, wrote a strong treatise (against the beliefs of his church) on the necessity of holding a weekly communion. In answer to those who suggested that the early Christians met every Lord's Day only because it might be their last one (persecution and death being rife) John Brown replied that, even supposing that were true (which it wasn't) it was still a good reason for meeting every Sunday. He said we should indeed meet as if every Sunday was to be our last one.

#### OUR TRYSTING PLACE

Absenteeism at meetings of the church is not by any means a new phenomenon, for Paul found it necessary to exhort his brethren, in his day, to forsake not the assembling of themselves together. His, Spirit inspired, advice was, "**Let us draw near with a true heart in the full assurance of faith: Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering: and let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to**

good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another: and so much the more as ye see the day approaching." All this is encompassed in four verses (Heb. 10:22-25) and quite clearly Paul equates the assembling of ourselves together with consideration for one another and a provoking to good works. Absenteeism has quite the opposite effect. Our truancy weakens the efforts of the church and discourages the brethren, It also weakens the absentees and does not provoke love and good works. It is also a very bad example all round; and particularly to the younger members. Such, says Paul, is the manner of some.

Recently some acquaintances of ours were invited to the Queen's Annual Garden Party at Holyrood Palace in Edinburgh. We can imagine the raptures of delight which attend such an invitation and how some become quite giddy with the prospect of actually being near to the Queen, and even the odd chance of making a curtsy or exchanging a word. And yet, as brother Campbell remarks (above) we seem quite capable of turning down the weekly honour of a place at the table of the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

The Lord's Table is our weekly trysting place with our Saviour. A trysting place is where lovers have arranged to rendezvous. If at the appointed time one of the lovers is to be found several miles away showing a preferred interest in someone else, what is the other to think? Our trysting place with Jesus on the first day of the week is usually well arranged. If at that time we are found playing bowls, mowing the lawn or taking the sun, what is Jesus to think; and what kind of commentary is that on us?

"THIS DO" said Jesus, "in remembrance of Me." The main purpose is, therefore, one of remembrance. We can only truly remember by being there. What can we find in this life that can be more important than that?

We trace Thy love, Thy grief, Thy pains,  
And Thy salvation free;  
Lord, while a beating pulse remains.  
We will remember Thee.

EDITOR.

## GLEANINGS

*"let Her glean even among the sheaves" Ruth 2:15*

### OUR ESPOUSAL TO CHRIST

"For I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy: for I espoused you to one husband, that I might present you as a pure virgin to Christ." (2 Corinthians 11:2)

"Marriage is one of the most suggestive of all human ordinances — one of the closest ties that bind human hearts together. We, therefore, need not wonder that inspired men of God should use this institution to illustrate divine truths. This is done repeatedly. Long before Christ made His appearance on the earth, or the church was founded, Isaiah had used this figure, likening the future church to a bride decked in her beautiful robes. Christ also employs it, representing the Kingdom of God as a marriage. Paul in the verse under our consideration introduces the same comparison.

#### Espousal is a Contract of Marriage

An espousal is a contract of marriage between a man and woman. In Eastern countries, the bride and bridegroom did not see each other prior to the espousal, and even then they did not come into full relationship until after the marriage feast. It was necessary, therefore, that the bride should be careful in her conduct, lest by any breach of contract everything might be annulled. Paul uses this illustration to show clearly to the Corinthians their relationship to Christ. They were as a chaste virgin espoused to an husband.

### **With a Jealousy of God**

In the first verse of the chapter he asks them to bear with him in what he calls foolishness, nay, he feels sure they will bear with him, when they know the feelings he has towards them. He was jealous over them with a jealousy of God. Paul, for the time being, as it were, is standing in the place of God, speaking to them God's mind, and feeling as God or Christ would feel if they should be unfaithful in their vows to Christ. He was jealous over them, because he wished to present them as a pure virgin to Christ, and he feared they might be corrupted.

### **He Had Espoused Them To Christ**

Paul had an especial interest in them. He had espoused them to Christ. Not only had he performed the marriage ceremony, but he had been the means of bringing them together. You remember how Eliezar, that faithful servant of Abraham, journeyed from Palestine into Mesopotamia to seek a wife, and after weeks of travel, succeeded in bringing Rebekah as a wife for Isaac. Paul was to Christ and the Corinthians what Eliezar was to Isaac and Rebekah.

### **The Church As The Bride**

He was sent by Christ into the world to select a people for him, and of such were the Corinthians.

It was, therefore, quite natural that Paul was interested on their behalf. Any unfaithfulness on their part he felt; he was troubled concerning them, fearing lest Satan should beguile them. The church as the bride must walk carefully. Any breach of contract might separate them from Christ, and render all past relationship void. How sad to think of the many who have been espoused to Christ and fallen by the way. Eve, the wife of the first Adam, was beguiled by the serpent, and that sin has brought untold suffering not only on herself and husband, but upon all her posterity.

### **The Same Tempter Exists**

And though the church is the wife of the second Adam, the same tempter exists with all the craftiness for which he has been renowned. He still, by smooth, flattering words, seeks to beguile the Church, trying to corrupt their minds from the simplicity and purity which is towards Christ. Paul knew that if the church at Corinth was beguiled by Satan, evil would get into the church which might never be eradicated. How true this is! As we look upon Christendom today, upon what should be the bride of Christ, we see the trail of the old serpent, and although many years have passed away since Satan first beguiled it, the evils still exist. Surely they are a lesson for us.

### **Christ As The Bridegroom**

But let us notice Christ as the Bridegroom, John Spake of Him as such, saying, "I am not the Christ, but am sent before Him. He that hath the bride is the bridegroom, but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy, therefore, is fulfilled." As Bridegroom, Christ has taken great interest in the bride. He has bestowed many favours upon her. She is not left in a state of starvation and neglect while He is away.

### **He Sought Out The Bride**

But He has clothed her in garments of salvation, and covered her with the robe of righteousness. He has left her jewels of the rarest kind, that she may adorn herself and be ready when He comes to make the marriage complete. Christ has done such actions as should bring forth love and admiration from the bride. In order to do this, He has sacrificed much. He came from a far-off country, underwent great privations, and though of royal birth, He sought out the bride, who was in poverty and disgrace. He gave Himself for her, that she might be sanctified."

“From heaven He came and sought her,  
 To be His holy bride.  
 With His own blood He bought her,  
 And for her life He died.”

F. COWIN (B.A. Jan. 1900).  
 Selected by Leonard Morgan.

## IF ANY MAN SPEAKETH (1 Peter 4:11)

**Not Of The Letter, But Of The Spirit:** (2 Corinthians 3:6)

This statement and a similar one in Romans 2:29, “in the spirit not in the letter,” are often misconstrued to teach that we should not be concerned about the actual wording of scriptural commands and traditions, because that is of the letter which killeth. In 2 Corinthians 3:6 Paul emphasises the need for inner transformation. “Written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in tables that are hearts of flesh.” (verse 3). Words are “written” but in a different place. “We beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image” (v 18). Such a person does not shrug off the significance of the words penned under the influence of the Holy Spirit.

In Romans (Chap. 2) a rhetorical question (in v.26) “if therefore the uncircumcision keep the **ordinances** of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be reckoned for circumcision?” leads to the conclusion “he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in spirit not in the letter (in v.29). This passage in no way discounts the wording of scriptural injunctions. What it does is enjoin spiritually motivated obedience.

Jesus said “If you love me, ye will keep my commandments.” (John 14:15). If the motivation is right, the willing obedience will follow. “this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments,” (1 John 5:3).

A middle way, a keeping of the balance between two legal extremes of a liberal “don’t bind where the bible doesn’t bind” stance, and a rigid “don’t permit anything not authorised in scripture” stance, is not a solution. It would at the best be a legal compromise.

The spiritual approach is diametrically different and it does not open the floodgates to all sorts of practices. Surprisingly, it is more restrictive than a legal approach. At the same time it makes allowance for development in a way that the more developed do not necessarily stand in judgement on the less developed.

Let me illustrate this last statement. At one time many churches of Christ were members of the Association of Churches of Christ. Out of conviction several of them withdrew. I am told that within the lifetime of many brethren now living, in the vicinity of Wigan, all of those that withdrew used to use instrumental music. They were taught that it was unscriptural and they removed the instruments. Now those churches belonged to the Lord just as much before they made these moves as they did after. The members of those congregations belonged to our Saviour just as much before as after. They did develop in their understanding of the scriptures but this does not mean that these brothers and sisters were any less faithful in their attitude to the Lord before they modified their views than they were afterwards. This raises several questions to which there is no clear-cut answer and which require spiritual discernment.

The spiritual approach is more restrictive but the restrictions are mainly self-applied. The spiritual mind not only obeys the binding instructions of the written word but also endeavours to search out spiritual principles by which he or she can be guided in every aspect of life. Readers will agree that such a disposition is diametrically opposed to the “don’t fence me in” principle. It is the difference between “the law

of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus" and the "law of sin and death" from which we have been set free (Romans 8:2). "For the mind of the flesh is death; but the mind of the Spirit is life and peace." Brothers and sisters, our outlook is different because we have the spirit of Christ, the mind of Christ. We are concerned about the things which are spiritually discerned (1 Corinthians 2:14) which the mind of the flesh cannot appreciate "for they that are of the flesh mind the things of the flesh" (Romans 6:5) so "the mind of the flesh . . . is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can it be!"

Carnal mindedness is wanting the things that are here and now. We are to "seek the things that are above where Christ is," to "Set our mind on things that are above, not on the things that are upon the earth," (Colossians 3:1-2). This is how it should be. I hope and pray that this is how it is, because everything depends on it. Make no mistake about it, the other way is "death," (Romans 8:6). When Paul said he was all things to all men, he was not sanctioning licence. He was talking of the RESTRICTIONS he placed on himself for the sake of others, (1 Corinthians 9:22). This scripture does not support the desire to introduce "attractions," whether it is "churchy" buildings, choirs, theatricals, to titillate the outsider or entertainment clubs to attract the youth or to keep our own youth. You that are spiritual must judge these things (1 Corinthians 2:15). People carnally won, usually remain carnal. THE UPLIFTED JESUS DRAWS (John 12:32). You've got to believe it, (Galations 3:1-3 q.v.).

Do you see the danger of being "spoiled" by human traditions? Desire for spiritual health will make us cautious of human concepts and human innovations, even though they may not be scripturally illegal. "Hold the pattern of sound (Greek hugiano=healthy) words" (1 Timothy 1:2). The mind of Christ will impel us to follow the spiritual principles revealed in the word of God even though there might not be a penalty-clause attached.

The introduction of the pyramid hierarchy system into this country has precipitated fear of the fundamental error of human glorification infecting "our membership," spreading consternation and alarm through the churches of these islands. Have we over-reacted?

Have we not fully acquainted the sheep with the mind of the shepherd? the good shepherd DIED A DISGUSTINGLY SHAMEFUL DEATH for his sheep and his sheep know it. These sheep KNOW their shepherd. They know he EMPTIED himself. They know HIS voice. THEY WILL NOT TAKE ANY NOTICE OF THE VOICE OF STRANGERS, (John 10:6). Whatever the danger, imagined or real, make sure the sheep know the shepherd.

Dogmatism rules in legalism. Christlike love and wisdom is required to encourage spiritual response to divine principles.

A wide range of scriptures have been quoted. The context of each quotation is essential to its understanding. To save turning this into an unwieldy document I have assumed that the readers will make sure that they are familiar with each passage.

Next time I would like to deal with the Brotherly Kiss question. In the meantime, please let me have your comments.

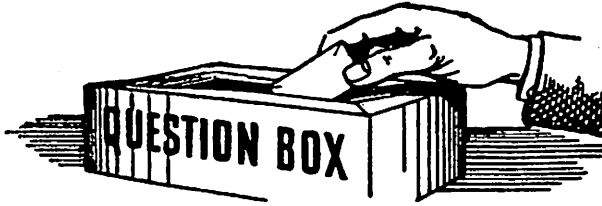
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#### Timely Question

When as a child I laughed and wept, time crept,  
 When as a youth I dreamed and talked, time walked  
 When I became a full grown man, time ran  
 And later as I older grew, time flew  
 Soon I shall find while travelling on, time gone  
*Will Christ have saved my soul by then?*




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Conducted by  
Alf Marsden

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“Just recently I saw a report about certain religious groups on a TV programme. One of the groups mentioned was the Central London Church of Christ which was described as a cult along with a group called the Moonies. Would you please explain what is meant by a cult, and why should a Church of Christ be described in this way.?”

A cult could be defined as ‘a system of religious worship; homage to person or thing.’ A church could be described as ‘a community of Christians locally organised for religious worship.’ A system could be described as ‘A set of connected things or parts which would tend to form a complex whole.’

In order to illustrate the above definitions we need to look at the arrangement of Churches of Christ in the British Isles as at this moment in time. Each community of Christians — commonly referred to as the Local Assembly — is completely autonomous. There is no identifiable hierarchical structure connecting such communities here on earth; ‘The Head of the Church is in Heaven. Each community is governed or (should be) by Elders and Deacons, and their authority extends no further than the local community to which they belong. This arrangement is scriptural and has never been challenged, so far as I am aware, in the British Isles.

In literature now coming here from Churches in the U.S.A. it would appear that the arrangement which we here know and understand is being overturned in the States. An identifiable hierarchical structure is being set up with headquarters **here on earth**. The authority of the Local Assembly is being set aside, and arising in its place, it seems, is something resembling a ‘cloned’ evangelical ministry. It evidently started life as the Crossroads Movement and has now evolved into what is known as the Multiplying Ministries of the Boston Church of Christ. As the evangelists who set up the Central London Movement were, according to reports, trained in the Boston Church in the U.S.A. then the producer of the programme mentioned above would presumably have seen the connection with a geographically located headquarters on earth, and so would have referred to the system as a cult. It is always difficult to comment without first-hand knowledge, but the above is the system as I have understood it from printed material which has come into my possession. If, then, the system as I have had it presented is true, what are the implications for we here in the British Isles?

### The Hierarchy

The system as it is envisaged is seen as a structure resembling a pyramid; there would be several levels in this pyramid. At the very top there would be one church, presumably the Boston Church, who would have control, direct or indirect, over a world-wide network of churches. Below them would be a number of ‘key’ congregations which would be known as ‘pillar churches;’ they in turn would control ‘city churches’ who would in turn control ‘countryside churches.’ Within this hierarchy there would be those known as ‘lead evangelists, co-evangelists, zone leaders, house church leaders, disciplers, disciples, etc.’ We in Britain could be excused for thinking that we have seen such systems in the past and know many people who live under such systems today; indeed some of us **came out** of such systems because when we examined them in the light of the Word we found them to be unscriptural. Suffice it to say that we



would fight tooth and nail against coming into bondage again to such systems, whether they originate in the Church of Christ or not. Personally, the words of Paul to the Elders at Ephesus stand as a beacon before my eyes, "For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears." (Acts 20:29-31).

### A View of the Local Assembly

As one who has been an Elder in a Local Assembly of Christians I have always been at pains to ensure that the Christian community in that locality functioned as directed by the Word. Furthermore, as one who has been a Training Advisor for some twenty years I have always taken the view that the Elders of a community of Christians could and should take it upon themselves to train suitable brothers to preach and teach. If that Assembly then decides to send and support someone from the Assembly to preach the Gospel in a new locality then that work would be under the parent assembly **until a congregation was established** in the new locality. However, once the new community could exist on its own then the parent assembly would cease to have any authority over, and direction of, the new community. The Elders of the parent assembly might offer advice if asked to, but that would be all; such is the method, I think, which we are accustomed to.

It follows, therefore, that it would be anathema for us to subscribe to a system which had at its base control by one Church over a number of other Churches. The Bible teaches us that a bishop is a bishop (Elder) of one Assembly, not of a diocese; the diocesan concept flourished when people saw fit to ignore the Word and its plain teaching. Can there really be Christians who would want to bring such systems into the Church of the lord?

### The Strength of Local Autonomy

Let us, for a moment, consider the Church which has elevated itself to the apex of the pyramid. Presumably, that Church would be the fount from which flowed training, doctrine, methodology, etc., to all the groups **under** it. If, then, that church became defective in doctrine, for example, then **all** under it would be defective, unless, of course, they saw the light and were willing to withdraw themselves from the false teaching; even secular church history teaches us that there have always been those who have been willing to embrace false teaching and then go on to promote it, and happily there have been those who have withdrawn from the defectors and tried to restore the truth. May it ever be so.

Conversely, let us think of the arrangement of autonomous local assemblies. If the leaders of one of those assemblies began to teach false doctrine and practice it, then the false doctrine would be confined to that assembly because the leaders who perpetrated the false teaching would have no jurisdiction over other assemblies. The leaders of other assemblies, being teachers and custodians of the purity of the Word, would see to it that the false teaching didn't infiltrate the particular assemblies of which they were overseers. Therefore, the error would not be compounded, and even though the Body universal, would grieve over the defection of some, the wound would not be fatal. Therein, I believe, lies the strength of local assembly autonomy.

It follows from this, of course, that each local community of Christians has the inalienable right to seek out from its own number those who can be appointed Elders and Deacons; that is the scriptural way. If such brothers exist in the said community, then that community has **no** right to introduce a substitute for the scriptural arrangement. One of the main criticisms of the Boston Church, I understand, has been that

leaders of autonomous local assemblies are inept, un-productive, and slothful, and so they have called into question the validity of local autonomy. I do not subscribe to this view; there are many faithful brothers who for years have 'tilled unproductive ground;' there has been some yield but it has not been spectacular. The valid point, of course, is this: when brothers are appointed to the oversight of an assembly, great care should be taken to ensure that such brothers are able to fulfill **all** the requirements of the office; scriptural qualifications are not the **only** pre-requisite; the Elder should also be skilled in human relations, motivation, leadership, communications, counselling, etc. The phrase 'apt to teach' does not simply mean that he is able to give a twenty-minute address now and again, but he must be a serious and fundamental student and exponent of the Word. If he has not these skills then he must be trained in them. Only then will he stand a chance of recognising false teaching when it is introduced in its early stages, and before it takes a stranglehold on the truth. We might pause to ask ourselves why the Multiplying Ministries concept has attracted so many zealous, personable, well-educated young people; it is probably because they think the rest of us are spiritually dead. Their zeal will probably attract many other young people to them, but their relative inexperience will lead them into paths which are potentially devastating to the Body of Christ. If the Church of Christ becomes bracketed with some of the more 'way-out' cults and sects then I believe that the harm to the Church will be serious and lasting. I do not mean that we should always tread the deeply-rutted paths of traditional conformity; we perhaps can take **some** risks on methodology, but it is the bounden duty of us all **never** to take risks with the Word.

The Churches in Great Britain have suffered over the years because of false teaching. Let us now say with a clear voice that we are neither sect nor cult, but the Church which was established by the Lord and for which he endured the pain and shame of Calvary.

(All questions, please, to Alf Marsden, 20 Costessy Way,  
Winstanley, Wigan, WN3 6ES)

## TRIBUTE TO R. B. SCOTT

As Editor of the *Scripture Standard* I am in a privileged position to say a few inadequate words at the passing of our beloved brother Roy B. Scott. There are many brethren much better qualified to pen a tribute of brother Scott than I, particularly as he and I were separated by 400 miles and only met, in the flesh, two or three times. However, we corresponded over the years, and spoke on the telephone quite often.

My first meeting with our brother was in 1960, although I had heard much about him previously. He certainly lived up to my expectations and all the complimentary things I had heard of him. Physically he could not be described as robust but was surprisingly tough and reached 93 years of age. Similarly, he was kind, courteous and very quietly spoken but again, this belied a great strength of character, resoluteness of conviction, and an incapability of being compromised away from God's truth. He had a true humility about him: he shunned the limelight and indeed would certainly not have welcomed these words of tribute. It was the last thing that he would have wanted, yet I know that any good thing that I say about him is, after all, a complete understatement of the truth.

Brother Scott rarely left his home congregation yet he was very well known, greatly loved and highly respected by brethren all over the country, and certainly up here in Scotland. Although our brother could not be described as a rich man he was generous to a fault and I suppose that only those closest to him have any real idea of the scale of his open-handedness. His hospitality to all the thousands of visitors, over

the years, to whom he threw open his home can only be described as legendary. And there must be a great many servicemen, at home and abroad, who, during the last war, could have testified to the wonderful reception they received from Roy and Mary Scott.

R. B. Scott was, I suppose, a name almost synonymous with 'Kentish Town church' but he was, of course, widely known to readers of the *Scripture Standard* for his sterling work with 'Scripture Readings.' These 'Scripture Readings' began in 1935 (at the inception of the magazine) but were taken over by our brother in 1945 and have continued as a valued feature to this time. Indeed this month's contribution was written about two days before our brother died. In the envelope with his article was a note apologising for the poor quality (as he saw it) of his work and asking if he ought to continue. This was typical of the man — working right until his last breath, yet all the while feeling that his efforts were unworthy of His Lord and Saviour. Thus for 43 years, apart from all his other work and responsibilities, our brother gave his unstinted labours to readers of our paper, every month, in his interesting and helpful expositions of scripture, and also his 'Reading Cards' with recommended readings, annually. This was, by any standards, a task of mammoth proportions given entirely free of charge, with a will and with a smile. Also entirely at his own expense brother Scott sent a very large number of copies of the *Scripture Standard* to friends and brethren not only all over this country, but all over the world.

The world is the poorer for the loss of men like brother Scott, as is the church, and already many feel the loss. Several times, lately and since his death, one has heard the remark, "He was one of the last of a special breed; a rare species — a true "Old Pather," the likes of whom many of us are unlikely to see again." How true this is. He has now gone to his rest and reward and we can but commend his family, and all those who mourn his passing, to the God of all comfort and consolation. His family have cause to be proud of his memory and all of us can profit from his life and example.

"We bless Thee for his every step in faithful following Thee,  
And for his good fight fought so well, now crowned with victory."

Editor.

## R. B. SCOTT

(Born 4th January, 1895; reborn 21st July, 1912; died 23rd June, 1988.)

Robert Balmain Scott was a hero of mine. He was simply one of the best. When Dorothy telephoned to inform me of his death, I felt a great sense of loss. He has filled my thoughts these past days. I will always think of him.

We first met in the late 1960's in Hope Chapel. I had gone to London to do Biblical research at the British Museum and had taken the opportunity to attend the mid-week Bible Study Class at Kentish Town. I am glad I did. He and all the saints gave me a very loving welcome to their little family circle. From that day I felt a special bond with my beloved brother.

Many things struck me about brother Scott, especially his kindness, gentleness and goodness. He was never forceful in his ways, but always willing to "reason together" with others. Make no mistake, he was a man of strong principles, but he was not a man of harsh and severe sentiments.

The church, of course, was his whole life. He laboured long and hard to spread the gospel and edify the saints at Kentish Town. He met countless visitors, especially Americans, at Hope Chapel and I am sure there was no one better known abroad than he. Both he and sister Scott gave hospitality to so many, even to American soldiers during the war, who must have wondered at him as he, in love, expressed his pacifistic views

I have at home a whole file of correspondence with him. This arose mainly from our joint-commitment to the **Scripture Readings** articles. He worked on them right up until his death. His energy, even in his early nineties, always astounded me. It was clear from his letters that he was never going to give up his task for the Master until he was taken to be with Him.

I shall miss him. The saints at Hope Chapel will miss him. *The Scripture Standard* will miss him. All of us will miss him. I feel in many ways his death brings about the end of an era. I recall that his great friend and brother, the late Tom Nisbet said of him: "One of the finest men you could ever meet anywhere. He was a Christian through and through — and so was his wife." Need I say more?

Ian S. Davidson, Motherwell.

## SCRIPTURE READINGS

Sept. 4	Psalm 37,1-17	Col. 3: 1-17
Sept. 11	Daniel 6	Col. 3:18 to 4:18
Sept. 18	Ruth 1	Philemon
Sept. 25	1 Kings 8,23-53	1 John 1 to 2,6

### If Ye Then Be Raised With Christ

The apostle has reminded the Colossians, and of course us, of the cleansing typified by baptism, its spiritual cleansing, the importance of the rising from the water compares with the removal of the fore-skin of circumcision eight days after birth by every descendant of Abraham. That effects a facility for cleansing of a bodily member from birth to death. In the same way a spiritual cleansing for life. IF it is real it is lifelong cleansing. The normal Gentile life was an unclean life as is indicated by Paul's list of verses 5 to 7. Now see what it means. Not only are the grosser sins to be swept out, but the very thoughts are to be purified by cleansing of the mind and heart. So far as Gentiles were concerned it was indeed a tremendous and real cleansing requiring a great effort of will. Consider what Paul says: not only were the grosser sins involved but those, less visible and obvious, to be put away, and those not so seen motives and thoughts (vv. 8 & 9).

### The New Man

Can we ever sufficiently emphasise these points with which Paul now deals? Ours is indeed a new kind of life. We cannot over-emphasise our duty as new

born creatures the purity and holiness of the christian character. It involves every thought, word and deed when we consider the great fact that we have been dead in trespasses and sins, and the saviour called us by His sacrifice into the new life in Christ. We have been renewed and called into His church, and brought from darkness into light to wear His likeness, made into His image. Our differences being abolished (verses 10 & 11). It is as though we are freshly clothed with the wonderful character of Christ Himself, so that all the characteristics of Jesus Himself have over-clothed us... Passing into details of the new life will be manifested in all our differing duties being manifested in our daily walk. Yes! we may wear His likeness and manifest Him in all our ways, displaying the love which has taken possession of our lives to invite the imitation of the **One Perfect Man!** The happy association flowing out from the very word of God in song of praise and thankfulness combining together in melody arising from heartfelt joy.

### Family Love

Wives, husbands and children each having instructions to combine them in true happiness for insurance of peace depending on their each doing their part with loving goodwill, each minding his or her own business! A special word for fathers as having chief responsibility. Slaves formed quite a proportion of population and were not expected to be rebellious, but how changed our society now is in our own part of the world. We

need to be thankful for the changes brought about solely by the holy influence of the **One Good Life**. Masters as those of special place have still need of instruction as they so often have power over their fellows.

#### **Concluding Greetings and Instructions**

We are so glad of Paul's wise words, so glad for the special messages. We observe them with Philemon in mind, there being obvious relationships, and so much information about the travellers. Paul in need of prayer, seeks their special interest, chooses his messenger with loving concern, speak so nicely of them, gives recommendations. Tychicus, Onesimus, Aristarchus, Mark, Barnabas, Jesus a Jew, Epaphras, Luke, Demas (but see also 2 Tim. 4,10) Nymphas, Archippus. What a lovely account of so many beloved fellow-soldiers! It would be interesting to trace their relationships.

#### **The Letter to Philemon**

This very personal letter preserved by God for our good. The runaway slave, Onesimus, is being returned to his master. He is under law at his master's discretion but a vital change has been brought about by contact with Paul. He has met a man of God who brought the holy influence of Jesus into the slave's heart, and is actually returning him to his own master. However this is not for punishment but for reconciliation. What a lovely example of the cleansing we have been thinking about in the church at Colosse. Let us look at the details of this happy story. Certainly Philemon is the Master. The household is his. Paul recognises him as a master and courteously asks for transfer of the position as fellow-servant, rather than demanding it as a duty of responsive love, beautifully recognising the right nevertheless. The intertwining relationships are surely a picture of the changing in society being effective of the holy influence of the life and spirit of Jesus. We note there are three fellow-prisoners mentioned. Aristarchus, reminding us of the shipwreck,

Paul himself, and Epaphras — we wonder why! He was apparently with Paul for that reason, and why he had such anxiety, anticipating joys in service at both Laodicea and Hierapolis, and Archippus was serving the Lord as these places where Nymphas had a "house" church. These served one another as they had opportunity. The mention of Barnabas and Mark brings happy and unhappy thoughts but relieved and relived. We are reminded that there is always sunshine as well as shade.

#### **The First Epistle Of John**

The most outstanding introduction to this is as unique as Genesis 1 and John's Gospel in character. The matchless few thoughts are so wonderfully expressive and full of glory. It seems the very Spirit of Christ here breathes through the words of John. We think we are justified to say the most wonderful truths ever given by God to Man are expressed here. "THAT WHICH" covers revelation, and God showed the APOSTLES through His word the utmost reality, and John is expressing this to us and thus showing us John and Jesus HIMSELF. It is vital that JOHN should as nearly as possible make Jesus as visible to us as HE was when walking this earth for our SALVATION. Indeed he does say this when he explains the reason for the message. We have contact, fellowship with God, so to speak, and touch Him in life's throng and press, and we are whole again! (quotation). Some of us have talked together about the fact that those who saw and talked with Jesus in spite of HIS REALITY never seemed to SEE, HEAR or TOUCH HIM — but the apostles did — as in this passage of Scripture, passed on in the message. How did the crowds never really see, hear or touch HIM? Would we be just as blind in the same circumstances — and even now — ARE WE? Following up John's thoughts, we see his next point is that Jesus is LIGHT. This makes it plain, very plain that we have got to make every effort to manifest whatever

measure of righteousness we can, by God's GRACE. And how greatly we are in constant need so the following verses bring us hope, comfort and joy. The sin and the darkness are near, but nearer still is the Advocate, who has made the propitiation.

We are assured of forgiveness by the love of our Saviour and the assurance is lovingly confirmed BUT (verse 7) equally are warned that obedience to commandments must be obeyed and this means "walking in the light." The words of warning and encouragement are essential for our wellbeing and are required lest we grow careless and fall into sin. We have to stay in: abide, and maintain a steadfast walk. This involves the keeping of the commandments constantly in mind.

R. B. Scott

## OBITUARY

**Kentish Town, London:** The church here sadly regrets to report the passing of brother Roy Scott, on Thursday, 23rd June, 1988.

Brother Scott was in his 93rd year and had been a very active and faithful member of the church since he was a young man. He had enjoyed fairly good health right up until his death and was always very grateful to his Heavenly Father for this. He was always active in every aspect of the work of the church and will be greatly missed by the congregation here.

The funeral service was conducted, both at the Meeting-house and St. Pancras Cemetery, by brother Geoffrey Daniell. We pray that God will bless and comfort all the family at this sad time, and indeed comfort all those who mourn his passing. "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord."

The family would like to thank all concerned for the many cards, calls and tributes from brethren and friends. These were very helpful.

Sister Dorothy Proud.

**Motherwell:** It is with deep regret that we report the passing of our much loved sister Jean Wardrop, on Tuesday, 5th July, 1988, at the age of 77 years.

Our sister had been ill for some time but despite the suffering she endured she faithfully attended to the remembrance of her Saviour until she was unfit to do so.

She had a long and faithful Christian life, strong in faith and service; excelling in hospitality and a credit to the church in every way. She was a fine example to all her brethren and will be greatly missed.

We commend all her loved ones, and all others who mourn her passing, to our Heavenly Father's care.

The funeral service on Friday, 8th July, was conducted by Bro. Hugh Davidson, assisted at the graveside by David Chalmers, Dalmellington.

W. J. Purcell (Sec.).

## CHANGE OF SECRETARY

There has been a change of Secretary at the church in Zoar Street, Morley. The new Secretary is:

Sister A. Chambers, 34 Wesley Street, MORLEY, Leeds. L27 9ED. Tel.: 0532 520397.

## "SINGLES RETREAT"

Sadly, due to unforeseen circumstances, the Broomlee 'Singles Retreat' planned for the week-end 26th - 28th August has had to be cancelled.

My apologies to those who planned to join us on that week-end but had not booked.

David Ferguson.

## HISTORY OF THE BRITISH CHURCHES OF CHRIST

Brother Ian Davidson proposes, God willing, to give a series of talks (illustrated by slides) on the above subject in the Meeting-house at Motherwell on the following dates:

Saturdays, August 20th and 27th and September 3rd. On all three occasions the meetings will commence at 6.30 p.m. ALL WELCOME.

### APPEAL

Our Meeting Hall at Cluny Terrace, Buckie, was built in 1958 and although we have kept the hall in a good state of repair, it has come to our attention that the windows are in such a bad state that they require to be replaced before the winter sets in. There are 25 large windows in our building, and as you can appreciate the cost of replacement is a big item.

We have at this time, two estimates for the windows, ranging from £4,500.00 to £8,500.00, depending on whether they are hardwood or PVC windows.

Although the Church here is capable of paying quite a large proportion of the sum required, we certainly can't afford to pay for the whole amount, and therefore ask if any individuals or Churches can help us financially towards the cost of this repair we would be most grateful.

All contributions should be sent to:

Church of Christ, c/o Bill Pirie (Treasurer), "Kelvin," East Church Street, BUCKIE, Banffshire.

*(Please Note: The Secretary of the above Church is Mr. Hunter Pirie, The Bield, 23 Harbour Place, Portknockie, Buckie, Banffshire.)*

### WHY NOT MOVE TO BUCKIE

The Church meeting at Cluny Terrace, Buckie, is in need of help in the spreading of the Gospel, in the Buckie area, so that the Church here may grow both Spiritually and numerically.

We are therefore appealing to any Brothers or families to come and work for the Lord, along with the Buckie Brethren, in preaching, teaching and especially in the personal evangelising in the surrounding area, on a full or part-time basis.

The members here are prepared to help in any way they can in trying to find housing and to help with the necessary domestic work in the settling-in process of a new home.

Unfortunately the Church here cannot offer much in the way of financial

support, as our contributions are not enough to support some one full-time. However, we would try to find work for any Brethren prepared to move here.

The Moray Firth is a very beautiful and desirable area to settle in, so why not come and work for the Lord in Buckie? For further details contact the Secretary: Brother Hunter Pirie. 'The Bield,' 23 Harbour Place, Portknockie, Buckie, Banffshire.

### WORKING AMONGST THE MUSLIMS

It is with regret that we have to announce that our Brother Steven Masood has decided to give up working "full time" within the Asian community in Manchester and Oldham.

In spite of very trying circumstances he has continued in this work with us for some five years and it has made its impact on the Islamic communities although not exactly as we had hoped. For example; according to information we have received through various muslim sources, in order to counteract the effort of Steven's tracts "The Bible is Changed, Really?" and "God Has No Wife", Ahmed Deedat's Islamic Propagation Centre (Durban South Africa) persuaded the Saudi Arabian government to part with £50,000 to enable him to produce for wholesale distribution a book entitled "Is The Bible The Word Of God?" It is also singularly significant that both the Islamic Propagation Centre and the UK Islamic mission have established centres in suburban Oldham.

With the Lord's help, the work amongst Asians will of course continue, with Steven and Allan devoting whatever time they can to preaching, producing literature and making themselves available to brothers, sisters and churches of Christ who need help in this vital field.

Steven, Allan and myself together with all the church which meets at Stretford thank everyone who has contri-

buted to the Asian work and to Steven's support in particular. Muslims do read the tracts and literature that we produce and ask questions of their leaders. Hence the effort put in by the various muslim groups to counteract them. This is a prime means of reaching Muslims and we would appreciate it if those who are able would continue to support the costly duplication and distribution of this literature. Those of you who have had a chance to peruse the Compendium will appreciate its value and the worthiness of supporting this work. If you have not had the opportunity to examine a copy please write to us.

The church at Stretford is continuing to grow but most are students. There are only three families with a member in full time employment and our resources are limited.

We have not abandoned the idea of Brother Allan Ashurst going "full time" but so far there has been little response to our appeal for his support. If you are thinking of contributing towards this please do contact me.

The church at Stretford once more extends its thanks for the support you have given over the last five years.

John Purcell, 3 Dale Avenue,  
Bramhall, Stockport, SK7 2JP.

### CHRISTIAN LITERATURE FUND

A charitable fund has been created by the generous endowment of brother Tom Blackmore of Weston-Super-Mare, under a Deed of Gift. Its purpose is set out below. There will be an annual distribution of the interest accruing from the invested capital and we invite applications from churches of Christ for grants from the fund. Grants will be subject to extent of finances presently available and subject also to the fund's specific purpose which is the provision of Bible and gospel literature. Applicants are invited to state the use to which the grant will be applied (The Fund is also open to receive legacies or gifts).

#### The Purpose of the Fund

"To provide Bibles, tracts and other religious literature to persons or churches in this country and abroad so as to provide the spiritual teaching of the Church of Christ and maintain the doctrines upon which it rests and the observancies that seek to promote and manifest it thereby benefitting the advancement of religion as a whole".

*Please write in the first place to:*  
The Trustees, The Thomas Blackmore  
Literature Fund, 21 Stoneleigh Cres-  
cent, Knowle, Bristol, BS4 2RF.

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