

The **SCRIPTURE STANDARD**

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

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Notice to all Agents and Individual Subscribers

HAVE YOU REMITTED FOR YOUR COPIES FOR 1955? IF NOT, DO IT NOW.

We will continue to send copies for 1956 (D.V.) as at present unless we hear from you to the contrary.

Many thanks to all concerned for their continued interest and support.
P. PARTINGDON.

What we hope to do

SOME readers have made good suggestions as to what might be done to increase the circulation of the magazine. These are being considered and, where possible and advisable, will be acted upon. We invite readers to write us concerning this matter.

In the meantime it goes without saying that there will no attempt to popularise the magazine by lowering its standard. We shall endeavour not to include anything whose purpose is merely to amuse or to pander to the unthinking. Gossipy chit-chat has no place in a publication intended to help Christians to 'grow in the grace and knowledge of Christ,' and to point the way of salvation to seeking souls.

It is often said in religious bodies that what is most needed is an educated ministry. We believe that what is most needed is an educated congregation—taught in the word of God and 'able to give a reason for the hope within them.' To this end we shall continue to work through this magazine.

We do not intend to make rash promises or to adopt new ideas merely for the sake of change. We shall try to widen the circulation of the paper by the best of all schemes—the worth of its contents. We want to make people eager to read what its writers have to say upon 'the things most surely believed among us,' and to be acquainted with what God is doing through His people in the various Churches.

We express thanks to those who have willingly and ably contributed to its pages these past months. Most of these brethren are extremely busy men, yet find time to devote to the preparation of their articles. Let us show our gratitude by at least reading and encouraging others to read

what they have written for our mutual good. Much can be done by individuals to make the S.S. more widely known.

Then to agents our warmest thanks are due. May we appeal to them, too, to seek to obtain new readers?

Next year, God willing, many of the usual features will continue. Mention may be made, however, of a 'Questions Answered' column which it is hoped to begin in the January issue. This will be conducted by Bro. Leonard Channing. Many readers will know the great interest which always centres in the 'Questions Answered' session at the annual Hindley Bible School. There is no reason why the same interest and spiritual benefit should not be experienced in this new venture in the S.S. Readers are invited to send questions on scriptural and Church matters and questions touching these matters direct to Bro. L. H. Channing, 9 Ripon Street, Aylesbury, Bucks.

Finally, we ask for the prayers of you all, that the magazine may show forth not the wisdom of man, but of God, and that it may be used by Him to the glory of His holy name.

EDITOR.

Approaching the Word of God

IV.

READERS may be wondering how many more negative considerations are involved in our study. Let us review the six main headings under 'Wrong Approaches to be Avoided,' noticing that one remains to be dealt with next month:—

- (a) Casual: reading without intending to understand.
- (b) Dishonest: interpreting from ulterior motives.
- (c) Dogmatic: using the Bible to prove assumed doctrine.
- (d) Mystic: spiritualising every text.
- (e) Fantastic: treating the Bible as a box of curiosities.
- (f) Priestly: relying upon a clerical monopoly of interpretation.

The Mystic Approach. In 'protestantism' it is common to find the Bible regarded as a sealed book which only the initiated can understand. Initiation into its mysteries, it is implied, can be obtained by a theological degree—according to the particular sect using this approach—but as for understanding it by reading as one does any other book, that would appear to be almost sacrilegious. We may even be told that the Scriptures themselves teach that they are a mystery.

To this suggestion it must be replied that Timothy was told by the Apostle that the sacred writings were able to make him 'wise unto salvation' (2 Tim. 3:14). Paul also showed the Ephesian Christians that the most difficult truths to be presented to the world were to be read and understood by all. He wrote (Eph. 3:4), 'whereby, when ye read, ye can perceive my understanding in the mystery of Christ'; and again (Eph. 3:8-9), 'unto me . . . was this grace given . . . to make all men see what is the dispensation of the mystery which from all ages hath been hid in God.' Further, the letter to the Colossians was to be 'read also in the church of the Laodiceans' (Col. 4:16) and a letter to Laodicea was to be read at Colosse. There would have been no point in this request if the letters could not be understood. The same applies to Paul's insistence that his first letter to the Thessalonians 'be read unto all the brethren' (1 Thess. 5:27).

But for our purpose the Mystic Approach may include such similar methods as the spiritual and allegorical. They are all tending in a similar direction, not only by assuming special qualifications for understanding and interpreting the Word, but also in tending to 'spiritualise' every text as though it were a kind of Samson's riddle, full of types and allegories to be interpreted spiritually rather than literally. A new publication from the pen of Dr. B. F. C. Atkinson, 'The Pocket Commentary of the Bible' appears to fall into this category. The first volume covers only the first nine chapters of Genesis but is sufficient to warn us that, unlike the same writer's excellent proofs of the truth of the Bible, his commentary should be read very critically by the young student.

Perhaps we may be forgiven for remarking that, among nearly all users of the Mystic Approach, 'the millenium,' which is nowhere detailed in Scripture as a literal possibility, is seldom spiritualised.

The Fantastic Approach might be considered to be an extension of the Mystic but deserves separate attention. Here the Bible is handled as though it were a veritable box of curiosities. It is scarcely a rational method of interpretation as it relies upon fantastic twists of numerology and linguistics which only the most imaginative genius could invent. The late John Scouller in S.S. of October, 1935 referred to a similar curiosity in Psalm 46. He wrote: 'Shakespear was born on 23rd April, 1564 and died on 23rd April, 1616. What more likely than that forty-six should be a favourite number of Shakespear's? Now, counting from the beginning of this 46th Psalm you will find the forty-sixth word .is "shake" and, counting from the end, the forty-sixth word is "spear." On the methods of the critics, there would seem to be no doubt whatever that Shakespear wrote the Psalms.' Bro. Scouller used this illustration against modern 'higher' criticism but it more aptly illustrates the antics of those who claim that the British nation is a lost tribe of Israel. Such methods are more worthy of the 'Magic Circle' than of the Bible class. R A H

Notes on my Life

BY WALTER CROSTHWAITE

A New Work in Hull

AT the beginning of 1906, there being a desire to break up new ground, along with Bro. W. Chapman (Senr.) we commenced work in the city of Hull. This was a joint effort by the General Evangelist and Yorkshire Committees. Hull was a stronghold of Methodism. For six months we laboured together, preaching indoors and out, and in every way possible pushing our plea for a return to New Testament Christianity. Then for eighteen months I was left to continue the work. The work was very hard, and progress was slow. However, with the blessing of God, by August, 1907 a Church with a membership of twenty-seven had been established. Then some well-meaning brethren (mistakenly as I then thought and said) attempted to hasten progress by joining with another mission. This proved disastrous to our cause in Hull. Disapproving of the policy pursued, we left Hull, and laboured with other Yorkshire Churches until the end of February, 1908.

In Leicester

The General Evangelist Committee intended entering new fields, and I served with them for two years. But instead of new ground I was sent to the Leicester district. Some soul-stirring times were experienced;

especially at South Wigston. I had spent a happy and fruitful two months with this Church in 1905. Large numbers attended the meetings, and many were added to the Church. While serving this Church during the year 1909 my wife, who had suffered for a considerable time from that terrible disease consumption, fell asleep in Jesus, leaving me with three young children. When well she had been all that a wife could be to a husband, a true 'help-meet.' Never shall I forget the kindness shown to her, and to myself, by brethren and sisters in many parts, and especially in South Wigston.

Towards the close of 1910 I received an urgent appeal to return to the Yorkshire district. Earnest efforts, and tempting offers were made to induce me to remain in Leicester. Had it been a case of choosing what seemed easiest and most pleasant these efforts would have succeeded. But I knew of the difficult position in Yorkshire and of their failure to secure a suitable evangelist, so I decided to go back there.

Before leaving the Leicester district I was married to Sister Harriet June Loveridge of South Wigston. She and her people had shown great kindness to my late wife, and to my children after my wife passed away. For forty-two years she proved a faithful wife, and a good mother to the children.

Return to Yorkshire

Much of the same experiences as during my previous eight years* work were repeated, two outstanding events being the starting of two new Churches, Hill Top Street, Leeds; and Bentley, near Doncaster. Hill Top Street Church was formed by members from Wortley, Leeds. For some years a really active Church existed there, and much was done to spread the plea of Churches of Christ. Bentley was a new coalfield opened out near Doncaster, the Church being formed of members from various places, mainly from the Nottingham district. Miners are often a floating population, new coalfields always attracting many of them.

Debating again with the Mormons

In November, 1910, we came into conflict with the Mormons again, and on the 23rd and 29th of that month a debate was held with one of their elders on the proposition, 'Is the Book of Mormon a Divine Revelation?' Mr. Hinckley, an elder from Salt Lake City, took the affirmative. He was a gentleman, and was quite fair, but he had a poor case; and my task was an easy one. An elder of the 'Re-organised Church of Latter Day Saints,' Mr. T. Taylor, was present. He evidently felt that the Book of Mormon had come out badly, and that he could better defend it, for he challenged to further debate, which we accepted. A debate was arranged, and for two nights, December 6th and 8th, we discussed, 'Is the Bible all-sufficient for our salvation?' This man was of the bulldog breed. He was much dissatisfied with the debate. He called at my house the day after and used some strong and abusive language. When an opponent resorts to personalities, it is evident he is beaten, and we may take his abuse as a compliment.

To try to cover up his defeat Mr. Taylor held a meeting on Morley Market Place. I was present and put some questions to him. The Market Inspector arrived on the scene, and asked, 'Who gave you permission to hold a meeting on this square on market night?' 'Oh,' said Mr. Taylor, 'I have seen the Market Inspector, and he gave me permission.' The Inspector, who was in plain clothes, replied. I am the Inspector, and

you have never seen me about any meeting.' So the meeting held to expose us had an inglorious ending. While dealing with Mr. Taylor we may add that we met again at Ardsley in June, 1917, and for four nights discussed the plea of the Latter Day Saints, and that of Churches of Christ. There was no doubt on the part of any present, including Mr. Taylor's supporters, that he suffered a crushing defeat. He never got into my way again.

(To be continued)

Converted through Contact with a Burglar

(This is the account in his own words of the conversion of Bro. Bob Bakvis, of Amsterdam. Many will have met Bro. Bakvis, either at the last Hindley Bible School or in Holland. The translation from the Dutch is by Bro. Frank Worgan).

I THINK you may be interested to know how I came into contact with the Gospel of Christ. Let me tell you the story from the beginning.

It was in the winter of 1944-45, and I was walking the streets of Amsterdam looking for something to eat for myself and my family. At that time of the war Holland was starving, and we, like others of our people, were in great need of help. [Remember that at this time Holland was occupied by the Germans.—F.W.] That day I met a man who said that he was a business man travelling between Holland and Belgium. He gave me a piece of chocolate. He also told me that he was a relative of my neighbour who lived in the flat above me. About six months later this neighbour, a lady, came to ask me if her relative could board with us for a while. Of course, he would pay for his lodgings, she said. Because we needed the money we were glad to agree. He came to live with us and always conducted himself very well. He gave me a pair of trousers and a few other things. And, even though he was often away from home for one or two nights a week, he paid his bill on time. He told us that he had to be in Belgium part of the time, on account of his business.

About this time, I learned that he sometimes used another name and that the police viewed his activities with suspicion. For this reason I requested him to find another home, which he did immediately. About three weeks later two policemen came and searched my home. Of course they found nothing suspicious, but one of them told me that the man whom I had sheltered was one of the worst burglars in Holland! This upset us very much. I told the detective, a Mr. Kollerie, of our circumstances, and that it had been necessary for me to sell much of our clothing and furniture to buy food, and he asked me to go to his home because he might be able to help us a little. He gave me a coat and my wife a dress, and when I thanked him he said, 'Don't thank me, but write a letter to my uncle in America. His name is J. C. Vandervis.'

I wrote to Mr. Vandervis. Some time later, when I came home from work one evening, I was surprised to find Mr. Vandervis and a Mr. Philips waiting for me. In this manner I came into contact with the Gospel. They told me about Christ, and what must be done in order to become a Christian. It was a year later, on August 1st, 1947, that my wife and I were both baptised in the swimming baths in Amsterdam. In this way we were the first Dutch people to accept the true Gospel of Christ in the work in Holland.

About Bible School Work

I HAVE been asked to set down some thoughts on this theme and have hesitated for a while, wondering just what can profitably be said under this heading. I imagine that what is wanted is rather a discussion of the why and how of Bible school rather than suggestions of schemes of work.

First let me say that we must beware of modelling our schools on what is traditional practice of sectarian bodies. We may well have adopted not only practices, but, more serious, attitudes to Bible school, work which have sprung from a sectarian source, without ever having questioned them.

The Authority for the Bible Schools

Well now, where do we stand with reference to the Scriptures in this matter of the Bible school. Have we a direct command to hold them? No. Have we a New Testament or apostolic example?—not recorded. Is the Bible school a necessary inference from any command?—Yes, it seems to be so, for the Lord commanded to 'preach the gospel to every creature' (Mk. 16 :15). Now, if we take this as our basis for action, then we have established not only a reason for holding a Bible school, but also our attitude to the work and our aims in doing it.

We are not interested in the moral training of the young as an end in itself, as some would declare their aims in Sunday school work. We are interested in teaching the story of the love of Jesus and the hopes of salvation it brings—we have no mandate of any sort for anything else. We are not set to 'keep' the young people we find in our schools (though would wish to do so); we are set to keep the faith. We should not be so much interested in the number of scholars in the school, as in the number coming out of it into the Church. All these things stem from that first premise that we are to preach the Gospel through the school.

How shall we teach the Children

Now having said all that, we must bow to the fact that children are not just small-sized adults so that they can be given the Gospel in small-sized sermons. Children are immature in every way. They cannot in early years understand what we adults imply by the name 'God/ even though they may speak very freely of Him. They are to very varied degrees aware of sin—not that they do not recognise it in their own lives, so much as that it is *not* in some of their lives. Did not Jesus say of the little children, 'of such is the kingdom of heaven'? (Mk. 10 :14).

At the other end of the scale there may be some 'little horror' who smokes and swears, and does many things his teacher has never dreamed of, *and yet he is a child*. Now all this poses a real teaser of a problem of approach. Do we regard our scholars as being 'of the kingdom,' or as sinners in need of a saviour? If they are the former, then they can be considered to have access to God through Jesus in prayer; not so if they are unredeemed sinners. What of our prayers then in Bible school (and similarly some of our hymns)? A prayer we offer in Jesus' name will be heard, but we encourage the children to join silently with us in that prayer. Is it part of the proclaiming of the Gospel to teach anyone to pray before he has assurance of pardon and of being heard in prayer? I do this, as no doubt many of my readers do, but I doubt if it is right to do so. Do we not by that kind intention rather run counter to the plan of salvation?

What we shall Teach?

Whilst the older scholars would doubtless get some benefit from a normal sermon, this is certainly not the best way to teach them. Their active co-operation will best win their interest in the matter taught to them. Their part may be the answering of questions, written or verbal, writing short summaries, or learning a verse, or drawing or colouring illustrations of the lesson. With the younger children there are difficulties as to what they can grasp of the ideas involved in the gospel. The command we mentioned as our basis, speaks of 'he that believeth' in the same breath as 'every creature,' which would seem to limit the scope of this latter term to 'every creature that can believe.' I think brethren should beware of becoming baby-minders by stealth instead of by good intention.

Well then, our aim is to disciple these children, to make them Christians. We should recognise that this will *not* be the aim of the vast majority of our scholars, and that if we are to succeed, there must be some sustaining motive for the child to appreciate. By the nature of things, it cannot be a conflicting motive. I suggest that progress from class to class and the sense of achievement of something learned are motives we can harness acceptably. So as a first aim we can adopt along with the children the aim of understanding the Bible (hence Bible school—rather than Sunday school). In the first stages we should teach the Bible stories: later texts and passages from the Bible should be learned by heart and a better understanding of the Bible stories attempted as opposed to mere knowledge of the facts; in the later stages the searching out from the Bible of 'the reasons why' of dispensations, atonement in Old Testament and New Testament, way of salvation, and so on naturally to the Gospel in full. It is important for the workers in the school to know where they stand and where they are going with respect to each child.

The Approach to the Children: Discipline

Real friendship should be offered to the scholars and our homes should become annexes of the school. This is a really profitable way of 'gossiping' the Gospel to children and adults. This contact will also help in the problem of discipline in school—a thorny problem to many. Adults coming to a gospel meeting know how to behave and fall in with the routine (ritual) as a matter of course. Children on the other hand do not take such a responsible attitude, and some of us have known children who have come simply to upset a school. Now whatever type of scholar we have, there must be discipline. We are bidden to 'do all things decently and in order' (1 Cor. 14:40), and no misplaced kindness should allow us to forget that the school is for teaching and that the scholars are there to learn. Good day school discipline does not rest on threats, but on reason and respect from teacher and child. That can and should apply to the Bible school. It is completely futile for a teacher to prepare a lesson and then to allow himself to be shouted down or side-tracked by disobedient and unruly children. If we cannot secure their respect and attention, then they will never hear the gospel we seek to teach; our first target must be to secure their co-operation. An appeal by letter, or better in person, to the parents may be profitable in a difficult case but, if all else fails, then the privilege of attending Bible school should be withdrawn, in the hope (not mentioned at the time of course) that the child will come back later, chastened and ready to be taught.

The occasional problem of this sort tackled firmly will secure throughout the school that right regard that will make the work pleasant and profitable toward salvation. If such a problem is left alone, in hope that

it will solve itself, then the end will be frustration for every teacher and the crippling of the school's work. Expect a lot in every way and you will not be disappointed; expect little and you will again not be disappointed—nor, I hope, surprised when little is achieved.

The Teacher's Preparation

Another help to discipline and the general good running of the school is preparation of the work taught beforehand. This ought not to need saying but it does. If the lesson does not flow smoothly and easily, then concentration will be broken and the theme is lost for the children. Any illustrations or materials used should be received beforehand as part of the preparation. Some schools, where the same theme or piece of scripture is used each week as the basis of the lesson in each class, find a 'preparation class' for teachers of help.

Another class which is a great help to discipline and the well-being of the school in general is the 'senior class' composed of Church members (all of them) and the older scholars who have reached the age of being 'too old for Sunday school,' as they often put it. This can prevent loss of contact with young people at the most critical stage and forms a good background for teaching them into the kingdom.

The Church's Responsibility

One final word: the school is a work of the Church. It is not an autonomous body within the Church—not an auxiliary. Matters of policy and day-to-day running should be in charge of and under the eye (physically) of the elders, even if not directly discharged by them.

I hope these thoughts may provoke thought and perhaps discussion through the pages of S.S. The ideas I have put forward are not offered as 'the last word' and I should be glad of the comments and corrections of others.

G. LODGE.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

- Dec. 4—Psalm 2; Acts 4:19 to 5:11.
 „ 11—Psalm 32; Acts 5:12-28.
 „ 18—Isalah 43:1-13; Acts 5:29-42.
 „ 25—Exodus 18:13-27; Acts 6.

The Church's unanimous Prayer (4:23-31)—Jesus had warned His apostles of what is now coming to them. Do we recognise what astonishing courage they showed? All the forces of "law and order" are being arrayed against them. There is not the slightest sign of a will to resist force with force (physical force), and the church is with them in sentiment. They do not even ask God to restrain their enemies, but seek His help in going on with their job. Notice the items in the prayer—recognition of God as supreme, recognition of the Scriptures as His word, fulfilled by those who opposed His Christ, recognition of His part as being

the working of miracles, theirs to tell the Message of salvation. God's answer was immediate in the affirmative with a physical sign.

The Church's unanimous generosity (4:32-37).—We look back with wistful longing to the delightful unity of heart and mind here pictured, and yet times like these have been experienced by individual bodies of Christians from time to time. They must come when men and women with solemn effort submit themselves to the Holy Spirit of humility, obedience and self-effacement. Satan gets busy among God's people when these conditions are fulfilled in us as individuals, or in the church—because they render him powerless. We believe that there would be many in Jerusalem who stayed by the apostles instead of going back to their homes (2:8-11), and some would be in need of the help so gladly given. We note the fund was used for "each according as any one had need" (R.V.), not used as a common fund for *everyone* to draw from. Luke draws our attention to

the generosity of Barnabas, and his reputation because we learn more of him later.

A salutary lesson on deceit (5:1-11).—In view of the higher responsibility of the apostles, God gave them special help, and it was evidently necessary that the duplicity of Ananias and Sapphira should be exposed. The lesson surely is that our giving should be with simplicity and sincerity, and certainly never with the idea of being well thought of. The sin was not in their keeping back part of the sum but in pretending they were giving all. This seems clear from Peter's words (verse 4). We are reminded that "God is not mocked," and that the wages of sin is death—and though we be appalled (20th Century N.T.) at this tragic record, these truths are the same now, whether retribution comes early or late.

Apostolic Pre-eminence in the Church (5:12-16).—This is often forgotten or neglected. The most significant phrase in these verses is "of the rest durst no man join himself to them." Evidently the apostles kept together and consulted in the colonnade of the Temple named "Solomon's Porch." It seems remarkable they were allowed to continue this but of course it was the fact of their being in favour with the people, who were receiving many and untold blessings through their hands. Peter is now "strengthening his brethren" (Luke 22:32) as their leader, and the scenes are reminiscent of those "beside the sea" in the days of Jesus Himself. Being added to the Lord is being added to the church.

The Apostles arrested and punished (5:17-42).—We are not surprised to see the religious rulers roused to action, nor to know that it was jealousy which moved them. How could they continue to tolerate the new authority? God chose to intervene. Shall we not regard this as another warning to these sinful men both of God's approval of the apostles, and the certainty of the resurrection? "He that being often reproved hardeneth his neck . . ." The facts are further brought home by the plain words of the apostles themselves, who merely reiterated their previous testimony, including notably the offer of "repentance and remission."

There was no sign of repentance here however, only an increased hatred, equal to murder in God's clear sight. Fear of

the people and the potent influence of Gamaliel held them back for the time being from actual crime. The flogging must have been both painful and humiliating—and unjust. It produced no resentment or desire to retaliate, but an obedient 'rejoicing' and continued obedience in telling the good news. Observe still they use the Temple courts in direct defiance of man and obedience to God, but also spoke in the homes.

Appointment of Deacons (6:1-6).—It cannot be certainly established that the SEVEN were 'deacons' in an official sense. The word is merely the Greek word for "servant" put into an English form, but they were appointed to "deacon" tables in the place of the apostles, who had been doing that work. They now realised that they must give priority to their great work of preaching and teaching—shall we say "deaconing" (distributing or serving out) the word of God—rather than spend their time in distributing material things. In view of the make-up of the community of Christians now in Jerusalem it would seem natural that Jews of foreign birth were not so well known as natives of Jerusalem—and that is doubtless why the complaints arose.

Judging by the names of those chosen to do the work for the apostles in this respect, the church chose those of foreign birth for it. The apostles put the duty of choice upon the church, and themselves appointed them with prayer and laying on of hands. We might well do both today provided we recognise we have no apostles, and do not make a ceremony of it.

The Work of Stephen (6:7-15).—The wise action of the apostles resulted in more victories for God's Word. Priests depended for their livelihood upon their priestly work under the Mosaic law, and would need to make much sacrifice to accept Christ. Stephen's work brought him into conflict with the Jews of foreign origin, and his outstanding ability in putting forward the truth and defending the gospel made them angry. How like His Master's experience was his. Unable to refute his words, they resorted to violence and misrepresentation. Stephen was moved by holy impulses, and thus his expression of face showed it. Doubtless Saul of Tarsus saw this.

R. B. SCOTT.

A Call Remember the Former Days

(Concluded)

MODERNISM and unbelief (as evidenced in the history of Churches of Christ) have failed and are failing. One may quote a passage from the chairman's address at the August Conference, 1955, which surely authenticates this: 'Tragically small and pitifully weak though we know ourselves to be, both within the divided Church and the distraught and agonised world, and incompetent and ill-equipped as we are even 'to be ourselves'!—and this after the vast amount of money and labour spent on Overdale and its teaching, since its inauguration in 1920.

There is no need for discontent amongst those who have contended and are contending for loyalty to 'the things most surely believed amongst us.' To the workers in every assembly, withdrawn from the associated Churches, we say, plod on with renewed energy, zeal, and courage, and God will give you the victory, for we are assured that it is His cause for which we labour. As He said to His faithful servant Joshua: 'Be strong and of good courage . . . Be thou strong and very courageous. Be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed, for the Lord thy God is with thee.'

Some, maybe, can do little but pray in this spiritual enterprise. This we will do. 'More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of.' One is assured that the promise of the Master to His first disciples equally applies to His true and faithful disciples to-day. 'Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye ask anything in my name I will do it' (John 14:13-14). 'Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you. Hitherto ye have asked nothing in my name; ask and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full' (John 16:23-24).

May we always pray and not faint, for the Lord will hear and answer in His good time. If we have faith to believe this and to rely on God's grace and strength, while we toil on, the future is on the side of those who 'contend earnestly for the faith once [for all] delivered to the saints.'

J. HOLMES.

'I Thank my God for you'

IN ALMOST every letter of Paul's that phrase has prominent place. Sometimes he is writing to those whose faults he must specify, to those he must severely rebuke, to converts whose growth he could clearly discern, to partners who served with noble devotion. But always Paul was grateful to them.

And should it not be with us all? Should our fellows not be a reason for our gratitude? We ought first to be grateful to God Himself. And the second reason for our gratitude is to know and love our neighbours.

It is not without reason Paul was grateful for those Christians. Those to whom he wrote—even the worst—helped him. They gave him something great to live for. They demanded that he live at his best, that he exert his spiritual powers to the limit. They rewarded his effort.

And is it any different with us? Cannot we too be thankful for preachers—even for those who do not measure up to our expectations? And for our congregations—even those who have demanded unusual patience, teaching, and forgiveness? Assuredly classes can give thanks for teachers and teachers for classes, who have drawn out of us the best. Those members who most have needed our help, patience, counsel, and forgiveness deserve our thanks. Even the sinners have done us some good.

'Who Loved Me and Gave Himself for Me'

(Galatians 2:20).

THERE was no room for Him when He was born (Luke 2:7).
But to prepare our place the Lord has gone (John 14:2).

He had not where to lay His weary head (Luke 9:58).
'He maketh me lie down,' the Psalmist said (Ps. 23:2).

He was weary journeying (John 4:4). To-day
'Come unto me and rest,' I hear Him say (Matt. 11:28).

He took the servant's form, the lowest place (Phil. 2:7)
To make us kings and priests—amazing grace (Rev. 1:6).

'Floods overflow me,' Jesus sinking said (Psalm 69:2)
But rivers never can o'erflow my head (Isa. 43:2).

The Man of Sorrows wept that sad dark day (John 11:35)
That God might wipe all other tears away (Rev. 7:17).

They all forsook Him in His hour of need (Matt. 26:56).
'I never will forsake mine own,' I read (Heb. 13:5).

'Reproach hath broken my fond heart' (Ps. 69:20)
That to hearts afflicted He might health impart (Ps. 147:3).

Foes plaited for His brow a crown of thorns (Matt. 27:29).
'A crown of life,' my happy brow adorns (Rev. 2:10).

'I thirst,' upon the cross He cried in death (John 19:28).
'Shall never thirst,' He to His followers saith (John 6:35).

'Was made a curse'—accursed for us He bled (Gal. 3:13)
That 'no more curse' might of His own be said (Rev. 22:3).

He came into my place, that I at last (Matt. 8:17)
Might share His glory, suffering days all past (John 17:28).

CORRESPONDENCE

WILL YOU PLEASE HELP?

In Fleetwood, almost on our doorstep, there is a serious case of polio. Margaret, now 22, has been in an iron lung over five years. She is helpless, only able to move her head. Every particle of food and drink has to be given her.

In spite of this affliction, this home is no place of sadness, but has always a welcome and a smile. Margaret is bright, vivacious, does not complain, and is most interested in the welfare of others. She is an only child and dearly loved. It is her attitude which makes it possible for her parents to keep going day by day. Their hearts must be heavy, but a brave and cheerful attitude is always shown before Margaret.

The financial strain in an illness of this kind is severe, and the wage of a working man cannot meet it. There are, too, circumstances in this case which are exceptional and unavoidable, which make help more necessary. I sensed this some time ago, and the urgent need for applied Christianity. The parents are God-fearing and upright people. They would never parade their need. I visit this home regularly and come away humbled, often with a lump in my throat and give thanks to God for a measure of health and strength.

The small church at Cleveleys has helped generously for a year or so, and this splendid family were intensely moved by our thought and action. But much more needs to be done, and I feel sure many churches and brethren will be willing to help and have fellowship in giving in Christ's name.

Please send your gift to me at 12 Poulton Street, Fleetwood, Lancashire.

Send it NOW, and when doing so give thanks, remembering that "Inasmuch as ye have done it . . . ye have done it unto Me." This fund will be kept open for a few weeks.

A. L. FRITH.

ULVERSTON APPEAL

Whilst the above appeal is in your minds, please remember also the appeal for help for the church at Ulverston which appeared in last month's S.S. A report on the hard work done to prepare the new meeting-house and of the first meetings there appears in this issue.

Please act soon and respond generously. "He gives twice who gives quickly." The need is urgent. Send gifts to Walter Crosthwaite, Ford Villa, Hart Street, Ulverston, Lancs.

[Bro. A. Winstanley has forwarded the following letter. Readers may remember Bro. Nyanjagha's report and appeal in October S.S.—Ed.]

Dear Brother Winstanley,

Thanks very much for your letter dated the 15th August, 1955. Your letter was read before the Church, brethren and sisters appreciated it.

I have received a bundle of "What must I do to be Saved?" which I am using in my house-to-house work. The Fort Jameson Church of Christ also thanks you very much for sending the copies of "Truth In Love" once a month.

There have been 17 souls added to the Lord's Church within the past two months: Fort Jameson 3, Embangweni, Kandodo 6, and Thozza 14.

In the Lord,

CLAYTON NYANJAGHA.

[A later letter from the same brother was written to the Editor.]

Dear Brother Melling,

I am sending to you the last month's gospel work done here as from October 1st to 31st, 1955.

Fort Jameson 1; Chizumbe, c/o Post Office, Embangweni, Nyasaland, Africa, 7.

TRACTS

When you have old tracts on the Church and doctrines or anything that you have and religious newspapers, very old numbers, do so send me for my help in this gospel work.

Sincerely yours in Christ Jesus,

CLAYTON NYANJAGHA.

Church of Christ,

P.O. Box 240, Fort Jameson,
Northern Rhodesia, Africa.

AN IMPORTANT STATEMENT

Elsewhere in these columns is a news report concerning the work of the Church in Tunbridge Wells. It mentions the restoration of six to the fellowship of the congregation here. It should be made

known that five of these were brethren formerly meeting at Silverdale Hall. The work there was carried on by a small group who had been excluded from the fellowship of the church as intimated in the S.S. for August, 1952.

Five of these brethren have now returned of their own accord, acknowledging that they were in the wrong. On proper acknowledgment they have been fully restored to the fellowship of the church. The work at Silverdale Hall has now ceased.

We give thanks to God for the return of these brethren, and are confident that our mutual efforts for His glory will be richly blessed. The church meeting at 5 Mount Ephraim Road (by permission of the Y.M.C.A.), is the only faithful congregation in this town.

On behalf of the church,

A. E. WINSTANLEY.

NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

Belfast.—A new work commenced here on October 9th, 1955. Our place of meeting is in Ceylon Street, off Ainsworth Avenue, in the Band Hall. Times of meetings are: Lord's Days, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 7 to 8 p.m. Due to other activities being conducted in the Hall during the week we are restricted to meeting there on Sundays only. Bible classes are therefore held in individual members' homes and our mid-week service is in the home of Bro. Tommy Fairley, 24 Brookmount Street, Belfast, who is also the treasurer of the Church.

Since launching out in this new work, calling people back to the Bible, six have obeyed the gospel of salvation, and our members to date number nineteen. We are having great times contending for the faith once and for all delivered to the saints.

The Secretary of the Church is Miss Ruby McConnell, 33 Ainsworth Street, Woodvale Road, and the Evangelist is Hugh Tinsley, whose address will be 34 Sarajac Crescent, Cavehill Road, but who at present is residing at 101 Cupar Street, Belfast.

H. TINSLEY, T. FAIRLEY,
S. COOPER, G. RICHMOND.

Birmingham, Summer Lane.—We had wonderful experiences of spiritual blessedness at our 90th anniversary meetings on Saturday, 5th November, and on Lord's Day. It was encouraging to have visitors from far and near. Bristol, Devonport, Eastwood, East Kirkby, Ilkeston, Leicester, Loughborough and local churches being represented. Our speakers at the Saturday meeting were Bro.

W. Steele and Bro. S. Jepson. The chapel, kindly lent us for the occasion, was well filled and some had to stand in the lobby throughout. Upwards of 200 had tea in the schoolroom below. On the Lord's Day, Bro. Steele exhorted the church at the morning meeting and Bro. Jepson preached the Gospel at night. The report indicated nine additions during the past year; five baptised, two restored and two received by transfer. We thank all visiting brethren who help to make the gatherings so enjoyable and especially our speaking visitors who gave of their best. To God be the glory for such a glad time of fellowship together.

We rejoice to report another addition to our number. On 23rd October, Sister Mrs. A. M. Coley made the good confession and, at the advanced age of 74, was baptised for the remission of her sins. To God be the glory. FRED C. DAY.

Blackburn.—We have just concluded an October Mission with our Bro. Leonard Morgan as missionary. We are greatly indebted to our brother for the time spared among his many onerous and business duties. The Church has been greatly strengthened, for all his exhortations were heart-searching and interesting, and his gospel addresses on Saturdays and Lord's Days were proclaimed with no uncertain sound. The Word so faithfully preached claimed two souls for the Master and His Church. "To God be the glory." Others too were interested and impressed by the spoken Word, and by service in song by two of the youngest members of the Hindley and Blackburn assemblies. The meetings were well attended from time to time by a good number of non-members. Here we would say "Thank you" in appreciation to many members of the Hindley, Scholes, Newtown and Ince Churches for their constant attendance, which increased our numbers to approximately 130.

One of the two baptised is Mrs. Bromley, an old scholar in the Lord's Day School. The other, Mr. Renshaw, has been attending the gospel meetings for some years. In his case the family circle in Christ is completed as his wife is an old member, and Roy and Derek, his sons, have more recently been added to the Church. To God be all the glory. Pray and rejoice with us Brethren in souls saved and the Church strengthened. H.W.

Buckie.—We are glad to report that the power of the gospel has been manifest in our midst. On Sunday, 6th November, Meta, daughter of Bro. Samuel Reid, was buried in baptism. Our sister has been a regular attender at our meetings, and her confident confession and sincerity of purpose have impressed us all. It is our hope that she will continue faithful to the end, and that God will continue to give us the increase. To His name be the praise. JOHN GEDDIS.

East Ardsley.—The church held its 40th anniversary meetings on Saturday and Sunday, October 29th and 30th. On Saturday over 90 sat down to tea. In the evening the meeting-room was filled to capacity, and there was wholehearted singing. Bro. J. Garnett, of Doncaster, spoke searchingly of Israel's 40 years' wandering in the wilderness and drew a parallel with the 40 years history in the life of this church. Bro. T. McDonald, Dewsbury, spoke forcibly and boldly on "What is a New Testament Christian?" Bro. H. Baines, of Morley, as chairman spoke in reminiscent mood as an old member of the Ardsley church.

Greetings were read from Bro. J. Holmes, of Goole, a pioneer member of the church. Brethren from Morley, Dewsbury, Doncaster, Birstall, Wortley and Nelson were present to enjoy a time of spiritual uplift and rejoicing. Bro. T. McDonald also served the church on the Lord's Day. E. PICKERSGILL.

Eastwood.—The Church here rejoices greatly in the manifestation of the power of the Gospel. On Lord's Day, November 6th, we witnessed another confess the Lord, and obedient in following Him by the way of His appointing. This is the sixth immersion resulting from the effort made recently, with Bro. A. E. Winstanley as preacher of the Word. We are encouraged and strengthened, and the praise and glory are ascribed unto God, through our Lord Jesus the Christ. CHAS. LIMB.

Great Yarmouth.—The annual rally of the fishermen from the North East of Scotland was held in the Park Baptist Hall, Great Yarmouth on Saturday, 22nd October, at 7 p.m. Owing to the sudden illness of Bro. George Hudson from Summer Lane, Birmingham, Bro. Dougall deputised as chairman. After a hymn and prayer he gave a welcome to the gathering which numbered approximately 120. Visiting brethren were present from Bristol, Birmingham, Dewsbury, East Kirkby, East Ardsley, Eastwood, and Morley. Friends numbered about 80 and were from Buckie, Fraserburgh, and Peterhead. The guest speakers were Bro. C. Limb from Eastwood and Bro. R. McDonald from Dewsbury. Both speakers excelled in their preaching of the old time gospel, and the many friends present were left in no doubt as to the way of salvation.

Brethren from Bristol and the North East of Scotland contributed items of praise; which helped to make the rally one of the most successful.

On Lord's Day, October 23rd, we assembled in the Labour Club Room to break the bread. Forty-five brethren and three friends were present. Every visiting brother had a part in the service. Bro. C. Limb exhorted us on the Love of

God and our responsibility as His children. In the evening sixty-eight were present when Bro. McDonald preached the gospel, and again his audience was left without excuse for not obeying the Lord. Sister Daniell rendered a solo. The meeting closed with the hymn, "I am coming Lord," and prayer.

This brought to a close a week-end that will live long in our memories. We thank all who have contributed toward its success, and God our Father who has so bountifully blessed us.

DAVID DOUGALL.

It was our privilege to visit Great Yarmouth, to have fellowship with our fisher brethren from the north of England. Some twenty "inlanders" joined in the Rally week-end, and we had a royal time together, marred only by the sudden serious illness of Bro. George Hudson. We are glad to hear good reports of his progress.

Bro. David Dougall does a fine job of work—hard work—at Great Yarmouth. Our thanks are due to Slamannan district for their co-operation.

R. McDONALD.

Hindley.—We had the services of Bro. L. H. Channing for a six nights' mission, September 24th to 29th. Each night a commendable audience gathered to listen to thought-provoking messages from God's Word. Although unable to record any decisions we know our Brother's labour is not in vain in the Lord. Ours the task to sow the seed—to God the increase.

Our Brother did not spare himself but worked hard, visiting and encouraging people to come to the meetings. The members also are to be commended for the support giving to the introductory work. We record our appreciation of our Brother's efforts and ask God's rich blessing.

We are happy to announce the decision of three of our school scholars on Lord's Day, November 6th, 1955. William Tattum, Alan Balmer and Alan Unsworth. May God bless them and use them to the praise of His glory.

Kentish Town.—On Saturday, October 15th, the church celebrated her 84th year of occupation of Hope Chapel by holding meetings in afternoon and evening. We enjoyed the presence of many brethren and sisters from other churches. In the afternoon interesting questions were dealt with by a forum of brethren, and a report of the year's work was given. Over 70 partook of tea in a hall lent for the occasion, and in the evening Brethren Gardiner and Winstanley gave gospel messages. It is encouraging to meet thus together and enjoy prayer, hymns, and teaching. Quite a number of non-members heard the gospel plainly and forcefully presented. We are grateful to God for His great mercies, and to all who supported these happy meetings.

Kirkcaldy, Rose Street.—During September and October three baptisms were recorded. They were: Bros. S. Brown and Pollock and Sister B. Knight who has come up through the Sunday School and Bible Class. During November and December we are holding a mission conducted by A. Gardiner, evangelist. This had a good start at the Rally held on November 5th. Unfortunately our advertised speakers could not be with us. But Bro. F. Nisbet from Tranent spoke in the afternoon and Bro. Gardiner at night. The sister churches in the district supported well, and a very enjoyable day was spent in fellowship with each other. We are now looking for good results in the future.

J.I.

Haddington.—A number of the brethren who reside in Haddington, but who have hitherto met with the Church in Tranent, have for some time considered it advisable to meet in their own home town that the work of the Lord might be done more effectively here. As a result, twelve of the brethren met for the first time on Sunday, November 6th in the house of Bro. Thomas Nisbet, 8 Haldane Avenue, Haddington, at 11 a.m., to remember the death of our Lord in the breaking of bread. We invite the brethren who come this way to meet with us. We intend, with the Lord's aid, to do much personal work until such time as we find a meeting place suitable for housing those who wish to hear the gospel. This town was one of the last strongholds in Scotland of the Pope of Rome. We shall need your help in praying for us. We would like to point out that the town is near the holiday resorts of Dunbar and North Berwick. If you should spend your holidays at these places we shall be grateful for your help in the work here.

All communications for the Church here should be addressed to J. Nisbet, 22 Herdmanflatt, Haddington, East Lothian.

Tunbridge Wells (Y.M.C.A. Building, 5 Mount Ephraim Road)—During October, Bro. Andrew Gardiner laboured with us. The usual services were held on Lord's Days, and also a "Questions Answered" session each Tuesday, and a gospel meeting each Thursday. Our home Bible studies, Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays were maintained, and two Saturday gospel meetings held. Some open-air preaching was done; also loudspeaker announcements, and a tremendous amount of visiting.

Bro. Gardiner preached at each gospel meeting, shared the ministry of teaching and edification, and worked indefatigably in the interests of the kingdom among us. Attendance of non-members was good and we are persuaded that many have been made to give serious consideration

to the claims of the Lord upon their lives.

We give thanks to God for the fact that during this period six were restored to the fellowship of the church, and one added who was already an immersed believer. This has made a considerable difference to our numbers, and we offer heartfelt praise to our Father in heaven. Brethren who know the south of England will appreciate the difficulties faced here. It is a hard field. But we know that the divine promise is true, "in due season we shall reap if we faint not." May the present ingathering be but the first—the present ingathering be but the first—

Our prayers follow Bro. Gardiner as he spends himself in the ministry of the Word.

Ulverston.—The Church is now meeting in the Burlington Street Hall, of which we wrote in last report. We held our first meeting there on Thursday, November 3rd, and had school, breaking of bread, and gospel meetings on Lord's Day, the 6th. The meetings were well attended, and we all felt much encouraged and cheered. Between afternoon and evening meetings many partook of an excellent tea provided by the sisters.

We put in a real hard fortnight's work cleaning and preparing the place. Our sisters worked splendidly. The three young sisters were immersed on Sept. 22nd had a week's holiday from the Grammar School, and worked hard and well in cleaning, etc. These three passed through the Sunday School to the Church. They are of the fourth generation of the highly esteemed Rockliff family to be in fellowship with the Church of Christ in this town. We have all worked hard and spent much in alterations, repairs, painting and purchase of furnishings. We are praying and hoping that the future of the Church will be bright and prosperous.

W. CROSTHWAITE.

Wigan, Albert Street.—For the five Lord's Days in October we had the services of Bro. Philip Partington from the Church at Ince. In the evenings we tried the experiment of starting the meetings at 7.30 instead of 6 o'clock. They were fairly well attended and we had a number of visitors and non-members present. The gospel was preached in simplicity and yet with power and conviction, and again we had the joy of seeing fruit for our labours. On the last Lord's Day, our hearts were gladdened as Edith Connor, daughter of our Sister Connor, came forward and desired to follow Jesus in His own way. She was baptised the same hour and received into fellowship the following Lord's Day. Again we thank all our brethren who through the year have served us week by week and helped to extend the Master's Kingdom. "To God be the glory, great things he hath done."

W. SMITH.

OBITUARY

Bristol, Bedminster.—It is with deep regret we report the passing of Sister Daisy Foote, on October 26th, a member of the Church for many years. Unfortunately, because of partial disablement and ill-health, she had been unable to meet with us for some time. Lovingly cared for by her daughter, with whom she lived, she has now passed to the care of her Lord. Our sympathy goes to her son and two daughters by whom she will be sorely missed.

F. W. WILLS.

Buckie.—With sorrow we record the passing of our dearly loved Brother James Murray, on 14th October, at the age of 87. Baptised 67 years ago, our Brother has been faithful to his Lord and the Church. Of a reserved nature, he ever held fast to the faith once and for all delivered to the saints.

Our sympathy goes out to his widow and family in their bereavement. But they sorrow not as those without hope, because "we believe that those who sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him," and "they shall be for ever with the Lord."

'Jesus wept, and still in glory,

He can mark each mourner's tear;

Living to retrace the story,

Of the hearts he solaced here.'

The funeral took place on October 18th. Brother Sam Hunter officiated, assisted by Brothers W. G. Reid and J. Geddes.

Eastwood.—The Church here has suffered loss in the passing of Bro. John R. Highton. Singing was undoubtedly his forte, and in this he served us well. Many brethren in the Doncaster district may remember him, for the earlier part of his working life was spent in that area. His widow has been in failing health for a number of years. Our sympathy and united prayers are extended to her and to her son and daughters.

C.L.

[We regret the passing of this good and faithful servant of the Lord. We became acquainted with him three years ago, but soon grew to love him for his quiet, humble and cheerful manner. His singing alone was a joy and inspiration.—ED.]

Kirkcaldy, Rose Street.—We regret to announce the death of Bro. J. Gilliard, of 24 Loughborough Road, Kirkcaldy. He had been in poor health for some time, but when well he made a point of being in fellowship at Rose Street. Our sympathy goes to his daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Webster, who have looked after him during his years of indifferant health.

J. INGLIS.

The New Testament Church was :

Episcopalian, because she elected and set apart New Covenant bishops or overseers as soon as they were raised up by Providence (Acts 14:23; Phil. 1:1; 1 Tim. 3:1-7; Tit. 1:5-9). ...

Presbyterian, because it was essential for those bishops to be elders or presbyters (Acts. 20:17-35; 1 Pet. 5:1-4).

Congregational, because every member had a voice in the management of affairs.

Baptist, because she administered Christian immersion to all believing penitents, and thus every member was an immersed believer.

Methodist, because she did, according to apostolic requirement, every thing 'decently and in order' (1 Cor. 14:40).

Society of Friends, because she sought to do the things commanded by the Saviour, according to His words, 'Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you' (John 15:14).

Salvation Army, because her members took the 'whole armour of God' (Eph. 6:13), waging spiritual warfare under the 'Captain of their Salvation' (Heb. 2:10).

SIDNEY BLACK.

AN OLD DEACON was leading in prayer. One of his stereotyped sayings was 'O Lord, touch the unsaved with Thy finger.' Once as he intoned this he stopped suddenly. Thinking he was ill, other members came to his aid. 'No, I'm not ill; but something seemed to say to me, "Thou art the finger".'

COMING EVENTS

Slamannan District.—The annual New Year social gathering of the Churches of Christ in the Slamannan District will be held (D.V.) on Monday, 2nd January, 1956, at 12 noon, in the Blackridge Church meeting place and a welcome is extended to all the brethren. The number of brethren intending to be present should be forwarded by each Church as soon as possible to Hugh S. Davidson, District Secretary, 11 Rosslyn Avenue, East Kilbride.

SUGGESTED SCRIPTURE READINGS, 1956.

These have now been prepared by Bro. R. B. Scott and can be obtained from Philip Partington, 78 Chapel Green Road, Hindley, near Wigan.

Please send for required number of cards immediately, enclosing one penny for each card.

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Secretary of Conference Committee: A. HOOD, 45 Park Road, Hindley, Nr. Wigan.

NYASALAND MISSION. Contributions to W. STEELE, Atholl Dene, Longniddry, East Lothian.

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