



brethren had been twice as successful in preaching the gospel as the American 'Christian Association' had been. However, in 1917 (after much unresolved wrangling with the 'Christian Association' over their tendency to admit 'Open Communion' and taking collections from the unimmersed) the British Churches of Christ entered into formal union with the fourteen churches of the "Christian Association". Stemming from this unfortunate 'marriage' there followed a deterioration in the steadfast of the Churches of Christ for, apart from the two issues just mentioned, the acceptance of instrumental music in the churches is traceable to the influence of these 'Christian Association' churches. The formation of Overdale Theological College in 1920 was also largely due to the union. The establishment of such a college was a departure from David King's strong and vigorous anti-college writings. David King was doubtless vindicated because from the College came clergymen, and 'modernistic' clergymen at that. Churches of Christ reached their maximum membership in Britain in 1930, with a total membership of 16,596, around 3,000 of these being in Scotland. Perplexed by the increasing trend towards denominationalism, some individual brethren and some churches were advocating that they break with the mainstream of Churches of Christ and follow 'The Old Paths'. Indeed in January 1936, the editor of the Churches of Christ magazine "Christian Advocate" wrote "... the future holds no place whatever for a body of ten thousand souls which is nothing more, or less, than a denomination among denominations." Thereafter the Churches of Christ disappeared into the world of church ecumenicalism - membership of the British Council of Churches, Free Church Federal Council, World Council of Churches, etc. etc. Where are they today? Many congregations have recently *abandoned their identity* as Churches of Christ and joined themselves with the United Reformed Church (whatever that might be). Some have retained the name Church of Christ and describe themselves as 'The Fellowship of Churches of Christ'. Between 1931 and 1948, however, twenty-three congregations who desired nothing of the trend towards denominationalism, but sought to walk in the 'Old Paths', withdrew themselves, with a membership of 1,338. The first four to become 'Old Path' congregations were Blackridge, Crofthead, (in 1931) and Kilbirnie and Slamannan (in 1934). Between 1943 and 1947 another 19 congregations left and became 'Old Path' churches.

Is it not frightening that Churches of Christ, setting out so full of promise and high aspiration in 1842 (with 200 congregations and 15,000 members after 30 years) should end up in virtual oblivion within a century? Doubtless Timothy Coop meant well in introducing dynamic men and fast methods from the U.S.A., not realising the long-term disastrous consequences. Doubtless those who set up Overdale Theological College meant well. Doubtless *everyone involved* meant well. Notwithstanding; the results are for everyone to see. Many of our older members lived through much of this and can confirm these events.

### The 'Old Paths' and the 'Scripture Standard'

It was against this historical backdrop that a magazine called the 'Interpreter' began in 1908 in Scotland, edited by Ivie Campbell, of Glasgow, assisted by John Scouller and J.H. Odd. Ivie Campbell was against participation in war (a vexed issue during the First World War); was against union with the 'Christian Association' (mentioned above); was against instrumental music and Conference Committees. 'The Interpreter' was not without its critics and when H.E. Tickle (in 1916) criticised the tone of its anti-war articles, Walter Crosthwaite sprang to its defence and said, "As to 'The Interpreter', apart altogether from the war, it stands for simple New Testament Christianity, and

serves to remind us of those principles our fathers sacrificed so much for, but which are so lightly esteemed today." The name of this magazine ("The Interpreter") was not generally liked and was changed in 1916 to "The Apostolic Messenger". Ivie Campbell fell ill and the editorship fell to W. M. Kempster. In 1921 the name of the magazine was again changed (to 'Bible Advocate'). This remained until 1935 when Walter Crosthwaite became editor and when the name changed to "Scripture Standard". Some brethren thought that the trend towards denominationalism could be stemmed from within the church but brother Crosthwaite believed that the best course was in 'coming out' and going it alone. Walter Barker, of Heanor, who printed and published the 'Scripture Standard' described brother Crosthwaite as "an apostle of dissolution, urging on brethren and churches of like mind to separate themselves and to follow the 'Old Paths'." As we have seen, ultimately twenty three congregations set out on that road, with the 'Scripture Standard' as their magazine, and Walter Crosthwaite as its Editor. Surely we should give thanks to God for such resolute men, and for the example they have left us. Brother Crosthwaite had of course great support and assistance from brother Walter Barker, the printer of the magazine. I am happy to pay great tribute to the late Walter Barker for the efforts he made on behalf of 'The Scripture Standard', both in the printing of the paper and in the ensuring of the accuracy and honesty of its contents. In brother Barker's 'Recollections' of the inception and outworkings of the magazine, (printed in the issue of July, 1961), one gets some idea of his efforts and his interest. I wish he was still here today. I would also like to thank the present members of the Barker family who still afford us great assistance and helpfulness in getting the paper published each month. I am sure that *readers* would want me to thank our printers who render us such greatly appreciated service.

Brother Crosthwaite followed faithfully his avowed purpose until his dying day; which was 13th May, 1961, aged 87 years. Those of us who attended his funeral realised that we were saying farewell to a man the likes of whom we would be unlikely to see again for many decades. Brother Carlton Melling became the editor (on a temporary basis) and remained so until his resignation, due to failing health, on January, 1974. Brother Melling had been left a high standard by brother Crosthwaite but was equal to the task. His task was a very difficult one when one remembers the considerable forces of upheaval at work during his term of office. I followed brother Melling, as editor, in 1974 and so I have been trying to do the job for ten years or thereabouts. Editorship is a sure-fire way of becoming unpopular with nearly everybody --without trying.

### **'The Old Paths' - Whither Now?**

I have said that it is incredible that the British Churches of Christ could go from a position of strength to a position of virtual obscurity in about a century, but what of the 'Old Path' movement, which started off so bravely with twenty-three congregations in 1947? I became a member of the church in 1947 and so I have been an eye-witness of events since then. When I was a young man the 'Old Paths' churches had several full-time evangelists, most of them having had their training from brother Crosthwaite. We do not now have any that I know of. Where did they go? With one or two notable exceptions they left us, fairly suddenly, to accept employ from churches in the U.S.A. and to organise the bringing here of American evangelists 'to get things going' (as Timothy Coop understood it.) Once again progress in Britain was seen by some to be far too slow, and money was also in short supply. If cash was needed for a new church building what could be easier than sending a distress signal to America for the money?

Napoleon said the British were 'a nation of shopkeepers' - as far as the church is concerned the British became (and are) a nation of beggars. Every so often when cash has been needed for buildings, schemes or whatever project, we have the spectacle of British brethren carrying the begging-bowl around the U.S.A. Remarkable things are claimed to have been done in this country in recent times - certainly enormous sums of dollars are being spent. No-one for a moment blames our American brethren. They are generous to a fault - a trait which seems to have been exploited by us British. I'm not, of course, passing judgement on anyone; merely stating facts. Naturally if our American brethren are going to be asked to finance a project they will want a major say in the outworking of that project. Thus, around 1960, when brother Clyde P. Findlay came from Texas to establish a church in Edinburgh he would brook no advice, or requests from British brethren, and as a result we know that the beginnings of division was caused (by the introduction of individual containers at the Lord's table). I personally, with others, enthusiastically assisted brother Findlay at first, thinking that he had come to Britain to assist the British Churches. It took me some time to realise that the idea behind Americans coming here was not to *help* 'Old Path' churches but to take them over, or, if necessary, nudge them aside. More and more evangelists from U.S.A. have followed on the heels of brother Findlay, and indeed are still coming, more than twenty years later. Also vigorous efforts were made to recruit British brethren to their ranks, brethren who would be prepared to push characteristics peculiar to American churches of Christ; i.e. the located preacher system; individual containers; colleges for the training of suitable evangelists, etc. Naturally the upheaval and division caused by these events of the last twenty years have cost the 'Old Paths' churches dearly, and it is extremely questionable if they will ever fully recover. It is hoped, but doubted, that our former evangelists, now in American employ, when they recount their triumphs, will reflect upon what their success has cost others - i.e. to those who remain in the 'Old Paths' churches. Some of those same evangelists used to write articles for the "Scripture Standard" but have now in some cases banned it from *their congregations*. Indeed they have produced their own magazines for some time now.

In such a climate of disappointing changes, which has continued over the last twenty years, the 'Old Path' brethren have had to 'go it alone' without the help of evangelists or other former protagonists. Many of us have a high esteem of our American brethren but do not necessarily want to be in congregations controlled by them - even for the price of financial security. There are still many brethren and churches in Britain who wish to remain completely independent, and who would stand and be counted as 'Old Paths' brethren. The movement has suffered severe body-blows but is still here. The 'Scripture Standard' will, God willing, still continue to represent the 'Old Path' brethren and those sympathetic to such a concept. To produce the magazine each month is financially difficult and I hope and pray that brethren will continue to support us in the future as they have done in the past. We may have little in the way of money, but by all means let us try to keep some integrity. I print a fairly large proportion of material from our good brethren in America but I hope that more of our Brethren here in Britain will write and send me articles for publication. Some years ago several brethren promised me faithfully to send me one article per annum (not a lot to ask) but the actual results have been disappointing. I will certainly try and improve the magazine but obviously can't do so without some material from readers - and it is a reader's magazine. If brethren will rally to the cause there is no reason why the

'Scripture Standard' should not continue for another fifty years. It really all depends on us.

"Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, *and ask for the old paths*, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls." (Jer. 6:16).  
EDITOR

## THE SCRIPTURE STANDARD

The January 1984 issue of *The Scripture Standard* means that magazine enters its fiftieth year of publication. I think it is a notable milestone and one which should not be passed without a few written comments. By the way, do not be fooled by the volume number on the first page. It should read 50 and not 52. This discrepancy results from two printing errors in May 1961 and June 1974.

The first *Scripture Standard* dates therefore from January 1935. It grew out of three other magazines - the *Bible Advocate*, *The Apostolic Messenger*, and *The Interpreter*, which was founded and edited by Ivie Campbell of Glasgow. Campbell began this small monthly magazine in 1907 because he wished it to reflect the views of the more 'Conservative' section of the brotherhood - views which in his mind were not being expressed in the then wider-circulated *Bible Advocate*. All these afore-mentioned magazines can be read with much profit today. In fact, I personally wish I had all the numbers in my bookcases. However, I know one place I can read and study them at my leisure - the home of my beloved brother Leonard Morgan of Hindley, Wigan.

*The Scripture Standard* has had only three editors in its fifty years. Their names are familiar to all - the late bro. Walter Crosthwaite (January 1935 - June 1955), bro. Carlton Melling (July 1955 - December 1973), and bro. James Russell Gardiner (January 1974 -). These men have done a great job over the years and one which, I think, has not always been fully appreciated. (Editing any publication is no easy task at the best of times). I, therefore, on behalf of all the readership, past and present, take this opportunity to sincerely thank them for their worthy endeavours.

From its first edition, *The Scripture Standard* has been published by Walter Barker (Printers) Ltd., Langley Mill, Nottingham, England. They too are to be thanked for their fine efforts. Today, they distribute four hundred and eight copies to churches throughout the United Kingdom. Thirty copies are retained for bound volumes. Bro. R. B. Scott of Kentish Town congregation in London receives seventy-two of these, not only for the saints there, but also for Christians and friends at home and abroad. His overseas contacts are in U.S.A., Nigeria, India, Australia, Alaska, West Germany, Channel Islands, Italy, Malaya, and Zimbabwe.

The Distribution Agent and Treasurer, bro. John K. Kneller of Longniddry, East Lothian, Scotland, receives two hundred and sixty two copies per month. He dispatches quantities of three and under all over the United Kingdom, and he uses the remainder for overseas orders. In fact, the U.K. total is forty-seven. Some are for isolated members. The overseas figure is sixty-eight. U.S.A., Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Malawi, West Cameroons, New Guinea, and Bermuda are their destination. It takes bro. Kneller two nights to mail all these out. As can be clearly seen, a number of copies is left over. If only the circulation figure could be increased! Dear reader, do you know of a friend who might subscribe to the magazine?

*The Scripture Standard* is dependent upon gifts to hold the price at the present level. Many send in an extra few pounds with their subscriptions, and this helps greatly. Some sisters pay for a copy to go free to poor brethren overseas. It is this spirit of sharing and helping that continues to encourage those involved.

Let us remind ourselves of the simple plea of *The Scripture Standard* as it appears each month on its front page: "Pleading for a complete return to Christianity as it was in the beginning". The editorial policy has never wavered from this. Indeed, countless articles have echoed it. The plea remains all important to the magazine.

The late bro. Walter Crosthwaite wrote this in volume 1 No. 1: "Our purpose in erecting *The Scripture Standard* is to endeavour to rally once more the loyal-hearted to 'contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints'. In two senses, the Scriptures are a standard: as a fixed rule or model, and as an ensign of war. We shall endeavour to keep these two meanings in view, seeking to test all things by the 'Scriptures of Truth', and making them the God-given banner to be displayed as the rallying ground for those who desire to 'fight the good fight of faith'. We hope to be the fearless foes of all evil and error; these and not persons will be the object of attack. We shall use the Sword of the Spirit, the Word of God, for defence and attack, believing as David said of the sword of Goliath, 'there is none like it'... Now we ask for the earnest support of those, and there must be many of them whose hearts are saddened by modern departures, and who desire to defend, and hand on the faith to faithful men. A glorious heritage and opportunity are ours. Pray that the Lord may guide us so that we may not fail Him." To all that, I give a resounding: "Amen!"

It has been an eventful fifty years. One wonders, if the Lord tarries, what the next fifty will bring. Perhaps I'll write about them in the year 2034: In *The Scripture Standard* of course!

Ian S. Davidson, Motherwell.

(I wish to express grateful thanks to bro. John K. Kneller of Tranent congregation for his assistance in the preparation of this article).

## GLEANINGS

"Let her glean even among the sheaves." Ruth 2:15

### Christ's Sacrifice and its Design

"The Saviour gave Himself - gave that which was nearest and dearest. His act was voluntary - He gave His life. He had the power to lay down His life and to take it again (John 10:18). Though others maltreated and crucified Him, they could have had no power over Him but for His own willingness to be a sacrifice. Legions of angels were at His command, who would have frustrated all human efforts to take away His life (Matt. 26:53). But then how would the Scriptures have been fulfilled, and His own great design achieved? He had come as the Lamb of God to take away the sin of the world. He came to die because of our sins. Sin was the great blot that He desired to wipe out by means of His sacrifice. He had more in view than the bestowal of forgiveness. His saving work was of a more thorough nature than merely to pardon. He aims at making His followers holy, freeing them from the practice of sin and the influence of surrounding evil. "Christ loved the church, and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that He might present it to

Himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish" (Eph. 5:25-27). This great purpose has the fullest sanction of God; it is His will that all men be thus saved. May not this be deemed a phase of the gospel of Christ? In few words we have laid before us the procuring cause of all our salvation - the work of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the ultimate benefit to man - redemption from sin."

Alexander Brown.

### The Miracles of Christ

"The miracles of Christ were unanswerable evidence of His power over the forces of Nature, and thereby they substantiate His claims to Divinity. They were His credentials to the people of the Apostolic age of His messiahship. They were essential at that time. Christianity was then beginning its career, and its advocates could not then, as we can now, point to its marvellous history as evidence of its truthfulness; they wanted something startling to arrest the attention of the world. In starting a new enterprise to-day, the promoters will advertise it in a more attractive manner than they would an old and established firm. So Christianity required credentials at the outset that were superfluous in later times, hence miracles were confined to the Apostolic age..... The Apostle Paul, in the thirteenth chapter of 1 Corinthians, stated that the power to work miracles would pass away from the Church, but that love might abide in it for ever."

Isaac Selby

### Saint. Hero. Missionary. Martyr.

"Dr. Parker once said in preaching: "And they say in Germany, this (Saul's conversion) is the result of an epileptic fit. Let us look at Saul before he went into the fit, snorting blasphemy and persecution. Together we will look at him in the fit, 'and Behold, he prayeth'. And now look at him when he has come out of the fit. Saint. Hero. Missionary. Martyr." Throwing up his hands, the Doctor shouted, "Fly on, thou mighty epilepsy."

B.T.I.

### The Great Divide

"Some years ago we journeyed through the majestic Canadian Rockies. At a certain point high up on one of the slopes, a little streamlet divided into two. One flowed westward, emptying itself into Pacific waters, while the other, going east would eventually pour itself into the Atlantic. At the side of the road were the words, "The Great Divide." Friend, have you brought the burden of your sins to Calvary? To do so means a passport to heaven; to refuse means eternal judgment. For all of us, that rugged Cross is the Great Divide."

R.M. Rae

### The Awful Ultimateness

"This is a crucial subject - this giving of a place for man's will to be exercised. Whatever gospel theme we may take up, we always find, in examining the whole of what the New Testament says about it, a place where the perfect provision made by God may be rejected by man, by the very creature for whom that provision has been made! "Ye will not come to me, that ye may have life," sorrowfully said He who came to give life. "Seeing ye thrust it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles," said Paul to the jealous Jews at Antioch of Pisida. It is, indeed, a theme to give us pause, the most awful and the most splendid fact in human life, that after man's ill-use of his freedom of will has brought ruin and shame, even God's power to save - the gospel - can be refused by him. Well might Phillips Brooks exclaim, "He came unto his own, and his own received him not;" these words are an assertion of the awful ultimateness of the power of free will in men."

Lancelot Oliver

Selected by Leonard Morgan

## BOLDNESS

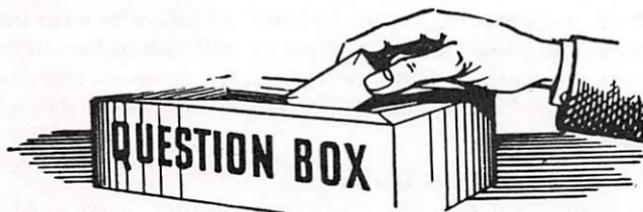
"Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John----- they took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus." Acts 4:13

Here we see a marked difference in the attitude of these apostles to that which prevailed at the time of the arrest of Jesus. Then, they were full of fear, and ran away; but now, they are doing all in their power to convince men and women that Jesus is alive and the Messiah who had been promised. The reason for this is that they have seen the risen Lord. In the assurance of His power over death they now go forth to tell the good news to all who will hear them. They are opposed by the rulers, imprisoned, beaten, and commanded not to teach any more in the Name of Jesus. They are not deterred, but rather rejoice that they are accounted worthy to bear shame for Jesus' sake.

Then acquainting the rest of the believers with the dealings of the rulers with them, they pray that with all boldness they may continue in their work of preaching.

If they who suffered bodily affliction could with boldness do the work of the Lord; how much more ought we to bear the superficial reproaches of apathy, scorn and ridicule. Let us remember that it was through their boldness they proved that they had been with Jesus, and that Jesus was working through them.

Tom Kemp, Hindley




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Conducted by  
Alf Marsden

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**"Should Christians become involved in the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, and if so, how deep should their involvement be?"**

The world is becoming polarised by political and social ideologies; the battle for people's minds was joined long ago, but it is now being intensified because of the accelerated threat to survival posed by two major evils, i.e. the production and deployment of weapons too horrible to contemplate, and the inequitable distribution of the world's resources resulting in the emaciation and ultimate destruction of deprived Third World peoples. In addition to these, if one takes into account the world recession which is resulting in unemployment, loss of dignity, despair, and diminished quality of life for millions of people throughout the world, then one can readily understand that the Christian is in the midst of many evils which in themselves must be anathema to him. But where does one start, and what are the principles which should govern the Christian's involvement in the organisations which are seeking to remedy those things which distress him so much?

It would seem reasonable to think that if all people were Christians then these problems would not exist, but unfortunately all people are *not* Christians and therein lies the problem. The spiritual Christian man says, "For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come"; the non-Christian man is earthbound and *his* prime concern is the preservation of those things which are of

the world, consequently, even though he may deplore the presence of weapons of mass destruction, he is nevertheless willing to accept their existence because of the so-called power to deter. Therefore, the problem is acute, and the Christian needs to clarify his thoughts and actions in accordance with his beliefs.

### The Non-retaliatory View

This view is almost two thousand years old but it is very unpopular. It is unpopular not because it has been tried and found to be wanting, but because it has *not been tried enough*. It was the Lord Himself who introduced this radical concept to people, "But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also" (Matt. 5:39). The Lord did not limit this to physical abuse only, but He also extended the idea to verbal abuse, "Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not" (1 Peter 2:23). Furthermore, He suggested that even though we were able to control our words and our actions, if we even *thought* retaliatory thoughts then we would be as guilty before God as if we had actually done the deeds. Such is the mind of the Christian's Lord and Master. So what ought to be the Christian's attitude to the subject under discussion?

So far as disarmament is concerned, the Christian should be a unilateralist. Not only did the Lord condemn the use of weapons for *offensive* purposes; He also condemned them for *defensive* purposes. When Peter took steps to defend the Lord in the Garden of Gethsemane, the Lord rebuked him saying, "Put up thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword" (Matt. 26:52). He then healed the man who had been the unfortunate recipient of Peter's impulsive action. Unilateral disarmament has never been tried so we have no certain knowledge that it will be effective; my personal view is that it will *never* be tried because of the pervasive fear which afflicts so many people when they think of themselves as defenceless. Paradoxically, many of the people who hold this view place themselves, or are placed, in situations which are potentially *more* dangerous to them; they do this almost daily and seem to be totally unconcerned about it.

The Lord *must* have known that the teaching of so radical a view would inevitably lead Him into personal danger; the Christian may think the same when he contemplates unilateralism, but is he ready to follow where the Lord leads?

### The Christian's Dilemma

The proposition which I mentioned earlier, that if all people were Christians then these problems would not exist, is not a strictly tenable one; the principles involved are closely related to problems associated with marriage. Ideally, spiritually, and theoretically, marriages between Christians should always be happy and successful ones; unfortunately, experience tells us that this is not always so. Similarly, Christians should never find themselves in situations where they are called upon to contravene the plain teaching of Christ; unfortunately, in the production and possible use of nuclear and other weapons, many do, and therein lies *their* dilemma and also the dilemma of those who are joined with them in the Body of Christ, the Church.

It is a well-known fact, that Christians who serve in the armed forces of nations who possess weapons of mass destruction may be called upon to deploy and use such weapons. They may argue that they are fulfilling the scriptural injunction to be subject to the powers that be, but whose is the *highest* authority,

God's or man's? Surely there can be only one answer to that from the Christian. I feel sure that many Christian servicemen (if that isn't a contradiction in terms) are agonising over the possibility that they may be called upon as part of their duty to unleash, or to assist in unleashing, the terrible weapons of mass destruction. Personally, if I felt that this duty were to devolve on me at any time, I would find it extremely difficult to sleep at nights.

Furthermore, I can well understand the dilemma of Christians who find it difficult to meet with their brethren who may have to obey orders which would result in the deaths of many people. Such Christians love their brethren, but they feel that they cannot under any circumstances condone what they might be called upon to do. They feel that their fellowship and worship might at the best be confused, and at the worst downright hypocritical. The dilemma experienced by Christians on both counts is very real and pressing, and demands prayerful thought and consideration.

### What about C.N.D.?

There are those who say, "Why all the fuss about nuclear weapons? It's just as wrong to kill *one* man as it is to kill thousands". This is perfectly true. Morally, killing is indefensible; to the Christian it is anathema. Practically, however, the results are vastly different. The mind shrinks from, and indeed cannot grasp, the horrible nightmare of nuclear bombardment; the atomising of people, the radiation from such explosions, the mutations of succeeding generations, the application of advanced technology serving only to reduce mankind to the level of base animals in order to survive. Is this what the Christian wants? Indeed, is this what *anybody* wants? If not, then why is there so much apathy, particularly from Christians?

The answer, I believe, so far as the Christian is concerned, lies in the idea that the first priority for the Christian is to preach the Gospel to people, and then when they are converted they will eschew war and anything associated with it. Unfortunately, this isn't always the case, as we have said, because many Christians are in the armed forces and are under the direct command of their military commanders, whose orders *must* be obeyed, especially in times of crisis or national emergency. So what should the Church be saying in order to resolve the dilemma?

First, it should be saying, loudly and clearly, that it is opposed to war in any shape or form. Some will say that this is inherent in the Gospel, but that does not exonerate us from saying it specifically.

Second, if Christians feel so strongly about this that they want to associate themselves with the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, well and good. However, it would be wrong to let this activity interfere in any way with commitment to Christ in the Church, and obviously Christians ought not to engage themselves in *any* activity which is unruly or unlawful.

Third, I believe that the Church should be teaching, more forcibly than it does, the non-participation of Christians in the armed forces. *Our* weapons are not carnal weapons, for as Paul says, "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places" (Eph. 6:12). It is Satan who induces into men of flesh and blood the sin which results in dark and evil forces being unleashed in the world; it is against Satan that the Christian wages *his* unceasing battle, and what a ~~daunting~~ *daunting* task *that* is.

Fourth, I would question the wisdom of Christians being employed in the production of nuclear weapons, and indeed all weapons of war. At this point I would also like to mention germ warfare which is just as horrible to contemplate as other kinds of warfare.

Well, I say 'let the voice of protest ring out'. Surely, the Gospel itself is a protest against sin, helplessness, hopelessness, despair, and man's inhumanity towards his fellow-men. All protest against sin and sinful aims, if it is sincere and lawful, shows to the world that we care.

(All questions please to Alf Marsden, 377 Billinge Road, Hayfield, Wigan, Lancs.)

## SCRIPTURE READINGS

FEBRUARY 1984

- 5—Zech. 4 Rev. 11:1-18  
 12—Micah 4 Rev. 11:19 & 12:1-17  
 19—Dan. 7:1-12 Rev. 13  
 26—Dan 7:13-28 Rev. 14

### THE APOSTLE'S MEASURING ROD.

John himself was given the task of measuring the temple of God. This could not have been the physical temple in Jerusalem because that great edifice had been destroyed many years earlier by the Romans in A.D. 70. What John must have measured therefore with the rod like unto the rod was the spiritual temple. Paul once told the saints at Corinth: "Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you" (1 Corinthians 3:16). And Peter also once revealed: "... You too, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 2:5).

It is no surprise that an Apostle did this measuring of the temple, the altar, and those who worship there. The building of God is still subject to the canon or rule of the Apostles i.e. to their inspired writings.

### The Two Witnesses

There has been a great deal of debate about these two witnesses. William Barclay, for example, suggests that

they are Moses and Elijah. But my suggestion is that they are the two great covenants of God - the Old Covenant and the New Covenant. We read: "These have power to shut heaven, so that no rain falls in the days of their prophecy; and they have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to strike the earth with all plagues, as often as they desire" ((11:6). Surely, it was the Word of God that achieved these things. (See 1 Kings 17:1 and Exodus 7:19).

The mentioning of the two olive trees and the two lampstands (verse 4) refers back to Zechariah 4:1-6. The two olive trees provided the oil for the lampstand which gave the light. That light still shines. It now comes from the Word of God fed by the Holy Spirit (Zechariah 4:6).

In this portion of scripture we read of forty-two months (11:2) and twelve hundred and sixty days (11:3). These are also found in 12:6 and 13:5. These periods are the same. Multiply forty-two months by the number of days in a month (thirty) and twelve hundred and sixty is the result. Another form of this is found in 12:14 - *time, times, and half a time.* (See Daniel 7:25 and 12:7). A time was a year. For example, Nebuchadnezzar was mad seven times, which is seven years (Daniel 4:16). Time equals one year, times equals two years, and half a time equals six months (forty-two months in all). God once gave Ezekiel the key for the interpretation of time in prophecy: "I have appointed you each day for a

year" (Ezekiel 4:6). So twelve hundred and sixty days is the equivalent of twelve hundred and sixty years. But what is this lengthy period? I would suggest the Dark Ages when the Church was in the wilderness (12:6 and 12:14).

John also talks of a period when the covenants or the Word of God would be killed by the beast and "their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city (Rome) which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified (afresh Hebrews 6:6). Then those from the peoples, tribes, tongues, and nations will see their dead bodies three and a half days (three and a half years), and not allow their dead bodies to be put into graves..." (11:8-9). Was their ever a time this happened to the Word of God? Yes, at the conclusion of the Dark Ages (532 A.D. - 1792 A.D.). 532 A.D. was when the first Universal Father (Pope) was appointed. 1792 A.D. was the date of the French Revolution. The French Revolution tried to kill off the Bible. An *Age of Reason* was inaugurated to take its place. It turned into a *Reign of Terror*. In the end the Bible survived. Its Author saw to that.

#### A Woman Clothed With The Sun

An important division in the book of Revelation is at the conclusion of verse 18 of chapter 11. In verse 19 we read: "The temple of God was opened in heaven..." Now we will find out about the trials and triumphs of the church of the Living God.

The woman mentioned in chapter 12 is a description of God's people. Very often in the scriptures a pure woman is symbolic of God's people in subjection. (This woman should be compared with the great whore of chapter 17. What a comparison!) She is clothed with the sun (gospel), and she has the moon (Judaism, the Old Covenant) at her feet, and on her head a garland of twelve stars (the Apostles). The child to

be delivered cannot be Jesus. The church did not produce Jesus. The child must represent an increase in the church (verses 5, 17 with 2:27 give proof of this). A great red dragon (a great bloody persecuting power) is ready to destroy the child at birth. This, of course, is Satan who cannot stand the growth of Jesus's kingdom. It's a war situation, similar to the one that was once in heaven itself. Note how Satan was overcome (verse 11) - by the blood of the Lamb (God's work), and by the word of their testimony (the Christian's work). Note too that God supports and protects His own (verse 14).

#### The Beast From The Sea

Daniel in one of his visions saw four great beasts come from the sea, each different from the other (Daniel 7). The first was like a lion (strength), the second was like a bear (crushing power), the third was like a leopard (swiftness), and the fourth beast was dreadful and terrible, exceedingly strong. It had huge iron teeth; it was devouring, breaking in pieces, trampling the residue with its feet. It was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns. These beasts represented, in turn, the Babylonian Empire, the Medo-Persian Empire, the Greek or Macedonian Empire, and the Roman Empire. (Read also Daniel 2). The beast that John saw here was that fourth kingdom - the Pagan Roman Empire. It had all the characteristics of the other empires combined - swiftness, crushing power and strength. It also had seven heads and ten horns. The seven heads represent the seven mountains of the city of Rome (17:9), and the ten horns represent ten kings or kingdoms that would arise (Daniel 7:24 and Revelation 17:12).

The Roman Empire was the greatest of empires. It was established by the maxim that *Might Makes Right*. It crushed all its foes. But there was one

kingdom it could not destroy, and that was the kingdom of God. In fact, the kingdom of God in the end destroyed it (Daniel 2:44). Despite ten major persecutions of the Christians under the Roman Emperors (13:4-7), the saints of Jesus could not be overcome. The victory belonged to the soldiers of the cross and not to the soldiers of the Caesars. The former showed that *Right Makes Might*.

### Another Beast from the Earth/The Mark of the Beast

The first beast (the Pagan Roman Empire) received a mortal wound, but its deadly wound was healed (13:3). It arose as another beast coming up out of the earth, and it had two horns like a lamb and spoke like a dragon (gentle and yet harsh). It exercised all the authority of the first beast (13:11-12). This second beast represents the Holy Roman Empire or Papal Rome. It is the equivalent of the little horn in Daniel (Daniel 7). History bears all this out. The Holy Roman Empire was but an extension of the Pagan Roman Empire.

The Holy Roman Empire had a tremendous influence in the world. Those who were subject to this politico-religious system are described as having a mark upon them. The mark was either in their right hand (a secret mark) or in their foreheads (an open mark). These marks must be symbolic. There is no record of literal brandings being carried out in that day. Who were marked? Those who bought and sold, and those who had the number of beast - 666. What is this number? It indicates the name of the beast. To identify the beast we must specify the Greek letters that total 666 (Remember, ancient Greek and Latin had letters for numbers). Some commentators detail the following:

L A T E I N O S  
30 1300 5 10 50 70 200 = 666

Who were the Latins? Those under the sway of the Papal power also called the

Latin power. Did the Papacy at one time claim jurisdiction over trade in this world? The answer is in the affirmative, and can be borne out by a study of the historical evidence.

### Chapter 14: A Chapter of Triumph

In this chapter there is the Triumph of the Redeemed (1-5); the Triumph of the Gospel (6-7), the Triumph over Babylon (8), the Triumph over Apostasy (9-12), the Triumph of the Faithful (13), and the Triumph over All Evil (14-20).

The "hundred and forty four thousand" we have already met in chapter 7. These were the first fruits of the Gospel-faithful Jews. The figure a hundred and forty four thousand is reached by multiplying the number of the tribes of the children of Israel by twelve thousand for each tribe.

The society in John's day was an agrarian society. Many would have understood therefore the comments on the two harvests.

Ian S. Davidson, Motherwell

## BELIEF : (17)

### The Obedience of Belief

IN our last three articles we spoke of the relationship of obedience to belief, godly sorrow and repentance. The Scriptures clearly show, as we have seen, that obedience *follows* these three factors in the process towards sanctification and salvation.

Paul would not have spoken about obedience *to* the faith (belief) if obedience had not been a consequence of belief. It makes nonsense of the Scriptures to say, as some do, that we need only believe in order to be saved.

### Belief is an Operation of the Mind

A little reflection will show any reasonably-minded person that belief is not an object of obedience. Rather, the opposite is true. Belief is *an operation of the mind* and is the willing

assent of the mind to facts based on reasonable evidence. On the other hand, obedience is *an operation of the will* leading to action, and arising out of belief.

In other words, belief is a process of thought which governs our actions. If our actions have been evil the acquisition of good thoughts will lead to reformation of conduct. The opposite is also tragically true: evil thought lead to evil behaviour.

What then is the obedience resulting from belief, godly sorrow and repentance and leading to forgiveness of sins, and so to a setting apart of the sinner through the agency of the Holy Spirit? What action does such obedience involve?

### The Gospel

In our last article we quoted the Scriptures relating to what has been called "The Great Commission" of our Lord. He said: "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved" (Mark 16:15-16).

### Vital Principles

From a study of the variants of the instructions Jesus gave in "The Great Commission" in Article No. 16, it is clear that all contain or imply the following vital principles for the salvation of the soul. *Belief* or acceptance of the great truth that Jesus is indeed the Son of God (John 8:24); that this, followed by godly sorrow for sin, leads to repentance (Matthew 9:13), involving as a natural consequence the desire on the part of the sinner to be rid of sins (Acts 2:37).

### A Way of Escape from Sin

God has met this desire by affording the contrite sinner a way of release from sins. This involves, on the sinner's part, a willingness to obey God's instructions for the forgiveness of his sins. And this willingness springs from the sinner's repentance or change of mind towards God.

### Obedience, Baptism, Sanctification and Salvation

The instructions God has given are clearly shown in the command of our Lord: that the repentant sinner should be baptised for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38). The Saviour, on his part, shed his precious blood to make this remission possible. The sinner, on being forgiven by God as a result of obedience to the instruction to be immersed in water, is thereby purified and set apart or sanctified (John 17:17-20; 1 Corinthians 6-11), and so put in the way of salvation - the straight and narrow way that leads to life eternal (Matthew 7:14; Luke 13:24-30; Romans 6:22).

### Exercises in Belief

Proverbs 8:8-9, 17:35-36; Jeremiah 7:23; Romans 10:16-17; Hebrews 5:9.

W. BROWN

(To be continued)

## CHRIST HAS NO HANDS BUT OUR HANDS

Christ has no hands but our hands

To do His work today;

He has no feet but our feet

To lead men on His way;

He has no tongue but our tongue

To tell men how He died;

He has no help but our help

To bring them to His side.

We are the only Bible

The careless world will read;

We are the sinner's gospel;

We are the scoffer's creed;

We are the Lord's last message,

Given in deed and word;

What if the type is crooked?

What if the print is blurred?

—Selected.

JUSTICE forbids us to use slander or libel. Charity goes still further; it orders us to defend absent persons against such slander or libel.

L' Etoile.

## WHAT IS IT?

God purposed it—Ephesians 3:11  
 Christ died for it—Ephesians 5:25  
 His blood purchased it—Acts 20:28  
 The saved are added to it—Acts 2:47  
 Are you part of it?

## NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

**Slamannan District, Scotland:** The Quarterly Mutual Benefit Meeting of the Slamannan District of Churches took place at the Community Hall, Brightons, on Saturday, 3rd December, 1983. The subject for discussion on this occasion was "Is there any scriptural authority for using leavened bread at the Lord's table". The speakers were Mark Plain (Snr.) from Tranent, and Leslie Purcell, from Motherwell. The Chairman was Joe Malcolm, from Dennyloanhead. The speakers brought the meeting immediately alive by taking opposite viewpoints and an hour's discussion, as usual, from the body of the hall followed. Reference was made to the appearance of the recent book, on the subject, "The Bread In The Lord's Supper" by brother Arnott, in Australia. It probably came as a surprise to some brethren that the use of unleavened bread in Britain (certainly in Scotland) is a fairly recent development and that the brethren in the early part of the Restoration Movement here, believed that leavened bread should be used. As usual the meeting was lively and interesting and many felt that the meeting closed at its most interesting stage. God willing, the next meeting will be at Tranent, on the 3rd March, when the subject will be "To the Christian what is the definition of 'Life' and 'Death'?" The speakers will be Harry McGinn, Dalmellington, and Hugh Davidson, Motherwell. Chairman James Sinclair (Snr.) Tranent.

Hugh Davidson. Sec.

**Zambia:** Today we saw a witchdoctor dance across the road followed by his entourage. He tried to put a curse on our vehicle but we kept on driving. However the gospel of Christ continues to be preached in Zambia. There are now 60 congregations in Northern Zambia and more, of course, across the border in Zaire. My wife, Angela, will be in the U.K. for a month (until 16th January, 1984) in connection with our son Ian who suffers from autism. She can be contacted at 18 College Hill, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands. Tel. No. 021 354 6906. Please pray for us as we pray for you. Chester Woodhall

## OBITUARY

**Hindley:** On Tuesday, November 22nd, at the age of seventy four years, our sister in Christ, Olive Wellings, died at home, after much suffering this year.

She was baptized into Christ, in January 1925, nearly 58 years ago.

The funeral service was held in the meeting house, on Monday the 28th of November.

Bro. John Morgan, officiated, and recounted the service that Olive and Edward had given, over a period of years for the cause of Christ, in this corner of God's vineyard.

Perhaps some of our brethren can remember sharing the hospitality that they gave at No 9 Arthur Street, during the wonderful times we had at our Bible Schools.

I personally remember with gratitude, the help given during those days.

Our sincere sympathy is extended to her devoted husband Edward, her sisters, relatives and friends who mourn her lost.

We pray that they may be sustained by the grace and love of our Heavenly Father.

Leonard Morgan

## EVANGELIST WANTED

The Slamannan District of Churches require an evangelist and all interested brethren should apply in writing to the District Secretary, Hugh Davidson, 21 Glen Lyon, St Leonards, East Kilbride, Scotland, GT4 2JJ.

## GETTING IT TOGETHER

THIS is the way the church looks to the preacher when he goes into the pulpit when there is sparse attendance

On the other hand this is the way it looks at a service when everybody is doing his bounden duty by worshipping God every Sunday in His Church. Of course it makes the ushers work harder, trying to find space to put late comers, but do you have any idea how it gives a great lift to the preacher? How his sermon gains new life and vigour? How people find new inspiration and meaning even though he is saying the very same things he would have said to the worth three gathered together to worship.

## AID TO INDIA

This will be of interest to the readers of the "Scripture Standard", who have contributed to the fund for assistance to our poorer brethren in India. Thanks to all those who have contributed and are contributing. Recently we have sent help to eight urgent cases needing help. We have decided to try and send a little to several appeals rather than a large sum to just one cause. We have been sending sums averaging £30 to requests for help in restoring damaged meeting-places, provision of Bibles, and gospel literature. Acknowledgements have been received in all cases, although one recipient had to buy rice to feed children with the money, because the price of rice has increased several times over. Recent Cyclones have been severe and some of the money has gone to buy blankets for homeless victims - many buildings and homes have been entirely swept away. Thanks again to all subscribers. Anyone wanting to help can send their contribution (large or very small) to me at 1/F Station Court, Haddington, East Lothian. Miss Ruth Nisbet.

THE only way to be rid of worry about things we have not done is to do them.

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