

# *The* **SCRIPTURE STANDARD**

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

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## **SOPHISTICATED CAVE-MEN**

Our vandals are getting younger and younger. Yesterday, three small boys were seen running away from a tower-block in Leeds after the horrific death of a 74-year-old woman about to enter the building with her shopping. Later, two nine-year-old boys were released by police, but a third will appear at Leeds City Youth Court today, charged with the manslaughter of Mrs. Edna Condie, by dropping a large piece of concrete on her from the top of the eleven-storey building. It would be nice to think that this is an isolated case but nearly every police department is finding that criminals are getting younger and younger. This summer of hot weather and light nights has led to unprecedented levels of vandalism involving young boys (and girls) in car theft for joy riding; in burglary and housebreaking; in pitched battles between gangs (involving stabbings) and in the setting-on-fire of schools, other public buildings and houses (sometimes with the inmates being burned to death). Many teachers say they can't retire soon enough, while others are off sick with stress and nervous breakdowns. It used to be that small children "should be seen and not heard" but nowadays many homes are ruled by the children: and they are certainly seen and heard. There was a time we might reprimand a small boy for throwing a toffee wrapper on the pavement, but not now: we know we would receive a mouthful of very unparliamentary language, and probably a kick on the leg. How could the country get into such a state, we ask?

Man needs to be controlled and if he can't (or won't) control himself, he has to be controlled by a source outwith himself, by laws and law enforcement officers. This has been from time immemorial but in Britain right now the laws are weak and law enforcement even weaker. Most criminals have an excellent chance of escaping detection, but, if caught will receive a very light sentence - even a few hours "community service". This situation is obvious to all, and rubs off on our youth: and is now rubbing off on schoolchildren (especially in schools where teachers are not allowed to retaliate against unruly pupils). The schoolchildren of today are the adults of tomorrow. What hope then, for the future? Can man, so sophisticated and advanced in technology, improve himself morally and socially? What hope is there for this? Indeed, what actual progress has man ever made?

### **HUMAN PROGRESS**

I suppose we all have our own ideas as to what constitutes human progress. Man has come a long way since the days of lurking around in caves, making flint arrow-heads and rubbing two sticks together to make fire. If we were to be asked what discovery or development we considered to have been the most telling in man's progress I suppose, we might all give differing replies. Some might think that space-travel has been man's

crowning achievement, while others might think that the discovery of electricity; or radio waves; X-rays; anaesthetics; the telephone; discovery of bacteria; combustion engine; steam power; etc. etc. has been responsible for man's best good. Some might suggest items closer to their hearts, i.e. the abolition of the outside toilet; coal miners might suggest "Pit Baths". In the middle-ages even royalty had a bath only two or three times a year. Truly up until this year of 1995 man has certainly 'pulled himself up by the bootstraps' in the realms of engineering, plumbing, architecture, medicine, agriculture and the general sciences.

However, if we were to strip away man's advances in technology and science we would find, I suggest, that **man, in himself, has made no progress at all.** *Man is still the same as he always was*, with his propensity to good and his tendency to evil - both just as strong as ever they were. We still have the forces of good and evil at work in the world. The servants of God are still vastly outnumbered by the angels of darkness. Man finds ready access to Universities and other places of learning but we still have, in the world, men quick to swell the ranks of the I.R.A. and enjoy the carnage of innocent little children out Christmas shopping. We still have the Mafia, the Red Brigade, the Ku Klux Klan and assorted groups of like ilk. On a larger scale we still have wars and oppressions in nearly every part of the globe to say nothing of the attempted genocide of entire races and nations. At the moment, the world stands back in horrified disbelief at the rape, slaughter, plunder and murder that's become part of daily life in Bosnia, and the latest twist in human progress: "Ethnic Cleansing". Human progress? We still have, in cities around the world, citizens who are scared to go out after dark, and we have people being 'mugged' in the streets, even in broad daylight. The prisons, in Britain at least, are all bulging at the seams. Things are such, in the world, that people of a nervous disposition should avoid watching even simple News Bulletins on TV.

#### SOLOMON'S VIEW

It would seem then, that any progress man has made has been largely of a *technical nature*, and that morally, and spiritually, man has made no true gains at all. Instead of making any true advance, man has simply been travelling in circles. A child on a rocking-horse may create plenty of activity but never ever gets anywhere. Similarly a child on a merry-go-round covers many miles but likewise goes nowhere. This, perhaps, describes man's furious activities over the centuries - much agonising and much debate but no noticeable improvement in character. This was true of mankind even in Solomon's day. In fact, in *the Book of Ecclesiastes*, Solomon tried, I suggest, with all his great resources of wisdom, to grapple with the problem of man's apparent inability to set his feet on higher ground. We notice that Solomon takes a rather pessimistic view of life in the *Ecclesiastes*, and we constantly encounter his exclamation of "**Vanity, vanity, all is vanity**". All activity seemed to be vain and pointless. There was a repetitiveness about man's daily, weekly and annual pursuits that resembled a going around in circles. In the opening verses of the book Solomon reminds us of the regularity with which one generation rises as another fades away. Even the sun sets out each day but returns again to where it began. The rivers run to the sea, evaporate and return again to the hills as rain, in a great cycle. Each generation of men are captive within their own environment and age, and have little remembrance or effect upon generations past or those yet to come. Solomon thus speculates upon what gives man satisfaction, what 'makes him tick' and how man *is likely to profit in any real sense*. He postulates upon the merits of riches against poverty; wisdom against folly; ease against honest toil. Solomon was in a unique position to comment upon these because he was, himself, fabulously rich and extremely wise. He enumerates the various roads in life a man might take and the consequences thereof. Indeed Solomon embarked upon some of those

roads himself; even the Epicurean pursuit of sensual pleasure. Man's capacity for such pleasure is insatiable, "For the eye is never satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing". Wisdom is preferable to foolishness but even with wisdom comes a proportionate measure of grief and anxiety - for only "ignorance is bliss". Perhaps, suggests Solomon, true satisfaction is to be found alone in honest toil, in the humble artisan who stands back to admire the work of his own hands. Certainly creative people seem always to be happy. However, at the end of life's day, muses Solomon, man goes to his long home, whether rich or poor, whether wise or foolish. The grave is a great leveller. Man must leave behind his riches, or his wisdom, or his skill, or his knowledge. Such is the dilemma facing thoughtful men. What road should they take through life? Should they seek fame, or riches, or wisdom, or a reputation or skill? Has the human animal power within himself to make true progress? **What are Solomon's conclusions? "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth . . . fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man".** (Ecc. 12:1-13).

### CAN MAN DIRECT HIS OWN STEPS?

Man has, of a long time, tried to control himself through Law and Order. Law, however, can but *define* sin and crime, it can in no wise reform the lawbreaker. Even the Mosaic Law had this inherent limitation. Few observe God's basic law, "To love God and to love our neighbours as ourselves". There is no shortage of legal prohibitions but neither is there any reduction in our crime waves. Notwithstanding dire warnings from Ecologists the pollution of the atmosphere and rivers goes unabated, as does the constant destruction of jungle rain-forests; as does the killing of animals (like whales and elephants) to the point of total extinction. *Human greed* takes scant regard of what will be left to future generations. Man can not *legislate* his own moral improvement? He can be changed only by some power well outwith himself. We must be changed - we must be 'born again'.

Neither will man be changed fundamentally by any **political initiative**, of whatever colour. Man's circumstances and living conditions might well be changed, but man will remain basically the same. **Revolution and social upheaval** have been resorted to in every century (and we had another bloodless coup only the other day in Nigeria) but the continual necessity for such drastic measures *merely proves* that man changes not. The Russian peasants were, perhaps, rescued from the cruel and indifferent Tsars by the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917, but they are, perhaps, presently subjected to just as real an oppression at the hands of those who killed the Tsars. A change of government is very often just a change of tyranny. Over the centuries endless millions have been slaughtered in the name of Social and Political Reform, and to what end? Think, too, of the millions who died only a few years ago because Hitler's Germany considered itself the 'Master Race' and attempted the genocide of not only the Jews but other cultures. The world will always need 'Freedom Fighters' because it regularly produces tyrants. Man is not aware that "The Truth" can make him free (John 8:32) and can make him "Free indeed".

Jeremiah, a long time ago, summed it all up for us when he said, "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps". (Jer. 10:23).

### CLEAN HANDS - PURIFIED HEART

2,000 years ago Jesus said, "Out of the heart proceed all evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness; all these things come from within and defile a man". (Mark 7:21). Here, in one comprehensive and succinct statement Jesus puts his finger on the spot. *The heart* of man is his stumbling block to any moral, or spiritual

progress. His heart must be changed, it must be renewed. The only physician who can accomplish this great renewal is the Great Physician, through the gospel, by His word, and by His Spirit. Such a change is not thrust upon us - man must take the initiative. James says that men (even Christians) must not only '*cleanse their hands*' but also '**purify their hearts**' (James 4:8). First man must be '**cut to the heart**' (as at Pentecost) by the realisation of his own wretchedness, and then he must '**obey from the heart**', that form of doctrine (the gospel) delivered unto him (by Christ's apostles) (Rom. 6:17). This is the only long term hope for sad humanity. Man must "**Trust in the Lord with all his heart, and lean not unto his own understanding**". "**Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me,**" was the prayer of the Psalmist and it must also be the earnest desire of all mankind before we can ever hope for a better world. Jesus brought revolution to the world (without bloodshed) and his doctrine has turned the world 'upside down' or perhaps 'right way up'. The best Social Reformers (indeed nearly all Social Reformers) have been prompted and motivated by Christian principles.

### CONCLUSION

In short, modern man, while making great inroads into scientific knowledge, is still as backward as the cave man in the matter of morality. And Jeremiah was right, of course, when he stated that "**it is not in man that walketh, to direct his steps**". Man can't help himself, and must rely on outside aid; from His Maker. Christ came into the world to give men "**the Truth**" and the "truth can make them free". The world's ills would be cured overnight if we adopted the golden rule: i.e. "**To love God and our neighbour as ourselves**". And not only to love our neighbours, but to love our enemies. Thus, the teachings of Christ are the world's only hope.

The state of vandalism amongst the very young is merely a question of the chickens coming home to roost. For years many children have been raised on a regular diet of TV violence and they, with society in general, have become quite brutalised and completely insensitive to human suffering. They have also suffered from a lack of meaningful religious instruction in school and an absence of "old fashioned" Sunday School. Society sows the wind and reaps the whirlwind.

We are inclined always to look at man's problems in a global context and think of progress in terms of large numbers, but Jesus spent much time in speaking to individuals, and before *the world* can improve *individuals* in the world must improve. The gospel is not aimed at groups, but at individuals. Jesus knows that if individuals improve, the world will improve. Even *congregations of the Lord's church* are only as good as the individual members. Thus, any reform, any improvement in the world at large, or in the church in particular, must begin with individuals: that is, with YOU and with me.

(P.S. Today's *Edinburgh Evening News* tells of a boy, only 5 years of age, who has had to be expelled from school, as quite ungovernable. His father, quite unabashed, says, "Sean's a great kid. He gets out of hand at times but that's not his fault". How true).

EDITOR.

## GLEANINGS

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

### ONE STEP ENOUGH FOR ME

**"When thou goest, thy steps shall not be straitened."** Proverbs 4:12.

The Hebrew of Proverbs 4:12 reads, "**As thou goest step by step, the way shall open up before thee.**"

**THE BIBLE SPEAKS**

THOU HAST ENLARGED MY STEPS UNDER ME . . . Psalm 18:36

THE STEPS OF A GOOD MAN ARE ORDERED BY THE LORD . . . Psalm 37:23

ORDER MY STEPS IN THY WORD . . . Psalm 119:133

MY FOOT HATH HELD HIS STEPS . . . Job 23:11

SEE MY WAYS, AND COUNT ALL MY STEPS . . . Job 31:4

THAT YE SHOULD FOLLOW HIS STEPS . . . 1 Peter 2:21

**SOMEONE HAS SAID**

Lead kindly light . . .

Keep thou my feet; I do not ask to see

The distant scene; one step enough for me.

A journey of a thousand miles begins with the first step.

Get busy . . . Keep busy . . . One task at a time.

"Our main business is not to see what lies dimly at a distance, but to do what lies clearly at hand." Thomas Carlyle.

John Ruskin had on his desk a simple piece of stone on which was carved one word:

TODAY.

I keep six honest serving-men

(They taught me all I knew):

Their names are What and Why and When

And How and Where and Who.

Rudyard Kipling.

An old Ohio farm saying: "If you think about all the corn you have to hoe, your back is broken before you start".

N.V.P.

One step I see before me; 'Tis all I need to see . . .

And sweetly through the silence comes His loving, "Follow Me!"

**ONE STEP AT A TIME**

Here is a bit of sage advice from one of my favourite philosophers, William James. "Be willing to have it so," he said. "Acceptance of what has happened is the first step to overcoming the consequence of any misfortune".

Dale Carnegie.

**STEP BY STEP**

God cannot lead us any way but step by step; for we can go but slowly. And so from day to day and month to month He reveals to us more clearly His purpose. How patiently God opens our spiritual eyes, until from seeing men like trees walking, we come to see all things clearly.

"O happy they who fear to take one single step alone;

But led by Him, will dare to tread the pathless depths unknown".

**TALES WORTH TELLING**

According to a very old story, there was once a Roman teenager who, after some practice with a weapon, complained that his sword was too short.

"In that case," said his father, "you must add a step to it".

I like that. It may be that in the battle of life you lack skill or money or influence, and imagine that because your sword is too short you cannot win a victory. But if you add a step to it - go forward bravely, get nearer to the problem, fight harder, or wait more patiently,

give your heart and mind and strength to the immediate task or problem, the chances are that, ill-equipped though you may seem, you will win through. It is not so much the length of your sword that counts - it is the determination of the fighter.

F.B.

Selected by Leonard Morgan.

## TEARS THAT STARTED A REVIVAL

In Nehemiah chapter 1 we have the account of how Nehemiah met one of his brethren from Judah and asked how things were there. What he heard started a revival in Nehemiah and eventually among his own brethren and the king of Persia.

What Nehemiah heard was that the people of Judah were poor and suffering. Their neighbours were hard on them and showed them no respect. The wall of Jerusalem had big gaps in it so that it really was no protection to its inhabitants. The temple stood no more; there wasn't even a foundation left to build on. This tells us somewhat of the spiritual climate there. When Nehemiah heard this, verse 3 says that he "**sat down and wept, and mourned certain days, and fasted, and prayed before the God of heaven**". All the man's devotion to his people was manifested in his grief as he heard the sad story. His true patriotism lay in his recognition of the relationship between his people and God and in his carrying the burden to God in prayer. There is something about when tears and prayers are joined together that gets the job done.

Nehemiah's tears are not because he is gazing upon the corpse-littered streets of a city that has been gutted by war. His tears were not the tears of a criminal who is being forcibly dragged to the scaffold to pay with his life for evil he had done. Nor were his the tears of a child that had been chastised by his father because he had disobeyed him. Nor were they the forced tears of a scene in a drama. Nehemiah's tears were because of *an apostasy of his people*. These tears started one of the greatest revivals of all time. It all started when Nehemiah "sat down and wept".

Look at the people Nehemiah wept for. They were the favoured of God. Their history was written on the golden pages of conquest. Their feet paced the basin of the Red Sea. Their armies watched fortified cities crumble to dust in their advance. Their song had been: "**Thy right hand, O Lord, is become glorious in power; thy might, O Lord, hath dashed in pieces the enemy**". Theirs was the tabernacle - holy place - covenant - oracles - promises. Now! Dry rot of apostasy had set in. A mighty nation had sinned - now she counted the wages (Rom. 6:23); but too late! This tragic account was like coals of fire in Nehemiah's heart. Here is where the story begins: Prayer that ends in power! Fasting that ends in feasting! Grief that ends in glory! This is the story of a revival that begins, where all must, in tears!

### POWER OF TEARS

James tells us that the fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much (James 5:16). When a righteous heart overflows in supplication, then all heaven gathers to attention. When trembling fingers drip with holy concern, then mercy and grace descend. Because of pure desire of an obedient heart, power and wisdom to meet every problem involved was given. Such was the prayer of Nehemiah. So must ever be or never be!

Have you ever thought of the relationship of great men of God and tears? David reigned during the golden age of Israel. The heathen were given to Israel for their inheritance. One ingredient seemed so necessarily a part of the mixture that David stresses repeatedly in his Psalms:

**"My tears have been my meat day and night". (Ps. 42:3).**

**"I water my couch with my tears". (Ps. 6:6).**

It was said of Jesus **"and when he was come near, he beheld the city (Jerusalem) and wept over it"** (Luke 19:41). The greatest evangelist of all discovered this secret.

**"Serving the Lord, with all lowliness of mind, and with tears, and with trials which befell me by the plots of the Jews". (Acts 20:19).**

**"I ceased not to warn everyone night and day with tears". (Acts 20:31).**

**"For many walk, of whom I told you often and not tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ". (Phil. 3:183).**

**"I wrote unto you with many tears" (2 Cor. 2:4).**

The tears of Paul melted the opposition and paved a blazing highway around the world.

God heard their voice weeping and saw their tears running down the cheeks of Israel and promised **". . . and they shall come again from the land of the enemy"** (Jer. 31:15,16). Then Jesus attended a feast in Simon's house and a sinful woman came in and washed the feet of Jesus with her tears and wiped them dry with her hair. When Jesus was criticised for allowing this known sinful woman to do this to him, he reminded Simon how he was the guest in his home and he hadn't even offered him water to wash his feet in, and said **". . . but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head"** (Luke 7:47, 50). Then in Mark 9 a father brought his epileptic boy to Jesus saying, **"With tears, I believe, help thou my unbelief"** (Mark 9:24). Jesus healed the boy.

#### SEAL OF SINCERITY

Everywhere people are crying, "Where are our converts? where are all those that have been baptized for the remission of sins? Where are all those that churches carry on their membership roll?" Let's answer with a question: "Where are the tears?" Dry-eyed Christianity lacks appeal. A conspicuous lack of tears betrays the fact that our message is all of the head and none of the heart. Nehemiah's tears supplemented to tell the story of God's faithfulness toward those that **"sow in tears"** (Ps 126:5, 6). Somehow there is in human tears a force that knocks at the very gates of heaven and pleads at the throne of God. No pious prayer or sermon can match tears. Tears bear a message straight from the heart of man to the heart of God, whether burning on cheeks of David confessing his sins, or scolding the palms of Peter who has denied the Lord.

Precious to the Father is that river whose fountainhead is the broken heart of a weeping saint. It is a tide that sweeps before it the faithful in setting up the gates, rebuilding the walls, establishing that righteousness which exalts the nation. Innumerable lips have made request, but there is that in tears which demands of God an answer. We need to let the gospel glitter anew against the background of sincerity. Remember the precious promise: **"I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears, behold, I will heal thee"** (2 Kings 20:5; Isa. 38:5).

K. Marshall.

## THE "GIFT" OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Over the last 21 years I have looked at and studied this subject from time to time, and each time I find that I am nearer to REALLY knowing what it is and what it means and how it was and is applied; both at the time it was first mentioned, and today.

At this time I am indebted to Brother William Woodson for his expounding of the following principle which he applied to "the doctrine of Christ" in an article in the April 1991 issue of *The Scripture Sword* in which he said: "Could it be that the 'doctrine of

Christ, here - (2nd John 9), and elsewhere in the New Testament, is of such nature that Christ is both the centre and substance of the instruction given in the doctrine, and *at the same time and equally* is the one who revealed it to his apostles and prophets, and thereby its author?"

He further concludes with this thought - "It is concluded that the 'doctrine of Christ' in 2nd John 9 refers to the truth of God given by the revelation of Christ and centred in the divine nature of Christ. There is no basis to separate one of these primary aspects of the gospel from the other.

It appears to me that *this same principle* can be equally applied to the person of the Holy Spirit as referred to in Acts 2:38 where Peter says **"and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit"**.

Using this principle, we see the Holy Spirit as being both the substance and the centre of the gift and, at the same time equally, the gift is the message received and obeyed.

Without obeying the message of the Holy Spirit (delivered by him through the use of Peter in the first instance in Acts 2:38 and subsequently many other people) no one can or will receive the "gift of the Holy Spirit," and in rejecting the message one cannot benefit by it and receive the forgiveness of sins and eternal life promised by the Holy Spirit.

To separate one from the other leads to insurmountable difficulties; for if we say that upon obeying, we receive only the person of the Holy Spirit and no other thing, then surely the effect of the message itself is left out, and on the other hand if we conclude that upon obeying the message all we receive is the remission of sins and eternal life, then where would the Holy Spirit be in the equation?

The key to understanding this is held in three passages of Scripture: the first being John 14:17: **"The spirit of truth. The world cannot accept Him because it neither sees him nor knows Him for He lives with you and will be in you."** and John 16:13-15 and John 17:20. We know from the entire context that these passages are specifically directed to the eleven apostles that were present. However, subsequent passages clearly link this idea of the Holy Spirit "dwelling" or "living" in *all believers* who have obeyed and accepted the message. The expansion of this thought and the effect of it upon those in whom the Holy Spirit dwells, is revealed and confirmed in Gal. 5:22-25 the concluding verse of which says: **"Since we live by the Spirit let us keep in step with the Spirit"**.

The obedience to the message first delivered by the Holy Spirit brings the promised eternal life found in Jesus Christ through his blood and produces all of his characteristics referred to as **"the fruit of the Spirit"** in verses 22 and 23; (the result of our receiving "the gift of the Holy Spirit" in the full and complete sense of it's meaning). This concept does not violate the teaching that we can **"fall away"** for the Holy Spirit can be rejected and overcome by the continuing exercise of our own free will and a return to the worldly ways that preceded our accepting the gift.

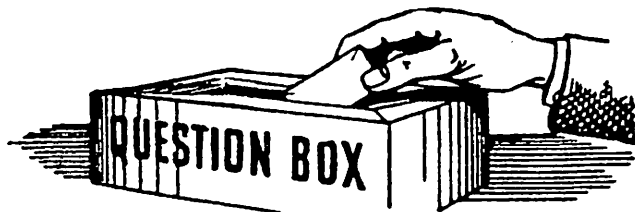
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## ONLY SIX!

It is told that a Sunday school teacher was once lamenting to C.H. Spurgeon about the smallness of her class. Spurgeon asked her how many scholars she had. "Six" was the reply. "My dear", Spurgeon replied, "Enough for you to be responsible for in the day of judgement."






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Conducted by  
Alf Marsden

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"In Isaiah 35:8 we read, "And the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein." Who are the 'wayfaring men'?"

#### THE WAYFARING MEN

The 'wayfarer' usually travels from place to place, invariably by foot. I suppose in these days we might refer to such an one as a tramp, although there is a class of 'traveller' today who is motorised, and takes his home with him wherever he goes.

Perhaps the nature of the 'wayfaring man' is made a little clearer to us in Jer. 9:2. In this part of the scripture, the prophet is bewailing the many sins of his people, and he says, "Oh that I had in the wilderness a lodging place of wayfaring men; that I might leave my people, and go from them: for they be all adulterers, an assembly of treacherous men". Here we learn that such men 'left the people', and had a lodging place in the wilderness. (Sometimes we say that a person is in 'the wilderness' if he is out of the mainstream activity of the people he usually associates with).

Later in the same prophecy, at 14:1-8, Jeremiah prays to God concerning the grievous famine which has stricken the land. In v8 he prays, "**O the hope of Israel, the Saviour thereof in time of trouble, why shouldest thou be as a stranger in the land, and as a wayfaring man that turneth aside to tarry for a night**"? The plain teaching here is that Jeremiah expected that God would be with them all the time, particularly in times of trouble.

There are two ways in which we can miss the presence of God. One is when we withdraw from Him; the other is when He withdraws from us. If he withdraws from us, this means that we have initially withdrawn from Him, because it is not in His nature to leave His children desolate. If we read on into Jer. 14, we shall see that the people chose to follow the teaching and prophecies of false prophets. If we want to keep the presence of God with us, then we must ensure that we, in this so-called sophisticated age, are not drawn from Him by following false teachers, of which there are many.

There is one other thing to notice relative to the question. Isaiah does **not** say that all wayfaring men are fools. What he does say is: "And the wayfaring men **though** fools". We sometimes get the impression that because wayfaring men choose to travel, that they are extremely foolish in not settling down somewhere. We may be right in this thought, and possibly there is a lesson to be learned here.

#### THE ITINERANT CHRISTIAN

Many of us have been, and still are, itinerant preachers. That means that we travel about from place to place preaching the teaching. Over the years this seems to have gained general acceptance in the Church. There is, however, a danger in this. Whether or not we are itinerant preachers, we are first and foremost, Christians, and generally we belong to some assembly. The danger is that we can give so many preaching appointments away from our parent assembly that any effectiveness we may have is lost to that assembly. We may believe that we have a responsibility to preach to as many people as possible in different localities, but we must never forget that we have also a responsibility to our parent

assembly.

This situation may be compounded by those Christians who are not preachers. some find great pleasure - especially if there are a number of churches within a short distance of each other - in meeting at such churches to the detriment of their own assembly. You cannot integrate well with a group from which you are continually absent. I have always been a firm believer in working from where you are. I don't know of any assembly in the British Isles which is not surrounded by sinners.

#### THE INERRANT WAY

In 'the way' prophesied by Isaiah, it is said that, "**the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein**". I think we can take this to mean that the traveller through life, even though he may be a fool, should not miss the way that Isaiah is speaking of.

When we look around the world today we have to wonder if this is so. There are many millions of people, travelling through life, who seem to have missed the way completely. According to our understanding of the passage in Isaiah they would seem to be more culpable than even fools. This is hardly surprising because God gives a warning, "**There is a way which seemeth right unto man, but the end thereof are the ways of death**". (Prov. 14:12).

How many times, when we have been travelling, have we seemed to miss the way. We're alright as long as we stay on the highway, but at times we have the inclination to travel the byways, and it is then that we can quite easily get lost. We travel the byways because it is pleasanter to do so; it gives us more pleasure. The pleasure can, however, turn to despair when we realise that we are lost. We then say to ourselves, "I wish I had kept on the way that I know best".

#### THE KINGDOM HIGHWAY

"Remember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old. Behold I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert". (Isa. 43:18, 19). This prophecy of a spiritual highway confirms the prophecy in ch. 35. There will be a new 'highway' and a 'way', and the whole of ch. 35 is a prophecy of the flourishing of the Kingdom of Christ; the spiritual Kingdom which was to be. You will remember that Jesus said of himself, "**I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me**". (John 14:6). The Kingdom prophetically represents the Church: the 'Way' is the Lord Christ Himself.

It is this spiritual highway, this kingdom highway, from which we should not err. Once having committed ourselves to 'the Way', we should be foolish indeed if we eventually missed the way. The Lord Himself is our guide. He knows the way because **He is 'The Way'**. We have seen, of course, that we can deviate from the highway, but never forget that there are countless thousands of fellow-travellers, and it is their responsibility to guide wayward souls back onto the highway. Later in his prophecy Isaiah says, "**Go through, go through the gates; prepare ye the way of the people; cast up, cast up the highway; gather out the stones; lift up a standard for the people . . . say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy salvation cometh; behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him. And they shall call them, the holy people, the redeemed of the Lord**". (Isa. 62:9-12).

In a sense, members of the Lord's Body are like the '*wayfaring men*'. We must always be travelling on; ever onward to the prize that is set before us. We dare not spend too long in one place, indeed, there is no reason for us to do so. The Hebrew Writer puts it quite well, "**Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach. For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come**". (Heb. 13:13, 14). Let us travel to

the Master, where He is.

I am glad the questioner sent this question. In my early days in the Church I heard many fine sermons based on Isaiah ch. 35, but in recent years I haven't heard many. Perhaps we have lost sight of the fact that we are travelling the spiritual Highway; perhaps we have lost the vision of the heavenly Jerusalem. **"And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The Way of Holiness"**. Praise be to God that many of us have found 'the Way'. Let us not be foolish enough to lose it.

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

## GODLINESS (A Word-study)

The use of the word "GODLINESS" in the authorised version N.T.

2 Cor. 7:9-11 "Godly sorrow" - "sorrow according to God".

"Godliness" is a strange English word. Does it mean godly or godlikeness, that is being like God?

Godliness is from Greek words they are derived from the verb *sebomai*. *Sebomai* is one of the two words most often translated in worship. The other, *proskunro*, stresses the outward action of worship, whereas *sebomai* refers to the inner feeling of awe in worship. So godliness has to do with our being overcome with awe.

The word godliness in I Timothy 2:10 means to be *in awe of God*. This is the only occurrence of *theosebia* in the New Testament, (theos, God + *sebeia*, being in awe of).

I Timothy 2:9 **"In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with braided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array";** 10 **"But (which becomes women professing *godliness*) with good works"**.

It is saying that women who claim to be in awe of God should dress themselves with good works, rather than dressing to impress.

In all other instances godliness is from *eusebeia* (eu well + *sebeia*), meaning being deeply in awe, or being overcome by awe or piety.

In Acts 2:12 *eusebeia* is translated "holiness":-

Acts 2:12 **". . . Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? Or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power *holiness* we had made this man to walk?"**

Peter was explaining that it was not their *piety* that had enabled the man to walk.

In all other places *eusebeia* is consistently translated godliness.

EXAMPLES:

I Timothy 3:16 - **"And without controversy great is the mystery of *godliness*: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory"**.

Does it not rivet you with overwhelming awe that the Almighty should make Himself known to mankind in the flesh?

Being driven by awe for God is totally advantageous:

I Timothy 4:8 - **"For bodily exercise profits little: but *godliness* is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come"**.

Anyone disputing this has a concealed eye head:

I Timothy 4:8 - **"If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, *even* the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to *godliness*; He is proud, knowing nothing . . ."**

How could anyone even begin to think that man's acquisitiveness is an indicator of his

depth of awe for God?

1 Timothy 6:5 - "**Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself**".

You can't beat being content with what you have and having a life motivated by an overcoming awe for God:

1 Timothy 6:6 - "**But godliness with contentment is great gain**".

The end is coming so we must sit up and take notice now!

2 Peter 3:11 - "**Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness**".

This necessitates getting to know the Lord more and more. All the information on this is in the Bible:

2 Peter 1:3 - "**According as His divine power has given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him that has called us to glory and virtue**".

Allan Ashurst  
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## SCRIPTURE READINGS

Nov. 5	Isaiah 5	John 12:37-50
Nov. 12	Psalms 41	John 13:1-20
Nov. 19	Job 19	John 13:21-38
Nov. 26	Exodus 33:7-23	John 14

### THE JEWS CONTINUE IN THEIR UNBELIEF

Jesus had performed numerous miracles and yet there were still many who did not believe in Him (12:37). John quotes the prophet Isaiah, who had foreseen the spiritual blindness all those years ago (12:38-41). These Jews in Jesus' day must have read Isaiah's words countless times, never thinking they applied to them. There is none so blind as he who will not see!

We read: "**Yet at the same time many even among the leaders believed in Him. But because of the Pharisees they would not confess their faith for fear they would be put out of the synagogue; for they loved the praise from men more than the praise from God**" (12:42-43, N.I.V.). What did the apostle Peter once say? "**We ought to obey God rather than men**" (Acts 5:29). The contrast is clear. I am also reminded of other words of Jesus: "**Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men,**

**him will I confess also before my Father who is in heaven.**" (Matthew 10:32).

### JESUS WASHES HIS DISCIPLES' FEET

One commentator has written: "Due to the terrain over which they travelled, and because men wore sandals or walked barefoot, it had long been a custom to set a basin of water before a guest that he might bathe his feet. Eventually this act was performed by a servant, or slave, of the household, who washed the feet of the visitor and dried them with a towel which he had girded himself. In view of this, it came to pass that when a host wished to demonstrate special honour to a guest, he personally performed the task, thus relegating himself to the role of a menial in kneeling before the guest". I believe that this act was one of great humility on Jesus' part.

We read: "**If then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet: you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you.**" (13:14-15). Is this a commandment binding on disciples today? Personally, I think not. I see the washing of the saints' feet, not as a religious ordinance, nor an act of social worship, but as a good work

that could still be carried out today by saints in some parts of the world, say, for example, Africa. In describing the character of those widows who were to be supported by the congregation, Paul wrote: ". . . if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints' feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work." (I Timothy 5:10). Surely, had the washing of the saints' feet been a religious or a social ordinance, it would have been impossible for her to have been in a congregation and not to have joined in it. He might well have said: "If she had been baptised, if she had eaten the supper", as to have said, "if she had washed the saints' feet," had it been a religious institution. Alexander Campbell has written: "Acts of worship are not called in the scriptures good works; nor good works, acts of worship. Prayer, praise, immersion, the Lord's supper, are nowhere called good works. These are acts of worship. When an assembly comes together to worship God, it is preposterous to make the washing the saints' feet part of the worship, or a religious observance of the day. It is a superstition and not a religion - it is converting a good work into a religious observance".

#### **JESUS PREDICTS HIS BETRAYAL AND PETER'S DENIAL**

Jesus foreknew His betrayal by Judas. He also foresaw the denial by Peter. I would point out that there is all the difference in the world between foreknowledge and foreordination. Jesus did not make these events happen. They were not planned by the Almighty. God had planned the coming of His Son into the world. For example, we read: "Forasmuch as you know that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conduct received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but

was manifest in these last times for you . . ." (I Peter 1:18-20). The betrayal and the denial were all of man's doing, Both Judas and Peter realised this later on - unto different ends.

#### **JESUS THE WAY TO THE FATHER**

In response to Thomas, Jesus said: "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life: no man comes unto the Father, but by Me" (14:6). As someone once said: "Christianity is not just a way of life; rather it is Life in the Way, who is a person, Christ Jesus". Jesus clearly thought during His ministry that there are but two ways for men and women. "Enter you in at the strait gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and many there be who go in thereat: because strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leads unto life, and few there be that find it." (Matthew 7:13-14). It is evident from His words that no one is going to stumble into the narrow way by accident, because it is not to be found. I think this is what Isaiah referred to when he wrote: "And a highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein. No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there: but the redeemed shall walk there. . ." (35:8-9).

It is interesting to note that the early disciples were known as "the people of the Way" (Acts 9:2; 19:9; 19:23; 22:4; 24:14; 24:22). I think the word "way" should have been capitalised on each occasion because it refers to the Lord Himself who is the Way.

#### **JESUS PROMISES THE HOLY SPIRIT**

Jesus said to His apostles: "And I will pray the Father and He shall give you another Comforter that He may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it sees Him not, neither knows

Him; but you know Him; for He dwells with you and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless I will come to you . . . But the Comforter, who is the Holy Spirit, in whom the Father will send in my name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." (14:16-18; 26). I like the word "comfortless". It is the Greek word *orphanos*, hence our English word orphan. God did not leave us orphans by giving us a book, but by giving us a person, the Holy Spirit. I also like the word "Comforter". In the Greek, it is *Paraclete*, which means "one called to the side of another". It expresses the purpose for which the Spirit comes. He takes our part and stays with us to help.

I know that there are some statements in John 14 limited to the apostles. Carl Ketcherside has written: "But we must never forget that the apostles were also disciples, and the promise was made to them in both capacities. Whatever the Spirit was to do for them in the apostolic office was limited to them as ambassadors and envoys. But whatever was done for them as followers of Jesus, as His disciples, belongs to all of us until He returns at the end of the age". Without the Spirit I am dead. With Him I am alive to God and I need Him every step of the way, every minute of the day.

For the Spirit to be sent, Jesus had to return to the Father. In Acts chapter 1 we read: "For John truly baptised with water; but you shall be baptised with the Holy Spirit not many days hence". (1:5). These words were fulfilled in Acts 2. "And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance". (verse 4). Later Peter told the crowd: "Repent and be baptised every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit". (2:38). What a gift!

Ian S. Davidson  
Motherwell.

### TEST YOUR BIBLICAL KNOWLEDGE

1. Who was Obed's grandson?
2. What was Joseph's first dream about?
3. In which city was king Xerxes' royal throne?
4. Whose names are written on the twelve gates of the new Jerusalem?
5. In the parable of the Good Samaritan, who first ignored the injured man?
6. Who deserted Paul because of his love of the world?
7. Who was John Mark's cousin?
8. Where did Aaron die?
9. Name the two wives of Mahon and Killion?
10. How many sheep did Job have at the beginning of his story?

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### WASTE

Waste of Muscle, waste of Brain,  
Waste of Patience, waste of Pain,  
Waste of Manhood, waste of Health,  
Waste of Beauty, waste of Wealth,  
Waste of Blood, and waste of Tears,  
Waste of youth's most precious years,  
Waste of ways the Saints have trod,  
Waste of Glory, waste of God. -  
WAR!

G. A. Studdert Kennedy.

## NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

**Slamannan District:** The Quarterly Mutual Benefit Meeting of the District took place on Saturday 2nd September, at Motherwell Meetingplace when the subject discussed was *Who are our Brethren in Christ?* The speakers were Bill Cook, Dunfermline, and Jimmy Grant, Wallacestone. The chairman was Joe Malcolm, Dennyloanhead. As always a great deal came out of the subject and the hour-long discussion period was well utilised. God willing, the next meeting

will be on 2nd December, 1995, at Tranent when the subject will be *How do we bear fruit as Christians* (John 15:8). *Furthermore how do we bear fruit, thus proving our discipleship.* Again we thank the good sisters of Motherwell for the excellent refreshments.

Harry McGinn (Sec.)

## OBITUARY

**HINDLEY:** We record the passing of our dear Brother James Catterall on 19th May 1995. It is recorded in the book of Genesis at the death of Abraham, "**Altogether Abraham lived a hundred and seventy years. Then Abraham breathed his last and died at a good old age, an old man and full of years; and he was gathered to his people**". Our Brother Jim lived to the ripe old age of 97 years having lived life to the full. During the last few years he struggled with sight and hearing loss and all the weakness of old age.

His working life was spent in the mining industry, he worked his way up to section deputy and was involved in safety, training and first aid work.

Our Brother was blessed with two good Christian wives, Lily, and Mary, and a son Jess and three grandchildren and great grandchildren of whom he was most proud. But our brother's great passion was the Church; from an early age I can remember our brother speaking, teaching, and taking part in every aspect of worship. His role in the Church was that of treasurer and he also held the position of deacon. When I read Psalm 122 I will always think of Brother Jim, "I was glad when they said to me, let us go into the house of the Lord".

I was told that he was up at 6.30 waiting for his lift to the Breaking of Bread. He lived from Sunday to Sunday, we all knew that it just took too much effort for him to come, **BUT HE DID.** Up to his last visit, he always gave out two hymns plus singing the chorus "Count your blessings".

Every speaker, whether good or bad,

would be given two sweets (barley sugars). We nearly all hated barley sugars, so after a word in the right ear we got chocolate limes or eclairs. Fond memories indeed.

We will treasure his memory, his seat will be empty and he will be missed. As it was said of Abraham "He was gathered to his people". We certainly have this hope for Brother Jim. He now awaits the resurrection morn when we all will meet the Lord in the air. The writer officiated at the funeral on the 24th May, 1995.

John Morgan.

**BEULAH ROAD, Kirkby-in-Ashfield:**

It is with deep sadness that we have to report the sudden and unexpected passing of our Brother Clifford Morley on August 29th at the age of 76 years. Clifford had been troubled by asthma for some time but he was not considered to be seriously ill when he was admitted to hospital for a short stay; it was a great shock to his wife Alice and indeed to all of us when he passed away quite suddenly.

Cliff was a faithful Christian, having been immersed into Christ over 47 years ago. He was a man of integrity, reliable in his work for the Church for which he acted as deacon prior to his death and was a man much loved by us all. We commiserate with his wife Alice and the family, and commend all to the love and grace of our heavenly Father in their sorrow.

The services, both at the chapel and afterwards at the crematorium, were well supported by brethren and friends, the writer conducting the services.

Tom Woodhouse (Sec.)

## COMING EVENTS

### ANNIVERSARY MEETING

Kentish Town, London

Our 124th Anniversary Meeting

on 7th October, 1995

at 3 p.m. & 6 p.m.

speaker is Brownlee Reeves.

**ANNUAL SOCIAL**

**Newtongrange**

Saturday, 7th October, 1995 at 4 p.m.

Speakers: Graeme Pearson, Dunfermline.

Mark Plain, Tranent.

We look forward to a rich time of fellowship with the various congregations.

Joe Currie, Sec./Treas.

**EDITOR'S CHANGE OF ADDRESS**

From 87 Main Street, Pathhead,  
Midlothian

to

26 Gavin Street, Motherwell,  
Lanarkshire. ML1 2RJ  
Tel. (01698) 252694

May I take this opportunity to apologise to all those who may have written to me and not had a reply. I regret that I cannot keep up with all the written matter that requires attention. Ed.

caring concern that brethren in the church continually share with one another. There are so many examples, such as the brother in Takoradi who is receiving hospital treatment for a severe illness, and the widow in Nobewam who has the practical love shown to her by the church there.

We very much appreciate both the donations from brethren which enables this work to continue, and our Ghanaian brethren who successfully strive to serve the Lord. We see the result when brethren everywhere work together for the Lord's Church and it is most encouraging. Galatians 6:9.

We acknowledge with thanks the £50 received from I.B.M.

Any one wishing to assist in this particular case please contact Graeme Pearson, 13 Fairways, Dunfermline, Fife. KY12 0DU. Tel.01388 728624. Cheques should be made out to "Graeme Pearson Ghana Appeal".

**GHANA APPEAL**

It is just over six years since the Ghana Appeal began and the results have begun and have been beyond our most optimistic expectations. New church buildings have, and are, being constructed, bibles and study material have been received, the Gospel is being successfully preached and the Lord's Church is growing considerably. What greater joy could anything bring us.

God is love (I John 4:8) and his children have that same love for one another (John 13:34; 15:11; I John 3:17,18). We see this in

- 1. King David (Ruth 4:17).
- 2. Sheaves (Genesis 37:7).
- 3. City of Susa (Esther 1:2).
- 4. The 12 tribes of Israel (Rev. 21:12).
- 5. The priest (Luke 10:31).
- 6. Demas (2 Timothy 4:10).
- 7. Barnabas (Colossians 4:10).
- 8. Moserah (Deuteronomy 10:6).
- 9. Orpah and Ruth (Ruth 1:4).
- 10. Seven thousand (Job 1:3).

**ANSWERS**

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