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The

SCRIPTURE STANDARD

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

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The Blackburn Conference.

FOR five long seconds it seemed possible that the Blackburn Conference might end without the singing of "Blest be the tie," then as if to make good the delay, two brethren led the company of two hundred in the singing of that hymn which so exactly expresses our feelings as we prepare to separate after these feasts of spiritual refreshment.

So ended an inspiring gathering which commenced at 1.30 p.m. under the chairmanship of Bro. W. Steele (Tranent) when a representative gathering of 150 brethren heard and discussed reports of the work which is being done in several spheres of Christian activity.

After the singing of a hymn, the Chairman led the Conference in prayer, Bro. J. Pritt extended a welcome to the Conference on behalf of the Blackburn Church, Bro. Alec Allan (Blackburn) read Romans xii., and the Chairman welcomed Bro. Glenn L. Wallace, of Abilene, Texas.

In his report to the Conference Bro. A. Hood, Conference Secretary, referred appreciatively to the work of Brethren W. Crosthwaite, David Dougall, and Andrew Gardiner, Junr. He said that it was proposed that two young brethren—Alec Allan, of Blackburn, and Colin Lewington, of Wisbech—should have a period of training with Bro. Crosthwaite.

Bro. R. B. Scott's Report of a special meeting convened by the Conference Committee and attended by members of that committee and brethren from the Churches employing full-time evangelists was read by Bro. Len Channing. He reported a full and frank discussion resulting in a resolution calling for the closest harmony amongst those who desire co-operative action for evangelistic purposes. The meeting had shown a remarkable and gratifying unity of purpose amongst the brethren taking part.

The Financial Statement presented by Bro. R. McDonald (Dewsbury) showed an income of £288 5s. against an expenditure of £439 19s. 4d., with a balance in hand of £168 3s. 9d. Bro. McDonald reported that the balance in hand was the lowest for a very long time.

The Conference then heard reports from the evangelists. Bro. W. Crosthwaite's report was read by Bro. A. Hood, in the unavoidable absence of Bro. Crosthwaite. The evangelists reporting in person were Brethren Andrew Gardiner, Junr., A. E. Winstanley, D. Dougall, T. Kemp, F. Worgan, and L. Channing. These brethren brought encouraging news of work done and results achieved in spite of considerable difficulty and opposition.

The *Scripture Standard* Report was read for Bro. Frith, who was unable to be present, and showed that after receipts amounting to £240 3s. 1d. and payments amounting to £230 11s. 4d. he had a balance in hand of £85 8s. 10½d.

The Report on the work in Nyasaland was presented by Bro. Steele and showed receipts of £109 10s., payments of £113 13s. 5½d., and a balance in hand of £122 17s. 0½d. In addition £45 2s. 10d. had been received towards the cost of sending Bibles to Nyasaland.

Bro. Carlton Melling reported on behalf of the three brethren— Bro. F. C. Day, Bro. A. L. Frith, and himself—who had been invited by the last conference to explore the possibilities of compiling and publishing a new hymn-book. In the course of an interesting report he said that a general outline had been prepared and a preliminary list of hymns compiled. Bro. Melling repeated the invitation to brethren to submit hymns which they thought were suitable for inclusion. He and his colleagues recommended that a Children's Hymn Book be compiled; and also a Tune Book for use with the proposed Church Hymnary, or, if thought desirable, a combined Words and Music Edition. This report aroused considerable interest, and was accepted with thanks.

Brethren R. McDonald and H. Wilson (Blackburn), the retiring members, were re-elected to the Conference Committee.

After considerable discussion, it was decided that henceforth two united meetings should be held every year (D.V.), the afternoon session of one only being devoted to business. This decision is to take effect forthwith and the next conference, which is to be held on 10th September next, will devote both sessions to spiritual matters.

Before the afternoon session closed two notices of motion were tabled proposing further reductions in the amount of conference time to be devoted to the giving of reports.

This brought the business of the Conference to a close and the brethren adjourned to the next room where an excellent tea was laid.

Bro. Len Channing presided over the evening meeting, when Bro. D. Dougall delivered a message of encouragement based upon the account of the Fall of Jericho, Bro. Frank Worgan challenged the brethren to more consecrated witness in a message on "The Gospel According to Paul," and (Bro. Gardiner, having very graciously made way for him), Bro. Glenn L. Wallace asked and answered the question "What is God like?"

A very fine atmosphere of fellowship pervaded the gatherings, many friendships were renewed and new ones formed.

The Blackburn Brethren had put much careful planning and hard work into the preparations and the Blackburn sisters fed us well. We thank our Heavenly Father who so richly blessed their efforts in giving us this happy and profitable time of fellowship.

T. McDONALD.

Bro. Crosthwaite's Report.

BY the grace of God I am enabled to present this report of work attempted during the past six months.

Personal Training

Immediately after last Conference, Bro. Ernest Cole came to Ulverston, and remained for three months. He came at his own charges. He worked hard, and we covered a considerable amount of ground in our studies. During his stay in Ulverston, he helped the Church much by preaching and teaching. At the end of the three months he went out as a free lance.

Bro. William Hurcombe came to Ulverston on February 21st, 1949, and is still with us. He is an earnest and keen student. He is rendering acceptable help to the Church in preaching and teaching. The Church at Scholes is responsible for his training and future work. So the Committee has no responsibility for these two brethren. Their only responsibility is the tutor.

Training by Correspondence

There are still a number of live students. Many have expressed gratitude for help received. There is always opportunity for others who desire to train for service by correspondence.

The "Scripture Standard"

For fourteen and a half years we have kept this magazine going. Some are kind enough to say that it improves with age. We have tried, and with God's help shall try, to keep up to, and to be true to the Divine Standard. Bro. Frith from the beginning until now has rendered very efficient help, and the Editor is most grateful for his hearty and loyal co-operation.

The Church at Ulverston

When our Lord sent those letters to the seven Churches in Asia He took account of the difficulties with which they had to contend. To one Church He said: "I know where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is, and thou holdest fast my name and hast not denied my faith." The Furness District is dominated by Overdale teaching and influence: yet many seem stirred, and at least feel uneasy, by the stand we have made for New Testament teaching and practice. Many admit that we are right, but they have not sufficient courage to come and help us in our fight for the old faith. We know that the Lord's curse rests upon those who hold back in the day of battle, and come not to the help of the Lord against the mighty.

The Church at Ulverston was formed by my father on March 19th, 1876. On March 19th last, we celebrated the seventy-third anniversary of the Church. We are the true successors of the pioneers. We had a memorable week-end and we are much indebted to the many brethren and sisters who came over to help us.

Our meetings are keeping up well. The average attendance at the Lord's Table is eighteen. We always have some non-members at our evening meetings. A well attended Bible Class is held on Thursdays. The latter half of the past six months has been made much more difficult by the serious illness of my wife. It has been a time of real stress and anxiety. But prayers have been answered, and we are truly grateful to God, and to all who have remembered us at the Throne of Grace.

WALTER CROSTHWAITE.

Bro. A. Winstanley's Report.

SINCE the beginning of December, 1948, I have been working with the brethren at Tranent, East Lothian. Average attendances at the Lord's table is forty-three. Every Sunday night, a number of non-members are present to hear the Gospel. Usually, a few are present on Wednesday nights also. We believe a number of friends are close to decision. Our week-night meeting for children is very well attended. In addition to the usual meetings on Lord's Days, a short prayer meeting is held. Also, I conduct a Bible Class in the Lord's Day School.

The effort has been advertised by handbills, Press announcements and extensive personal work. Much Gospel literature has been distributed.

An interesting feature of our work has been the discussions we have had with sectarians. Chief among these was an encounter with some 'Faith Alone' evangelists, which resulted in a further talk with members of the "Brethren" denomination. We hoped this might lead to our friends learning the Way more perfectly, but this did not materialise. We have had talks with people of various religious persuasions.

I have made a number of visits to a company of people meeting in Gullane—a coast town some miles from Tranent. Here there seems a willingness by the gathering to accept the simple Bible truth. Our hope is that these friends may become obedient to the Gospel, and that a Church of Christ may come into existence in this place.

The Lord willing, I shall remain at Tranent until the end of May this year. To date three have obeyed the Lord in baptism. The prayers of all brethren are asked for the work in this place.

A. E. WINSTANLEY.

Bro. Dougall's Report.

IT is with gratitude to God for His many blessings that I present this report, which is the fourth since I began as a full-time preacher.

When making my last report, I was working with the Church in Priory Lane, Dunfermline. This mission carried on until the end of December. The usual meetings were conducted on Lord's Day. Breaking of Bread, Bible Class for the young, and Gospel meeting. On Wednesdays we had a Bible Study meeting. Week-night meetings were restricted owing to the hall not being available. Much tract distribution was done. The Brethren loyally supported the work. Attendances at meetings were good, and interest was aroused in the surrounding district. Additions to report are five immersed.

Since January, I have been working with the Church at Rose Street, Kirkcaldy. This Mission finishes at the end of this month. The usual meetings were held on Lord's Day, and a Christian Fellowship meeting on Wednesday. I assisted at the Women's Meeting on Mondays, Sunshine Corner on Wednesdays, and the Young People's Bible Class on Lord's Day. An influenza epidemic called for much visitation, and had an effect on attendance. As the Mission is drawing to a close attendances are improving, and many non-members are interested. So far, one has been restored and one immersed.

During the six months under review, I have assisted at the Mutual Improvement Class at Kirkcaldy on Saturdays, Wallacestone Church on Thursdays, and visited on invitation Morley, East Ardsley and Ulverston.

For the letters of encouragement and good wishes from the Brethren we render our thanks, and ask for your prayers that the work of the Lord may prosper in our hands; to whom be all the glory.

DAVID DOUGALL.

Bro. Kemp's Report.

I THANK you for the opportunity of presenting to you a brief report of labours expended in the Master's service.

I have just concluded a twelve months' period with the assembly at Silverdale Hall, Tunbridge Wells. The work in this field is very hard, and there are very few workers. When I went down for the first time, in June, 1947, there were only eight members, but through the co-operation of all concerned we are enabled to report that the membership has been increased to seventeen. At the commencement we had to try to build up a Gospel meeting, for previously, through lack of preaching brethren, they had to hold children's meetings. After much effort, personal work, and distribution of literature, we were able to see some fruit. The Gospel meeting each Lord's Day averaged about thirty.

One of the pleasing features of the work was the regular attendance at the mid-week Bible study meeting when thirteen were present. They also have a very good women's meeting and young people's meeting in the

week. There are many difficulties in this field, and the Brethren will do well to maintain the work there under such circumstances. May the Lord bless the efforts of all concerned and may the cause flourish and grow.

Ince Effort

I know you are eagerly awaiting our remarks in this matter. Bro. Frank Worgan and I have conferred together and agreed that I should give a report of the preparatory work, and he of the results of that preparation.

For a long period of time, the assembly at Hindley have felt the need of evangelising in a New Testament way, by breaking up new ground and endeavouring to plant a new cause. The first place we considered was Leyland, near Preston, but owing to the difficulty of transportation (it is fifteen miles from Hindley) we dropped the matter temporarily. Then our minds centred on Ince, a nearby town with a population of twenty thousand people. There are over five thousand houses in this area, and it is close to Hindley and the Wigan district Churches. There are many denominational Churches, mostly Methodists, but no New Testament Church.

The matter was earnestly discussed and prayerfully considered, and when the overseers suggested a three months trial period the assembly unanimously agreed, and Bro. Frank Worgan and myself were delegated to help in the effort.

The estimated cost of the effort will be over £200, and this sum is being provided by the Hindley members and other interested brethren.

We had much difficulty at first in securing suitable meeting rooms, but this was overcome by the procuring of the Band Room, Knowles Street, Lower Ince, for the Lord's Day meetings, Ince Public Hall for eight Wednesdays, and the Co-op. Room in Higher Ince for five Wednesdays. These rooms are in different parts of Ince so the whole area will be effectively covered. Four thousand "Revivals" and as many handbills announcing the meetings were distributed by the Brethren. Window bills were willingly displayed by local shopkeepers. Day schools were visited and invitation cards were given to the children to take home to their parents. Methodist Churches were approached with a view to announcing the meetings, and one of them at least is displaying a poster in the meeting house window. Loud-speaker announcements were made in the whole area. Such was the character of the preparations made. Brother Frank will later report on the results obtained.

Brethren remember our efforts continually before the Throne of Grace, that we may so labour as successfully to plant a cause of New Testament Christianity in Ince.

TOM KEMP.

Bro. Worgan's Report.

THE first three months of this year I spent working with the Church at Newtongrange, Scotland, and whilst no baptisms are reported we feel that the time was not wasted. During that period, elders and deacons were appointed; and seven restored to fellowship.

When the effort concluded, the Church was in a much healthier condition; and on the last Lord's Day of the period there were fifty-one in fellowship and over seventy at the Gospel meeting.

I feel that this assembly is on the brink of great things, and believe that if only she will continue as she has recently commenced she will have a great future.

As you have heard, at present Bro. Tom Kemp and I are working along with the Church at Hindley, in an effort to establish an assembly at Ince. We are under no delusions as to the difficulties involved in such a work, but we believe that 'our God is able.' Naturally, we were very anxious

about that first meeting on Lord's Day, April 3rd, in the Band Room, Lower Ince. It would both be foolish and untrue to say otherwise, for it was an experience we never had before, and one we shall not soon forget. When the meeting commenced, it was raining very hard, and there was not a single stranger present, apart from friends brought over from Hindley. However, the situation took on a new aspect when, after the opening prayer eleven non-members entered bringing the total of strangers to seventeen and the number present to eighty. This was an encouraging send-off.

The second meeting was held on Wednesday, April 6th, in Ince Public Hall, and although much personal work had been done and the meeting advertised by means of loud-speaker, the result was rather discouraging. Eighty-five present, but few non-members. Once again, heavy rain.

Lord's Day, April 10th, saw us back at the Band Room where we had an excellent meeting with ninety present, including twenty-eight non-members. At this meeting, contacts were made which we feel may prove fruitful. But any over-confidence we may have felt was shattered on Wednesday last, April 13th, when we held our first meeting in Higher Ince in the Co-op. Room. Although we had had a good reception at the doors and in the open air only forty-three were present. Nevertheless, we intend to keep the whole area covered, for we feel sure that there must be some people in Ince who are waiting for the truth, and it is going to be a matter of finding them. For this reason, we believe that the success of this venture will depend, not so much on indoor meetings but on personal and open-air work, and as much time as possible is being spent in this way. We are hoping, when the weather improves to do more open-air work and, if possible, to hold cottage meetings in the homes of contacts.

During the next fortnight we are looking forward to having the assistance of Bro. Glenn L. Wallace, from Texas, and are praying and believing that the Band Room will be packed to the doors next Lord's Day evening. (This expectation was later realised—106 present).

May I say that we have been much encouraged by the interest which has been shown by the Brethren. Some intend to come over and give us a hand for short periods. Bro. Lewis Murphy has very kindly made arrangements to come and so has Bro. Ralph Limb. The help and encouragement of such brethren is sincerely appreciated. Also mention must be made of the wholehearted support given by brethren of the neighbouring Churches. They have supported us well and we thank them for it. We ask for the prayers of the brotherhood in this effort. We feel, as has been said, that we shall have to contest every inch of the way, but we believe that our God is able to do more than our asking, and we are praying that ultimately we may have the joy of seeing a Church built on the New Testament pattern in Ince.

FRANK WORGAN

Bro. Channing's Report.

IT gives me great pleasure to have this opportunity of giving you a report of my work since the last Conference, not only because these reports are a means of encouraging each other in the Faith, but because the fact of my reporting to you this afternoon, with others who have not previously done so, is a sign of a new spirit amongst us, a sincere attempt to implement the resolution made recently at Leeds. Personally I am grateful to the brethren who have extended this invitation.

Following the Conference in September last, I travelled to Morley to conduct a fortnight's mission there. The brethren at Morley, in the past, have had many difficulties to overcome, but now, having succeeded, there is a fine spirit of evangelism arising. During the mission, besides the usual Lord's Day activities, a Gospel meeting was held each Tuesday, Wednesday,

and Saturday, a children's meeting on Monday, and a Bible study in the home of one of the brethren on Friday.

On the two Thursday evenings that I was there, public discussion meetings were held in Gildersome, a village about two miles from Morley. These meetings were not only well supported by the brethren, but attracted a good number of visitors. On the second occasion, a local Methodist preacher was prevailed upon to occupy the platform with me, the subject under discussion being, "What must I do to be saved?" The discussion resolved into one of Truth versus Sentimentalism, in which denominational error was clearly exposed. Advertising was carried out during the mission on a large scale, by leaflet, local Press, and loud-speaker van. The fruit of these efforts was eight additions, five by baptism, and three by restoration.

From Morley I came back to London to begin work once more with the Kentish Town Church. Here in London, we are up against the difficulty of the majority of the members living several miles from the meeting place, and this limits our mid-week activities. However, besides the usual Lord's Day meetings, a meeting was held on Wednesday and cottage meetings in the homes of two of the brethren every Friday and Saturday. The latter, Bro. Black's, at Richmond, has been particularly successful, for since its inception it has played its part in bringing four into the Church. I would heartily commend this means of spreading the Truth, for many will listen and learn in the informal atmosphere of the home who would never otherwise be reached by the Gospel meeting. As to outdoor work, some two thousand "Revivals" per month were distributed, and much door to door work done. One brother was restored during this period. I might add, too, that after months of fruitless effort, I have at last been able, by means of an exchange, to obtain accommodation in the Kentish Town area. In the past, the fact of my living ten miles from the meeting place has been a great hindrance to the work.

At the end of January, I began a mission with the new cause at Aylesbury in Bucks. During my holidays last year, Bro. W. Cole, who lives there, and I explored the possibility of commencing a work there. A hut, used by the local Scouts, was secured on loan for two days a week. It has the advantage of being situated on an entirely new and very large housing estate. The meetings commenced last November, but at first with little result. However, Bro. E. Cole came into Aylesbury at the beginning of January, and we are grateful for his useful preliminary work and for his continual assistance during the mission.

We are also grateful to Bro. Glenn Wallace, who came to Aylesbury virtually straight from the "Queen Mary," in order to hold meetings there during the last few days of the mission. All forms of advertising were used, including the distribution of some 10,000 handbills and "Revivals," door-to-door work, use of the local Press, and extensive use of the loud-speaker van for open-air meetings. We also called a discussion meeting, inviting by letter every minister in the town, though out of the sixteen, only one attended, the Pentecostal pastor. He at first agreed to a public debate on the question of the way of salvation, but afterwards thought better of it. As a result of these activities, the work has really been set in hand there: A Sunday School has been formed with an attendance of between thirty-five and fifty children, two members were contacted in the town who have been attending the denominations for several years and they are now beginning to support the work, and two ladies are very near the Kingdom. The Kentish Town Church hope to continue to give some form of support to the cause there, as they have been doing for the other small Church at East Grinstead.

The period at Aylesbury was broken into by another fortnight's mission at Morley, this time commencing with their anniversary meetings. Much

the same activities were carried on there as on the first occasion. Among the visits made were two of particular interest. One was to a local vicar, who had challenged a statement concerning baptism that the brethren had inserted in the local Press. The other was to a Nazarene pastor, who, we learnt, had warned his flock against us. However, neither would substantiate their criticisms in public debate. We are grateful for the whole-time assistance during the mission of Bro. L. Murphy. From this effort we had the joy of seeing three added to the Lord by baptism.

And now we look forward to working again with the Kentish Town Church. Let us pray that not only here but each one in his own sphere of labour, may so proclaim the Gospel, both by lip and life, that the "mercy drops," the twos and threes that are now being added to the Lord, might become "showers of blessing," to the extension of the Kingdom, and the glory of His Holy Name.

L. H. CHANNING.

Report of Hymn Book Committee.

BRETHREN F. C. Day, A. L. Frith and I were appointed by Conference at Wigan to go into question of a new Hymn Book. We have met three times, January 22nd, at Wigan; February 12th at Fleetwood, and April 2nd at Birmingham.

So far, the general plan of the proposed new book has been decided upon. We recommend divisions of hymns to be: I. God, II, The Lord Jesus, III. The Holy Spirit, IV. The Word of God, V. The Gospel, VI. The Kingdom and the Church, VII. The Life of a Christian, VII Miscellaneous, IX Indexes. Broadly the plan on which selection has been made is: 1, Whether the hymns are true to Scripture; 2, Whether they ascribe praise to God or Christ; 3, Whether in them Christians teach and admonish one another.

We recommend:—

1. That a children's Hymn Book be compiled. Such a work will probably be more difficult than the compilation of one for Christians, as only very few hymns can be sung with truth and meaning by children.

2. The publishing of a Tune Book to the Church Hymn Book, preferably the words and tunes to be included in one book. This project will entail considerable expense.

We think we are voicing the feelings of the brethren when we say that a new Hymn Book is necessary, and that we must be ready as Churches and individuals to find the required money. We are not yet at the stage when we can present concrete figures, but we here and now appeal for the guaranteed financial support to carry on the work.

This is a great opportunity, brethren. Many never thought to see the day when we could undertake ourselves the publication of a new Hymn Book, with all the blessing it may bring to the Churches. Let us seize the opportunity and support the work with prayer and money.

CARLTON MELLING.

Impression of Blackburn Conference.

A GOOD conference, ably presided over in the afternoon by Bro. Wm. Steele, and in the evening by Bro. L. Channing. The Blackburn brethren did admirably as hosts. The whole afternoon was well spent even if only to be thrilled with the singing of the praises of Him who bought us with His Blood.

May we be inspired to greater effort.

A. HOOD.

The Siege of Jericho.

Summary of Address at Blackburn Conference by Bro. D. Dougall.

THE Children of Israel, after their wanderings in the wilderness, crossed the River Jordan and entered the Land of Promise. To possess the land, its capture was necessary. The key city, Jericho, presented a difficulty; and to the eye of sense was impregnable. It stood before them as a barrier to progress. Notwithstanding the strength of the city, under the leadership of Joshua, the servant of God, the Israelites triumphed gloriously; "They went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city."

The Church of Christ in Britain has its Jericho. Bro. Frith, in April issue of the "S.S." said that we, as Churches, were at the crossroads, and the signpost pointed to Evangelism. To many, the Jericho has been the manner, but I believe this is small compared to the gigantic task, the evangelisation of Britain. The task seems an impossibility, the obstacles are so many, the army so small.

The capture of Jericho was a victory of faith. "By faith the walls of Jericho fell down" (Heb. xi, 30). The evangelisation of Britain can only be accomplished by faith, and I believe if we express the same characteristics which marked the faith of the Israelites the victory will be ours. The same God who blessed and honoured Israel will assuredly bless us.

The Venture of Faith

It is said there are three faiths. The faith that receives (John i. 11, 12), the faith that reckons (Rom. vi. 10, 11), and the faith that ventures or risks. The first two deal with salvation and sanctification, and the latter with service.

God has always tested the faith of His servants, and in the testing the need of venture is apparent. It is in venture that God is put to the test, and given the opportunity to attest. Scripture abounds with illustrations. In Heb. xi we have a long list of men and women whom God honoured, because they ventured forth on the strength of God's promises, seeking to do what God commanded. God honoured Israel, granted them victory at Jericho, because of such expressions of faith. It was life or death when they crossed Jordan; they could not turn back. It was the same when they marched forth against Jericho, they stood to be ridiculed if their project failed. But they risked it, putting God's Word to the test, and they triumphed.

If the evangelisation of Britain is to become a reality, our faith will have to be expressed in venturing more. We believe the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation, and we believe God blesses faithful service, but how are we to test or prove this unless we venture and give God the opportunity to attest? Hindley Church is to be admired in their venture at Ince. The same will have to be done wherever possible. To this end, let us be prepared to sacrifice our time, talent, and money.

The Obedience of Faith

The secret of Israel's success is also attributed to their obedience. "As the Lord commanded, so did they." They circumcised, kept the Passover, and obeyed the plans of the Lord's captain in the siege. They had no room for man-made plans. Complete success was the result of complete obedience.

It is the same to-day. As in all ages, what is not of God will not stand. Substitute any form of man's devising where God has spoken, and ruin will

follow. The only safe course for success is speaking where the Bible speaks and being silent where it is silent.

Discipline of Faith

In the siege of Jericho, strict discipline was necessary, and it was exercised. Joshua commanded Israel, "Ye shall not shout, nor let your voice be heard, neither shall any word proceed out of your mouth, until the day I bid you shout; then shall ye shout." To a people descended from grumblers this was discipline indeed. Without discipline there would have been chaos, every one being free to do what was right in their own eyes, and instead of victory the siege would have ended in failure.

In evangelisation, discipline is needed to-day both in word and in life. We often remain silent when we should speak, and speak when we should be silent, with the result opportunities are lost to spread the Gospel. Our lives, too, as heralds of the Gospel, often fail, casting a reflection on the Church and hindering progress. It is only the disciplined army that can conquer in war, and likewise in the Church's war against the forces of evil.

Patience of Faith

The Children of Israel also exercised patience. Notice, in encompassing the city, how they patiently waited, only compassing the city once each day for six days, and on the seventh compassing it seven times. There was no giving up when the task was easy, there was no slacking off when the going was hard, and their patience was rewarded.

In the great work lying before us we, too, will have to exercise patience. Our Jericho will not fall in a week or two. It may extend to years, but "let us not grow weary in well doing for in due season we shall reap if we faint not."

Appropriation of Faith

To the eye of sense, Jericho was straitly shut up, because of the Children of Israel. "None went out and none came in," but to the eye of faith Jericho was already conquered. "The Lord said unto Joshua, see, I have given into your hand Jericho." Note the Lord's promise, "I have given," but before the victory, they had to compass the city thirteen times. In doing so, they appropriated what God has given. Every step forward in their march round the city meant that. The Lord had said, "Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon have I given you." We can picture the scene as they compassed the city. The sneers and taunts of those inside, and the steady march of the Lord's people. With each step they could have shouted, "It is ours, it is ours." And how true, "for when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shouted with a great shout, the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city."

God in all ages has been true to His promises. If His people will do their part He will certainly do His. Let us, therefore, get started to this great task that lies before us, venturing more, strictly obeying, exercising discipline and patience, and, through appropriation, go on to complete victory, the evangelisation of Britain.

D. DOUGALL.

'MY Gospel.'

Address by Bro. F. Worgan at Blackburn Conference

MY message to-night is based upon Paul's Gospel, the Gospel according to Paul. If my right to use such phrases is questioned, let me show that three times Paul speaks of 'my gospel.' Romans iii. 16: 'In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.'

Romans xvi. 25: 'Now unto him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel.' Second Timothy ii. 8: 'Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead, according to my gospel.'

You see then the striking manner in which Paul speaks of the Gospel. He speaks of it as his own distinct personal possession: *my* Gospel; the gospel according to me Paul.

With What Authority?

1. *A revelation.* Bearing in mind that the gospel according to Paul was not a written record like the other narratives we have in the New Testament, but that it was the good news of Christ presented in a different way, we ask, what right had Paul to speak in this manner? Read Galatians i. 11, and you will discover that Paul claims his Gospel to be every bit as authoritative as the Gospels according to Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John. 'But I certify you, brethren, that the Gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of men, neither was I taught it, but by revelation of Jesus Christ.' Continue to read that same chapter and see Paul put himself to great pains to make those Galatian Christians realise that his gospel was a divine revelation. He points out that, after Christ met him on the Damascus road, he didn't turn and retrace his steps to Jerusalem, seeking the apostles but being obedient to the heavenly vision, he turned into Arabia. And out there the Lord brought him to realise he was a chosen 'vessel,' called to be the apostle to the Gentiles. Out there Paul received his own special charge. A message to proclaim. His gospel. Had he turned and sought out the apostles, he would have got a lot of second-hand information from these men who had been the intimate companions of the Lord during his earthly ministry. But he would not have got that first-hand experience of personal revelation from Christ, of which he speaks in 2nd Cor. xii, when he heard and saw things not lawful for a man to repeat. Here is the fact. Paul came out of Arabia bringing with him something he dared proudly to call his very own; my gospel. It didn't differ from the Gospel others were proclaiming, so far as its substance and centre was concerned. It was still 'The gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.' Yet in a special way it was Paul's Gospel: the good news he carried; in which he gloried, for which he eventually died at Rome, the gospel according to Paul.

2. *An Experience.* Another reason why Paul could speak of my gospel is that it was the message of his own experience. It was the good news of Paul's own experience of the life-changing power of Christ. It was the fruit of his own contact with Christ. And because Paul's message to the world was the message of personal knowledge and personal experience, he was able to say, 'It is my gospel, because it is the gospel as I have experienced it myself.'

What Effect?

How did people react to Paul's message? They accepted it without question. They never accused him of being a hypocrite. Think of that. Paul was ridiculed, beaten, stoned, hated, imprisoned, and eventually

martyred. But he was never accused of hypocrisy. The people knew that here was a man completely identified with his message. Think of that glorious paradox in Galatians ii. 20: 'I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I but Christ liveth in me,' Paul says: 'I am dead! No! I'm alive! No! I am not alive! It is Christ who is alive in me!'

It is significant that after writing to Timothy concerning what he calls 'my gospel,' Paul goes on to say, 'Thou has fully known my doctrine, manner of life.' Doctrine and life mean profession and practice, and profession and practice were harmonised in Paul. He says to Timothy, in effect, 'Timothy you know that the message I preach is true, because you have seen its effect in my own life! You know my doctrine. And my manner of life. This man lived the Gospel. He realised what we must realise; that no profession of faith in Christ is of any value unless it is backed up by a sincere attempt to be Christlike in character. Experience proves that progress and power come when profession and practice go hand in hand.

This must have been in Paul's mind when he wrote to the Philippians, saying: 'Only let your conversation be such as becometh the gospel of Christ.' Remember that word 'conversation' doesn't mean talk. Paul does not say 'Only let the things you say become the Gospel of Christ.' He doesn't urge to be orthodox in statement and belief. Nothing is easier than this. Many can talk and argue about the Gospel when they are not living the Gospel. Many are orthodox in word but heterodox in practice.

The word isn't 'talk.' It is 'walk.' That corresponding Greek word occurs once more only, in Acts xii, where Paul says, 'I have lived [and that's the word] I have lived in all good conscience before God unto this day.'

Conversation in the New Testament sense means living. And Paul urges those believers to live in a manner consistent with their profession. To them has been entrusted the task of spreading the good news. Back up the message then by living worthy lives; lives at which none can point a finger of scorn. In this he was not urging them to do something he did not do himself, for almost the last words in the Galatian epistle read 'Henceforth let no man trouble me, for I bear in my body the marks [the *stigmata*, the brandings] of the Lord Jesus.

The Application

Turning from the gospel according to Paul, we ask what of the gospel according to you . . . to me? What of the gospel we preach? And remember we are preaching. We are inclined to overlook the fact that every member of the Church of Christ is a preacher, and think that the onus of responsibility for the spreading of the good news devolves on the shoulders of the one or two who have the ability to stand and face a crowd. But this is a mistake. We should all be preaching, if not in word, in a far more convincing way. In life. We may not be able to put what we believe into words when speaking with friends or neighbours, but we can put the Gospel into action. This is what I am striving to press home to-night. The fact that every Christian life ought to be a preaching life. It is not everyone who can preach a sermon. Nor is it everyone who can understand a sermon. And, to be honest, after listening to some sermons, I'll go so far as to say it isn't every sermon that can be understood. But everyone can understand a Christian life. And when all is said and done it is Christlike living that is going to carry conviction into the hearts of men. For that reason, I believe that if we are not making the progress we should like to make we have no one to blame but ourselves. There is nothing wrong with our plea! We hold a position and a plea second to none. And the Church of Christ ought to be the mightiest force in the world to-day. She has all the promises of Christ. She has all the power of Christ. The trouble is that our practice is often wrong. We are not living as we ought to be living.

It is a sad state of affairs when a Christian's practice contradicts his preaching. But often people cannot hear what we say because what we are speaks more eloquently and more loudly. Someone has suggested that the reason we so often fail to convince men that Christianity is true is not because we lack arguments. Or even because our arguments are weak, but because we often lack the argument that cannot fail to convince, and that is a Christlike life. People notice these things. They don't ask 'What is he saying?' but 'What is he doing?' Writing to the Corinthians, Paul said, 'Ye are our epistles, written in our hearts . . . known and read of all men.'

Though there are more Bibles in the world to-day than at any other time in the world's history, men and women will not trouble to read their Bibles. Therefore, they are not affected very vitally by the written Gospel. But they are affected by the Gospel in action. They may not read the Gospel according to Matthew. But they read the Gospel according to *you*. Experience proves that the world has no time for that person whose profession of Christianity is a hypocrisy. When the world discovers that a man is not what he claims to be, it is not long in letting him know what it thinks of his kind of religion. And rightly so, too. But, at the same time, let it be said that even the world is forced to admire that man who, though not claiming to be perfect by any means, yet, with real sincerity, attempts to put the teaching and spirit of Christ into everyday life.

Henry Ward Beecher once said, 'It is historically true that Christianity did not spread so rapidly at the beginning because of the truth of its doctrine but because of the lives of its disciples.' Isn't that true? The evangelism of which we read in the New Testament was without the organisation that we so often insist on to-day. It was not restricted to the time or place. It was not a matter of putting on Sunday best and going off to hear a man preach at six o'clock. Rather it was a case of 'As ye go . . . preach! A case of making known the Gospel through lives fragrant and radiant with the presence of Christ.

This is the only way we shall ever reach the people. The story is told that the oversight of a certain Church were met together to consider ways of reaching the people. The chairman said, 'Well something will certainly have to be done!' Another said, 'The church socials are a flop! Didn't even pay their way!' Another said, 'And the illustrated sermons on Shakespeare and Milton didn't bring the people in' Finally, an old Christian arose and said, 'Mr. Chairman, I've been thinking that if we tried preaching the Gospel of Christ, and practising it a bit more, that would bring the people in.'

And an old negro was right when he said that there are two parts to the Gospel. Believing it and behaving it. And it seems to me that if more folks who claimed to believe the Gospel would behave it, we should have still more believing it.

According to *my* gospel. Let's make this a personal matter and ask ourselves, 'How much weight does my Gospel carry with those with whom I come in contact in my place of business, or at my work or on my shopping expeditions?' For after all, these are the times and places for a most effective preaching of the Gospel according to me. It is true that the progress made by any Church is determined by the Gospel preached by the lives of its members.

We have a glorious plea as Churches of Christ, and the gospel we bear is the world's only hope. If we realise that we are living epistles seen and read by the world, and that as such we have it in our power either to adorn or besmirch the Gospel of Christ, we shall take care to live lives consistent with our profession.

"So let our lives and lips express the holy Gospel we profess.
So let our works and virtues shine, to show forth doctrine so divine."

F. WORGAN.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

MATTHEW'S GOSPEL xiii, 24 to xiv, 36.

The Parable of the Tares.—Matthew here gives us a selection of parables, which may or may not have been spoken just at the same time. We may be inclined to a feeling that it was not fair for the Saviour to hide the truth from the multitudes, but the divine wisdom decided this point—"Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" and "He knew what was in man." Probably the multitude had already been tested by the truth anyway, and could not receive more at that time. These wonderful little pictures would bear fruit later in the minds of attentive and interested hearers. We understand that the dastardly trick of sowing weeds in a man's field is a form of vengeance or spite common in past and present times in those eastern countries. This is a parable of action moving forward to the time of harvest and reckoning. The farmer acted with wisdom in withholding the effort to separate until the difference between wheat and weeds was too obvious for mistakes.

Parables of Mustard Seed and Leaven.

—The mustard seed is very small but it grows to a considerable bush. From a very small beginning the kingdom of God would grow to great size, and give shelter to many. Probably the smallness of the seed was proverbial, and the terms 'least' and 'greatest' need not be regarded as absolute terms. The parable would indicate to the disciples that they need not be discouraged—an impression which might be created by the earlier parables. Leaven has otherwise in the Word symbolised evil. In this parable it symbolises the quiet but all-pervading influence of the gospel. The history of the progress of Christianity in the world is thus prophetically and pictorially told.

The Use of Parables.—The Psalm from which the Evangelist quotes is lxxviii, which is a recitation of Jewish history intended to teach the necessity of obeying God. It is history which gives light upon present needs. So do the stories told by the Saviour illustrate the mysteries of the kingdom of God about to be established. The first two verses of the Psalm state the Saviour's programme (as also that of the Psalmist), which more fully fulfils it. We do not need to suppose that no more direct teaching was given, but that at the time spoken of the parables were used exclusively. The 'gospel' had already been widely published—not, of course, the gospel of the New Covenant as an accomplished fact.

Explanation of the Parable of the Tares

—Like that of the Sower, the parable of

the Tares was explained by the Saviour in detail. It was at the request of His disciples. They found some difficulty in grasping the lessons. The history of the Christian age is set forth. We see that good and bad are to remain almost indistinguishable in the Church, which is of course the kingdom here referred to: but a final day of reckoning will come. The dread picture of the end of the wicked is there—the angels gathering them up at the Saviour's behest for the furnace of fire. How great a contrast—let us ponder it well—between that and the 'shining forth like the sun,' so clearly reminding of Dan, xii, 3.

Further Parables.—The parables of the Treasure and the Pearl show the transcendent value attached to the kingdom by those who discover or seek it successfully. The thought of a sudden joy is present, which we might compare with the joy of learning that Jesus died for sinners, and can take their guilt away. What shall a man give in exchange for it? The drag-net gives a picture like that of the Tares, indicating first the mixed nature of the members of the church, and secondly, the certainty of a final judgment. How great a care must have been in the Teacher's heart for His disciples. They were to carry such a heavy responsibility, and needed so much the divine instruction. He gives a picture of what all Christians should be—"ready always to give an answer" (1 Peter iii, 15).

A Visit to Nazareth.—We think it reasonable to suppose that our Lord paid more than one visit to His native town. If so, in this case the reception was not so violently hostile (see Luke iv, 16-30). Nevertheless their familiarity with his relatives was a cause of stumbling. Mark gives a little more detail, adding that Jesus marvelled at the unbelief. Would not that be because His life among them in earlier days must have been a convincing evidence of His divine origin? We believe He did not many mighty works there, not because His power was withdrawn from Him, but because He knew signs would not convince.

The Murder of John the Baptist.—We have a glimpse of the uneasy conscience of a wicked king, who had nevertheless been moved by the teaching of John. He desired to see Jesus, but only did so when Pilate sent Him to him for judgment, and then he acquitted Him of any evil-doing—a strange anomaly. The sordid story of lustful amusement culminating in the murder of a good man merely to save his face, fits in with what is known historically of this king. His story is somewhat like that of Ahab and Jezebel—sad when a woman sinks low and dominates the man. We know what a high estimate Jesus made of John's character and work—better (may we suggest) a dead prophet than a live king.

The Feeding of the Five Thousand.—

We must not pass this incident without reading all the accounts of it as recorded Mark vi. 32-43, Luke ix. 10-17, John vi. 1-14. It is a stupendous miracle, and had the effect of convincing many of His Messianic mission, so much so that they would have taken Him by force and made Him king. It would be a perfectly natural thing for Jesus to seek peace and quietude after hearing the sad news of John, particularly as it prefigured His own coming "departure." It may be indeed that the contrast between the popularity of this particular day, and the final rejection of the mob, were upon His mind. He was not to have the peace He sought. His wonderful patience and perfect calm must have made an indelible impression on His disciples as they distributed the divinely increased supplies of food among the groups of hungry people. He was moved with compassion for them and healed their sick though they utterly thwarted His search for peace. Then they completely misunderstood His mission. We note He constrained His disciples to go across the sea, leaving Him to dismiss the multitude, and we know not how He turned the multitude from their purpose of making Him their pawn in an orgy of violent rebellion—quite common in that period among the Jews. (Acts v. 36 and 37). Then He retired to pray—was this a continuance or repetition of the third temptation?

Walking on the Water—The ship would be about three-fifths of the way across the sea when Jesus approached on the water. The fourth watch would be between three and six a.m. 'Spirit' would be better translated 'phantom' or 'ghost' in our modern language. Peter's failure to continue walking was of course due to his looking at the storm rather than unto Jesus. It was a good lesson for him—and is just as much to us. It would seem that others were in the ship besides the disciples. What a most astonishing evidence of power that control of the elements must have been, yet the transformation of a human soul is greater, and there is our self-will.

A Warm Welcome.—The report of the wonders worked by the Great Rabbi brought a renewal of the crowding round of the multitude with their sick folk. Their faith was justified and rewarded. Have we realised that these scenes are the most wonderful in history?

R. B. SCOTT.

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CHANGES OF ADDRESS

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NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

Birmingham, Priestley Road.—The Church celebrated her 20th anniversary on Saturday, May 7th. About 70 brethren and sisters accepted our invitation to tea, and nearly 100, mostly from local Churches, joined us at the evening service. Our speaker was Bro. Paul Smith, who gave a most uplifting and inspiring address based on the words of Jeremiah xv. 19, urging us to take the precious from the common.

Bro. Smith served the Church on Sunday morning, and urged us to get back to the Bible; and in the evening preached to a good congregation on 'Stewardship and Fidelity.' Mrs. Paul Smith gave a beautiful rendering of "When I survey the wondrous Cross."

We go forward into the new year full of hope that it may be the most successful yet.

R. H. CROSS

Capetown, Woodstock.—We are glad to make known that Bro. Boyd Reese, his wife and child, passed through Cape Town on the 23rd February, 1949, on their way to the U.S.A. from the mission field Northern Rhodesia. On the evening of 27th February we had the privilege of having Bro. Reese to address the meeting. His subject was 'The Establishment of the Church.' The message was so inspiring that all present, brethren and visitors, received a blessing.

On the afternoon of 27th March, we were able to rejoice in witnessing a native man confess the Lord Jesus and unite with Him in baptism. This being due to the efforts of the native brethren of the Langa Assembly. The service was conducted by Bro. Kannemeyer, of the Woodstock Assembly, and although the attendance was not as expected, nevertheless it was to us who were there another season of refreshing to the glory of God, May it urge us who love and fear the Master to a greater zeal for the things of God in our lives and for those who are without Christ.

T. HARTLE

Leven, Fife.—On April 3rd, 1949, David Foster, a grandson of the late David Reid, was immersed into the ever blessed name. He was received into fellowship on April 10th. On April 30th, the annual social was held, at which twelve churches were represented. There were present one hundred and twenty adults. The speakers were Brethren W. Steele (Tranent) and A. E. Winstanley.

J. GRAHAM

SOME News items and a letter from Bro. Carlton Melling on 'The Thursday Cross,' are held over until next issue.

COMING EVENT

Beulah Road, East Kirkby, Notts.—Special meetings in connection with the anniversary of the opening of our present Meeting House, and the commencement of the Church here will take place on July 9th and 10th. Speaker, Bro. Will. Steele, of Scotland.

Tea and social meeting on Saturday, July 9th. Tea 4.15 p.m., meeting 6.30 p.m.

OBITUARY

Beulah Road, East Kirkby.—The Church has sustained a further loss in the removal by death of Sister Alice Caulton, who, after a prolonged illness, departed this life on April 3rd, at the ripe old age of eighty years. She, along with her revered husband, were amongst the first twelve members who, because of certain departures from, and innovations to New Testament teaching, withdrew from the neighbouring Church at Nuncargate, and helped to form a Church adhering to first principles, at East Kirkby, on November 30th, 1924.

Brother and Sister Caulton were formerly members of the Church at Selston, three miles away. Immersed at Underwood some sixty years ago, our Sister continued humbly to serve her Lord and Master until the death of her husband. Since that date, failing health has prevented her from rendering active service. Of a cheerful, motherly disposition, she will be remembered for her piety and dignified Christian character. She, along with her husband rendered much valued service during the early years of the Church here.

She leaves behind four daughters and one son, whom we pray may follow the noble example of good Christian parents.

The funeral service took place in the meeting house on April 7th, Bro. A. Murray officiating. After which the remains of our dear Sister were laid to rest, there to await the resurrection day, and the coming of our blessed Lord.

W. B. JEPSON

Devonport.—The Church has suffered a great loss in the passing from this earthly pilgrimage of our dearly beloved brother in Christ, Alexander Berry Clarke, at the age of sixty-one years, after a short illness. Our brother had been a faithful member of the Devonport Church since December 16th, 1907, being an elder, also having occupied the position of Secretary and Treasurer for a great many years. He loved his Lord and found great joy in doing His will, his greatest joy being his keen interest in the salvation of souls. He was scarcely absent from the meetings, and his life was an example to all who knew him. Our sympathy goes out to our sister in the great loss she has sustained. We take comfort in the knowledge that we sorrow not as those without hope: for we know that he is where suffering, sorrow, pain and death are done away, and where God shall wipe away all tears from all eyes.

W. LAKEMAN

Tranent.—On May 3rd, the Church lost Sister Mrs. James Sneddon, at the age of 73. She was baptized at Newtongrange at the age of fifteen years, and remained faithful. She came to Tranent after her marriage and has been with us for forty-eight years. She died suddenly. Her death was a shock to us all. Her voice is now still, and she rests from her labours. She has no more pain. She died believing in her Saviour that she would rise at His coming. She followed her Master in going out to help all those in need, and she has been active all those years in helping those who needed her. She is well spoken of by all. The children loved her and called her Grandma. She was ever ready in Church work and cleaned the Meeting House for many years with satisfaction. She is gone to be with Jesus which is far better. We pray God to bless our Brother and family in their sad bereavement. She is not lost but gone before. Her memory will linger with us until we meet again in brighter scenes.

The burial took place at Tranent on Friday, 6th February, Bro. A. Winstanley officiating.

W. WILSON

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