

# *The* SCRIPTURE STANDARD

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

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## *Images of God*

FROM time to time we hear news of great disasters. They may be "natural" calamities, such as earthquakes, floods, tornadoes etc., or "mechanical," such as shipwrecks, railway crashes or air disasters. Such events make "news"; relief funds are opened for the victims, and prompt and generous giving helps to alleviate the plight of those who suffer. Such dramatic stories touch the humanity in people; our feelings of horror and sympathy are aroused, and our practical response is immediate. To present the sufferings of men and women and children in their nakedness is to ensure that money, clothing, homes to relieve the unfortunate will be forthcoming.

That is, of course, as it should be. But such occurrences are often only "a nine-days' wonder." Once having contributed what we can to help the needy, we feel we have fulfilled our responsibility and have done what we could.

But there is suffering in the world that endures constantly. So prevalent is it, that the needs of the sufferers no longer make news. This suffering is so widespread throughout the world, that it has largely lost any impact upon us. We know it is there, but we would rather not think of the uncomfortable fact; would rather not face its awful reality.

We draw our readers' attention to two great tragedies ever present in our modern world—hunger and refugees. We briefly present some facts, and we ask that, as churches and individual Christians, we do what we can to ease the suffering to which millions of our fellow-creatures are constantly exposed.

### **Hunger**

Two-thirds of the people of the world are underfed. Two out of every three people—two thousand millions of the three thousand millions in the world—go constantly hungry. We may regard hunger as a healthy sign. When we have worked hard or taken a long walk, or otherwise exerted ourselves physically, how good it is to know that we can satisfy our appetite and regain our strength with a good solid meal. Even if we are hungry, we know that our hunger will soon be satisfied. But that is so of only one person out of three. Do we realise that most of the world's population have a constant physical hunger? That men and women and children get up in the morning hungry, that they will remain hungry right through the day, will go to bed again hungry, and that this is their permanent state? They hold out no hope of their needs being supplied. Malnutrition results in stunted growth, disease, lack of strength to work, with constant effect upon industrial production, hence low wages; slow and agonising death. Children crying for food which their anguished parents are unable to give them. In such conditions discontent and Communism flourish, and the teaching of Christ has little hope of making impact.

The average expectancy of life in our country is now seventy years: in those countries where hunger is rife, it is thirty years. In some of the most vivid words in Scripture, Jesus described the plight of the young man who "would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat." That is the exact state of the millions of the hungry: they would be glad to eat the refuse and leavings that our farmers give to their animals.

**Refugees**

Since the end of the first World War in 1918, seventy million refugees have been "scattered upon the face of the earth." Today forty millions have no home, no country, and often, through their treatment, no hope of self-respect. Some are called political refugees, some economic refugees, some are just the underfed, for the two problems—hunger and refugees—are inseparably connected.

It is almost impossible for us to grasp the fact that every day and every night, since God said to Joseph in a dream, "Get up now and cross the border into Egypt," families have been crossing borders into foreign lands, because of fear or persecution, most of them knowing they would never return. These things seem so remote. Yet some of us have heard from the lips of refugees themselves, the sufferings, humiliations and frustrations to which they have been subjected. At such times we have realised that these are not objective problems which stand outside our concern, but that individuals, persons like you and me, are involved. Too often we have displayed indifference towards human suffering, have refused to face these facts of life. But we cannot escape from the knowledge that these great social problems exist. For every hungry one, every refugee, is a person, a child of God.

**What can we do?**

We may feel that these are matters removed from us, that we cannot do much about them, anyway. We have our lives to live, our own problems to solve; these are full-time occupations, whether of our hands or minds. In any case, we have not raised these problems; we are not the cause of this distress. To reason thus, would be to renounce our responsibility to preach and live the gospel of Christ. We may not be the cause of men's living in sin, nor of all the situations which arise because of the evil of men. For that reason, then, are we to leave men to their sin and refrain from telling them of the Saviour from sin? We know that we cannot. Nor can we ignore our responsibility to alleviate suffering, wherever it be. We are not to examine whether these suffering ones be white or black or any colour; whether Communist or part of the "free world"; whether Roman Catholics, Protestants or members of the church of Christ. They are in need, and that should be sufficient cause to move us to help. The question "Am I my brother's keeper" carries its own answer—Yes.

But what can we do, and how, to give help? We can depend upon it, that, where there is a willing mind, the way will be found. These are urgent, ever-present problems. If Christians and Christ's church do not lead in ministering to those in want, whom can we expect to act? We must be forward "in every good work," must "do good to all, especially those of the household of faith." May I suggest that as churches, we keep in mind constantly, the needs of others, and that regularly, even weekly, we lay aside a portion of the contribution of the saints for this purpose? It is good that occasionally we send contributions, but such help is spasmodic. If certain brethren did not keep these needs before us, so many of us would forget their existence. And that would not ease the suffering.

To whom should such help be sent? There are those who insist that only "through the church" should our contributions be sent, and that our own brethren should **take** this help direct to the people concerned. So much the better, if that can be done. But we must agree, that in almost all cases this is impossible. Must, then, the suffering ones perish, because we cannot send help through our brethren? Certainly not: these are people, each made in the image of God; each a soul for whom Christ died; not a nameless mass, but persons.

We append a list of channels through which our contributions, in money, clothing or other ways, can be forwarded. We need not fear that much of the money will be swallowed up in administration expenses, for no such deductions are made by these bodies; all work is given voluntarily (here, perhaps, we can offer our service).

Here is a list of Bodies registered for purposes of relieving such cases:

- Freedom from Hunger Campaign, United Kingdom Committee, 17 Northumberland Avenue, London W.C.1.
- Oxford Committee for Famine Relief, 50A Bourne Street, London S.W.1.
- Save the Children Fund, 12 Upper Belgrave Street, London S.W.1.
- War on Want, 9 Madeley Road, London N.W.5.

In addition, two of our brethren will willingly receive any such contributions. They are: Eric MacDonald, 48 Rose Glen, Kingsbury, London N.W.9, or Albert E. Winstanley, 43A Church Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent.

You may state through which Society you wish your contribution to be sent, or for what purpose and from which church or person. Or, if it is found difficult to move a church, as such, to action (it may be a church questions the rightness of,

or scripture authority for contributions to such causes through such means) but you, as Christians, need not be frustrated; you can send your personal gift.

Brethren, this is not a "social" work merely. It is work that has its example in the teaching and work of our Lord Jesus Christ. Nor are these new problems. They are as old as the word of God itself. For there we read how the Jews were forced to leave their own land, to endure suffering and shame in alien countries, the victims of pitiless war and "man's inhumanity to man." Our Saviour Himself was a refugee, when He was taken into Egypt to escape the cruelty of Herod. Even in the earliest times of the church His disciples were "scattered abroad"; and in the centuries since, the Jews have been hounded like beasts from place to place, finding no home, no rest. We had thought all these things were unpleasant memories of the history of men's bestiality. But in our own time we have proved them even more dreadful facts.

The need, then, is all the greater. It is ever increasing. Little though it may be, let us do what we can, motivated by the love of God and therefore, love of His "images," to carry out the gospel manifesto: ". . . to bring good tidings to the afflicted; to bind up the broken-hearted; to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; to comfort all who mourn; to grant to those who mourn in Zion—to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit." (Isa. 61:1-3 R.S.V.).

EDITOR.

## *Origins and Growth of Denominationalism*

### VI: THE ALBIGENSES AND WALDENSES

FROM time to time, in sermons and literature pleading for the restoration of New Testament Christianity, reference is made to the Albigenses and more frequently to the Waldenses. Even if it is not claimed outright, it is at least inferred, that these groups were kindred spirits with ourselves in opposing apostasy and seeking the primitive religion of the New Testament. The truth is, that we know very little about the Albigenses, and only a little more about the Waldenses, for the simple reason that the only literature that has come down to us, from the twelfth century, when these groups made their appearance, has come from the people who were anxious to suppress them. This being so, it will be readily understood that the writers of those early accounts did not burden themselves with accuracy of detail in reporting the doctrines and practices of the 'heretics,' as they were called, nor did they try to put them in a good light.

When the Waldensian group began to publish a literature of its own in the fifteenth century, attempts were sometimes made to pass it off as being of earlier origin.

#### **The Albigenses**

The name itself is derived from the city of Albi, in South West France, but in reality the centre of their movement was Toulouse, some forty-eight miles away. The other name by which they came to be known was 'the Cathari,' which, roughly translated, means 'Puritans.' Perhaps the simplest way of summing up the position they adopted is to say that their movement was a protest against the priestly class and against the authority which it had assumed.

It is remarkable, that in an age dominated by Romanism, the Albigenses circulated copies of the New Testament, from the study of which they opposed image worship, denied the existence of purgatory, and even rejected tradition as an authority in religion. But we must also note that, if the early writers are to be believed, the Albigenses in addition, rejected the Old Testament Scriptures, held doubtful views on the nature of Christ, and the strange doctrine which imposed only one condition of membership, namely the baptism of the Spirit, which to them was so important, that their followers could receive it upon their death-beds. Perhaps if they had written themselves, or if, having written, their literature had survived, even these doctrines might appear in an altogether different light. At all events, as with all who opposed Rome, they were fiercely attacked and put down and died out about 1320.

#### **The Waldenses**

In this case we have to do with a group whose name honours its founder, Peter Waldo, a wealthy merchant of Lyons, who became convinced that he must sell all his possessions, give to the poor and live a life of poverty. To this extent the preaching and teaching of this man received the commendation of Pope

Alexander III, who, in common with all other popes, admired and commended poverty in others, whilst preferring another mode of life for himself! But when Waldo added other subjects to his 'sermon-list,' the Pope forbade him to continue to preach without permission from the Bishops. And this permission he was unlikely to receive, since his preaching included the condemnation of doctrines of the Roman Church. Peter Waldo organised 'the poor men of Lyons,' a band of travelling evangelists who went through central and southern France circulating copies of a translation of the Scriptures which Waldo had made, using the Scriptures in exposing Roman errors.

One of the methods used by these itinerant preachers was to carry with them boxes of trinkets, or articles of clothing, which they offered for sale at the homes of wealthy Catholics. After making a sale they would suggest that they had even more valuable things to show—things they were willing to give, providing they would not be delivered up to the priest. In this way, a copy of the Scriptures would be left in a Catholic home.

The success enjoyed stirred the Roman authorities to instigate a bitter persecution against the Waldenses. They were finally hounded out of France, into the mountainous region of Northern Italy, where they found refuge in the valleys of Piedmont. The Catholics tried to reach them even there, but the nature of the country made it virtually impossible to exterminate the group entirely, although no group in history has a more glorious record of martyrdom than the Waldenses of this period.

As to their doctrines: it should be recorded that the first account of their faith comes from one of the Roman Inquisitors, Sacconi, who wrote about 1250. We understand that they believed that oaths were forbidden by the Scriptures. They denied the right of the civil powers (virtually the same as the religious powers at that time), to impose capital punishment. They held that the Church of Rome was NOT the Church of Christ, some of them even declaring that Rome was, in fact, the 'scarlet woman' of the book of Revelation, whose laws ought not to be obeyed. It is also possible that they rejected infant baptism, the need for consecrated meeting-houses, the doctrine of transubstantiation, and masses for the dead, because about the time of Peter Waldo there was another Frenchman, Peter de Bruys, whose followers took this position.

In strict isolation in the Piedmont valleys, the Waldenses survived the years of Roman domination, living largely as poverty-stricken and unlettered peasants, with a simple faith and piety. But in the 16th century, when the Reformation began, the echoes of its thunder reached the valleys of Piedmont, even as they spread throughout the whole of Europe. The Waldenses merged into the general stream of Protestantism. For instance, in Germany there were scattered groups which joined the Hussites and the Bohemian Brethren.

By the 19th century their position had changed considerably. Garibaldi's achievements in Italy in 1860, for example, opened the door to a religious freedom hitherto unknown in that country. The Waldensians, as they became called, established a theological college in Florence in 1861, and a training centre for evangelists at Genoa in 1862. When the Principal of the theological college visited England in 1865, he informed his audience that his church had its own printing press and was served by 42 'ordained ministers.' The despised Waldenses of 1170 had become respectable. By 1870, they had about 5000 'communicants' in some fifty congregations.

In the "Christian Advocate" of 1887, there is a letter from a brother, Jules de Launay, who had been active in the cause of New Testament Christianity in France. He informed the editor that he had changed the name of his 'mission' to the 'French and Waldensian Old Paths Mission.'

One of the lessons we may learn from this brief history is very important. More than once we have heard sermons in which the preacher has quoted Matthew 16:18, 'and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it,' to prove that the true church has always existed. Then has followed the attempt to connect the Waldenses and other groups with this assertion. Quite apart from the fact that this is not what the words of the Lord mean, I do not believe we are under any necessity of imitating the example of the Roman apostasy in her claim to apostolic succession. We do not need to prove that the church has existed in all ages, that there has always been a faithful remnant. The important thing is that the Word of God has always existed, and wherever that Word has gone it has produced life. We have that Word today, and if we preach the message preached by the first Christians and men respond with the same obedience as those first hearers, we may have the same church. Let us thank God that history records, however obscurely, that there were men who protested against the great apostasy of Rome. But let us be even more grateful for the fact that God has preserved His

own Word. It has flowed through the ages like a life-giving stream. Sometimes the stream has seemed to be lost in difficult territory, but it has always emerged to view again.

And wherever the river has gone, it has brought life.

F. WORGAN.

## *Signs of the Times*

RECENTLY, reading Matt. 16, the first few verses, my mind was attracted as never before, by a sentence in the third verse. The passage contains those familiar words of the Lord about signs in the skies. "When it is evening ye say, it will be fair weather, for the sky is red. And in the morning, it will be foul weather today, for the sky is red and lowring. O ye hypocrites! ye can discern the face of the sky, but **can ye not discern the signs of the times?**" A question which carried a rebuke, because of the inability of those people to discern the significance of things being said and done in their midst. The implication is that they should have been able to do that, but failed.

What then of us? Did that rebuke belong to those only who then heard it? Or does it fall with equal weight upon us who live in these times? And has it fallen upon every age since the words were spoken? Is it not true that every age has its signs to be read and understood, and profitted from? Do we not now suffer because of the lack of vision on the part of our forefathers? And will not our children and children's children suffer because of our shortcomings in this same respect? This writer believes that the answer to all these questions should be, Yes! Paul could write of the Jewish rulers (1 Cor. 2:3), that had they discerned the wisdom of God in Christ, they would not have crucified Him. The signs of which Christ had spoken were there to be understood, but they had not seen, or having seen, had misread what they saw, with dire consequences for them and their nation.

That there are signs in our skies of other things than the weather, is certain, and that there are dark and ominous clouds amongst them, we are all fully conscious. The craving after knowledge is acute in the minds of many, and the results of their probings and searchings are both amazing and fearful. Signs and wonders, not of Divine origin, but coming from this restless faculty within man—revealing his ceaseless desire for some new thing—create in everyone of us lesser mortals a sense of amazement at what has been achieved, and a looking forward—almost with dread—for what will appear next. These signs of our times, together with the more normal occurrences of human activity, are thrust at us by press reports and broadcasts all through the day, and almost through the night, a constant stream of more or less exciting things, so that we live in a state of bewilderment, puzzling ourselves as to what all these things will really mean to us.

Over all hang the heavy clouds of war, a constant menace, dreadful and ominous. Always an evil, war is now dressed in the garb of sheer terror, fearful in the minds of all who have given it the smallest thought. The pomp and ceremony which once caught the eye, have vanished from it. War is now a machine of dreadful power, completely pitiless and without mercy.

A hymn we sang in the first great war, had in it, two lines which are now becoming obsolete: "No longer hosts, encountering hosts, shall crowds of slain deplore." We now learn that soldiers will no longer march against soldiers, as they have done through ages past. What was formerly considered an unlawful act, to attack the civilian population, has become, in this age of enlightenment, the deliberately chosen target for destruction. We are told that a single machine, armed with a crew of very few, trained for the dreadful purpose, can let fall upon one city a single bomb, having power greater in itself, than all the bombs dropped by both sides in the whole of the last war.

Sir John Cockcroft, British scientist, has stated that "during the last year, bombs have been developed that can destroy, by heat alone, everything within a radius of 20-30 miles below the point of burst, and in doing that, have carried the world still further along the road to destruction."

"By heat alone" I take as meaning apart from the nuclear weapons, about which we have heard and read so much. A conference of Scientists, drawn from 35 countries, held in August of this year, issued a statement, a clause of which reads: "A general war with nuclear weapons would be a disaster of unimaginable magnitude. It would destroy a large fraction of the people now alive, and jeopardise the conditions of life of the survivors." "These weapons destroy not merely production, but productivity itself." "Death is to steal upon us by the spreading of

disease, attacking us in the air we breathe, by what we drink and by what we eat, in ways which cannot be fought and cannot be resisted."

Sir John Cockcroft has stated the position with respect to all this in three words, put as positively as words can be: "**Disarmament or death,**" President Kennedy, in September, 1961, at a meeting of United Nations, spoke to the same effect: "Today, every inhabitant of this planet must contemplate the day when it may no longer be habitable. Every man, woman and child lives under a nuclear sword of Damocles, hanging by the slenderest of threads, capable of being cut at any moment, by accident, miscalculation, or madness. **The weapons of war must be abolished before they abolish us.**"

These are not the statements of dreamers and cranks, but of responsible men, holding high positions in world affairs, and should have the attention from us all that such impressive words deserve. We also are responsible people, and our responsibility is not only to ourselves and those of the "household of faith," but to all men alike, whatever their spiritual condition, their race, or colour.

What God's thoughts are concerning these things here written about we can never know. That He thinks, we do know. He has told us that our thoughts are not like His, nor are our ways. Of His knowledge of these things, there can be no doubt? From the authority of the Lord Himself, we have it that not a sparrow falls to the ground without His knowledge, and that we may be assured of His knowledge of what man is now thinking and doing. Is He to look down upon this so lovely world of ours, and see it become bereft of life, robbed of its beauty, desecrated and devastated by a death wrought upon it by man, a creature of His own creation? Will the day come when He will look upon it and see it unscarred by the ravages of war, peaceful and happy, as Isaiah prophesied it should ultimately be? As it was pictured when the chorus of angels sang of peace **on earth** and goodwill among men? Or, maybe, as He once looked upon the earth at the beginning of time, before a curse fell upon it, when He "saw everything that He had made, and behold, it was very good?"

These are two views of the world to be, so very different, yet both, we fully believe, lie within those three words, spoken by men who have knowledge and understanding to speak, who have given us the alternative, "Disarmament or Death?"

Which shall it be?

(To be continued).

W. BARKER.

## *Problems of Relationships: Companions*

(Substance of a talk given at Bang or Vacation Bible School, 1962)

THE lecturer does not profess to be an expert in problems sometimes arising through amorous friendships with one's opposite sex. Nevertheless, it may be helpful to pass on to younger brothers and sisters any help and advice gleaned from many sources.

There is a great need for older Christians to guide the younger and steer them through the emotional and exciting years. In this 20th century young people seem to mature, physically, more quickly than in past years. Unfortunately, it can not always be said they mature more quickly mentally. Hence the need for wisdom and Christian teaching.

One experience in early youth is that of

### "Dating"

Youth is the springtime of Romance. The poet says "In the spring, a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love." By older people and parents, it is often described as "Just a silly infatuation." Doctors view it as another step towards adolescence. In our age it is spoken of as 'April Love.' I presume by this, it is meant one's first or early love. Call it what you may, whilst its effect on young people may differ according to how badly they get it, on the whole "dating" should never be taken too seriously.

If possible do your dating in groups or small numbers. It is not advisable to go off on your own at this early stage. It is important, too, always to seek your parents' permission before making a date. They will appreciate this gesture; and it will add just that little bit more joy on your "night out." Don't try to deceive your parents; they will soon find out. When boys pay more attention to their hair-brushing, and girls spend more time in front of the mirror, then they will realise that your night out is no ordinary one!

Another word of advice. Whenever you make a date or appointment, do your best to keep it, and do not treat it in an off-handed manner, as if he or she does not matter. Remember to act the Christian; be courteous and thoughtful—and be on time!

A very common term used by young people today is doing a "steady," I presume it means going out seriously, and continually with the same friend over a long and indefinite period. A lot could be said for and against this in one's early youth, but we do not have the space to do so. However, and briefly, let me say this in favour: it is better to behave this way than to flirt about, and to be called amongst your friends a flirt.

Against going seriously will often be your parents advice, and this should never be ignored (they may want you to learn from their 'errors!'). Young romances very seldom blossom into anything worth while. They may last three months or three weeks. In many cases, the newness and excitement soon wear off, and the reason for this may be due to seeing each other too often! I don't think it is advisable 'to do a steady' in your early youth.

It is also important, as young Christians, that we reflect on how we are

### Behaving

Under this heading, we must mention kissing. Kissing is here to stay, and many of us are glad of it! But what is a kiss? Undoubtedly it is an expression of love and affection, and it could be said as old as Adam himself. Read the suggested scripture lesson (Gen. 29:15-20). It is not a game, and not a thrilling pastime and should never be indulged in for the mere excitement or thrill. Indiscriminate caressing can be very explosive and can have serious results, and by Christian boys and girls, petting and cuddling should be avoided.

I repeat, kissing is an expression of real love and affection, and should always be regarded and acted on as such. Anything which is more intimate than kissing in our courting days is entirely out. I know the modern, worldly young people have their views on this, and practise what is called sexual experience before marriage, in order that they may find the proper and best marriage partner. The Scriptures soundly condemn such behaviour. Fornication, the term used to define it, is a sin and should not be even suggested or mentioned amongst young folks. In some cases, girls themselves are much to blame for their fall; but the young men are chiefly responsible.

Here are a suggestion or two which may help to avoid the temptation. Girls should dress with modesty and decency: "Your beauty should not be dependent on an elaborate coiffure, or on the wearing of jewellery or fine clothes, but on the inner personality"—1 Peter 3:4. (J. B. Phillips's Trans).

In olden days the practice of women was to overdress with many yards of material. Now we have the position reversed. The aim is rather towards undress than full dress.

Boys and young men should refrain from reading obscene, sexy and cheap books on physical culture. Never indulge in telling or listening to suggestive tales. Keep the mind pure, read daily your Bible and pray often.

### Planning.

When two people feel that they are suited for, and that they really love each other, their desire is to be married. Then begins another sublime stage in their companionship—the time when they feel they ought to become engaged and plan a home for their future life together. What a grand period in courtship this can be! The making of plans together, looking at houses, saving, preparing, and hoping that their marriage will be unique, and so it should be. However, it is well in all our planning to commit all our ways to God in prayer and ask His blessing. Do it together, as often as you can; it will be a good start for the future.

One word of warning: make sure your companion is in the Lord, having the same faith. It is the best way, and the Lord will the richer bless your life together.

ALEX ALLAN.

May each of us do our best now to teach others the words of God that this famine shall never occur because of our indifference.

May misfortune follow you all the days of your life—and never overtake you.

It is possible to have too much. A man with one watch knows what time it is. A man with two is never sure.

What a pity it is that a person can't dispose of his experience for as much as it cost him.

# SCRIPTURE READINGS

FOR NOVEMBER, 1962

4	Genesis 7	2 Peter 2
11	Genesis 8	2 Peter 3
18	Psalms 45	Hebrews 1
25	Psalms 8	Hebrews 2

## THE CHRISTIAN GROWTH

(2 Peter 1:3-11)

IN these verses we have the apostle Peter's exhortation to all Christians to grow. He sets out first the high position and privilege of the believer, and concludes with his final destiny. The first is at the very threshold of the new life in Christ, and the intervening effort is the means under God by which the final destiny is assured.

Divine power, and that alone, can provide "all things that pertain to life and to godliness." The life is the spiritual life which is eternal, begotten in the heart by the Holy Spirit through the divine message and born at baptism. Godliness is the mark of God's presence through a life of pious and holy living. That power has given the means of attainment in giving the knowledge of Jesus. That knowledge constitutes a call to follow the example He set us of the glory of a holy life of perfect behaviour, which was rewarded by man with crucifixion, and approved of God by resurrection. The story is in the gospels, and is bound up with all the other portions of Scripture, both old and new covenants. Obviously if we apply our whole soul's effort to acquire that knowledge, we shall assimilate the divine power which gave the writings. The power is in the divine mind which alone makes the Word itself powerful. This is not worship of the "letter" but it involves us in whole-hearted acceptance of it. No-one can reach up to God without the means He has provided for the purpose. Once we lose our respect for the writings, we lose our grip on the divine life.

"The exceeding great and precious promises" are not promises of a better world and a more comfortable life here, though life is immeasurably enriched by the necessary self-sacrifice and self-denial like Christ's. Life so lived is foretaste of and preparation for the glory of heaven in spiritual rapture with the Deity. The restoration must really restore the vital living organism for which Christ died if it is to be effective, and that can be accomplished only by the changed lives of the members—humble prayerful lives given over to practising the precepts of Jesus and spreading the news of His love. No amount of outward show can substitute these, and without them the show is vain.

The promises are essential to Christian life, giving incentive to live here, without regard for anything which would turn us away from the final goal; heaven itself. The abundant entry into the eternal kingdom is worth all that we can ever do or sacrifice.

We do not escape the "corruption which is in the world through lust" by getting more material prosperity and pleasure out of present conditions. It is certainly our business to improve the lot of others while we are here, but escape from the corrupt world is only possible by transfer into the spiritual existence which is eternal, and begins here in the "inward man" (2 Cor. 4:16). The world continues in the power of the evil one and getting out of it into the kingdom of God is the only way out. We do not escape a corrupt world by reforming it, though practice of godliness lightens its darkness.

The spiritual man is a partaker of the divine life. Have we considered the wonder of this? If our baptism was that surrender to the divine will which it should be, the share of the divine nature began then. But it must grow. We cannot expect the final triumph unless we develop. In our passage we have Peter's recipe by divine inspiration for the development of Christian character without which the life is a failure. The steps in this progress are given as faith, virtue, knowledge, self-control, patience, brotherly kindness and love. Provision is made for this progress from our Christian babyhood until we are mature—full-grown. The growth is from fundamental faith to love of divine quality. It requires our choice and effort, continual prayer, diligent study of the Word and watchfulness over our own behaviour at all times. The Saviour's warnings taken to heart will help us with the last: "and what I say unto you I say unto you all, Watch" (Mark 13:37). "Ye know not the hour"; our eternal destiny depends upon our being ready.

What use can a Christian be who merely assents to the truth of the gospel story? Unless we show, at least, gradually increasing good behaviour and changing attitudes—that is virtue—we remain "babes." The practice of virtue brings experiences into our lives which teach us, and so increase our knowledge of ourselves and others. Application of the instructions of Jesus through His own and His apostles' teaching and example develops ability to choose the actions and attitudes we take. So we learn to do good and eschew evil—self-control—which, with the Christian, is Christ-control. Finding this a struggle with self, needing divine aid, we have to cultivate patience with ourselves and with others, and in bearing trials. God may well permit us to suffer, but never more than we are able to bear, and we have to revere Him, learning in whatever circumstances we are placed to accept



them with reverence for the Disposer of all—godliness.

Our own endeavours will make us sympathetic and loving towards all in the same great race. We learn our weakness and have need of human as well as divine aid. "And the help each gave the other was the help that came from Thee"—so we "have fervent love among" ourselves (1 Peter 4:8)—"brotherly love." Even this takes time to grow, but the final development is love like our Saviour's own, embodied in the "first and greatest commandment," and the "second like unto it," and illustrated in the expression of the apostle Paul, "who loved me and gave himself for me."

There is no higher ideal in this life, and no more glorious consummation, than the exceeding great and precious promises. If we want to be useful and fruitful, this programme will be ours. The consequences of neglect may indeed be everlasting loss. The consequence of "giving diligence" (verse 10) will be "the entrance into the eternal kingdom." The Lord give us grace for this endeavour.

R. B. SCOTT.

#### SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR 1963

Bro. Scott has again undertaken to compile the Notes for 1963. Once more we express our deepest gratitude to our brother for devoting time, trouble and abilities to this task. We are sure that the blessing the Notes bring to many is ample reward for our brother's work. Bro. Scott is also compiling the list of Suggested Readings for use by the churches for next year.

May we here remind readers, especially church secretaries, that these cards will be available towards the end of December, but application may be made for them now. Please write Paul Jones, 41 Pendragon Road, Birmingham 22 B, stating number required and enclosing postal order to cover cost—1d. per card. Thank you.

Editor.

## CORRESPONDENCE

DEAR Bro. Melling.—After reading the front page article in the current (September) issue of the S.S., I have again been reminded of the inexcusable apathy, in this country, to the soul-destroying effect of the evolutionary dogma on an already corrupt and ailing society. You are to be congratulated for offering it to your readers.

The springs of cultural life are being poisoned daily in the classrooms of our educational institutions, when the mind is at its most impressionable and formative.

It is here, at this stage in the life of every individual member of society,

that a process of brain washing begins in which the Bible is discredited and rejected, in the belief that it is no longer relevant.

The B.B.C., television, the cinema, the pornographic exhibitions to be seen on bookstalls, and advertisements everywhere meeting the eye, add their quota. These are the pipelines feeding our prisons and corrective institutions beyond capacity because of the steep increase in crime, sex, intemperance, violence, and increasing disrespect for law and order—even of common decency.

The tendency to equate democracy with the concept of a "freedom" to do "just what we like, irrespective with its entail of "couldn't care less," is eloquent testimony to the demoralising effect of this false dogma.

That evolution is a false dogma and has no basis in science is not as widely known as it should and could be—if only the Lord's people would take the trouble to inform themselves and leave the sidelines.

Sir Arthur Keith, some years ago, was honest enough to observe—"Evolution is unproved and unprovable. We believe it because the only alternative is special creation and that is unthinkable."

Prof. D. M. S. Watson, B.B.C. broadcaster (of "Sixth Formers" Series, a few years ago) has said the same, and refused to debate. This refusal is shared by Julian Huxley.

The quotation—one among many—is given to expose the real reason why so many scientists believe evolution.

It is not because the theory has been "proved" by scientific investigation—carried on for over one hundred years now—but because it is "unprovable," and more specifically because they are not prepared to accept the only "alternative, special creation," at any price.

Evolution is thus a dogma, not a scientific concept built upon fact, but a philosophical alternative to the Christian faith, rapidly becoming identified with Communism, to which scientific humanism is closely allied and will be increasingly so in the future ahead, a future in which it is the aim of Huxley and his humanists to "take over" from God.

"Operationally," he declares God is beginning to resemble not a ruler, but the last fading smile of a cosmic Cheshire cat—"Religion without Revelation" and "The Humanist Frame" in which the genetic prospect for the human race can only be described as terrifying in the extreme.

It is time, therefore, we bestirred ourselves and took courage from the fact that an increasing number of scientists are rejecting Darwinism and exposing its weaknesses, which are many.

I am sending some pamphlets under separate cover which it is believed will be useful. It is to be deplored that there are too few publications in the U.K. on

this subject, designed to meet the evolutionist on his own ground. The Evolution Protest Movement is trying to fill the gap in this respect and should receive all the support we can give, for it is truly missionary in its spirit, honours the inspired Word of God, the Lord Jesus.

JAS. JOLLEY.

## NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

**Kentish Town**—autumn rally, 1963—Kentish Town is so far from the North and Midlands that we could hardly expect the usual attendance, but we were most happy to welcome well over 50 in the afternoon when five brethren discussed the question of causes of division, and how to avoid them. It was necessary to discuss principles rather than specific cases, and this was done quite thoroughly with agreement on all main points. The motives at the roots and the practical outcomes were talked over. We trust that all who came took to heart what was said. It is obvious that there is a widespread consciousness of need for unity, which is all to the good; but most suggested remedies seem to involve the sinking of principles to achieve an outward form rather than a return to New Testament standards.

Bro. Winstanley led and summed up the forum, and in the evening, to a somewhat larger audience, preached on "The Wounds of Jesus."

Gratitude was expressed to the visitors, some of whom came a long way, and to the sisters who catered for our bodily needs with their usual success, refreshments being handed round again before our distant visitors took their journeys.

**Kentish Town**—anniversary meetings—We were glad indeed to welcome visitors from many parts. Bro. E. McDonald presided over the afternoon session and reminded us of the need for change in approach, due to great changes in society since the chapel was built in 1871, and of our plea for unity. A short report was made of the year's activities, including the beginning of our two months' mission with Bro. Nisbet, who presided over the evening meeting. We had the services of Bro. Mountford, from Summer Lane, Birmingham, as speaker, and enjoyed and profited by his addresses in afternoon and evening, on "Remove not the ancient landmarks" and "The Hands of Jesus." May God be praised for these times of happy fellowship and encouragement.

The services of Bro. T. Nisbet are warmly appreciated and contacts have been made with numbers who have never been in our meeting-house before. Pray for the blessing of God on our labours.

R. B. SCOTT.

**Newtongrange**.—The church held its Anniversary Mission, 22nd to 30th September, beginning with a social gathering. Many of the churches in the district were represented and we do hope much good was the result of our meeting. Brethren L. Purcell (Motherwell) and Wm. Hendren (Belfast), did the preaching to a capacity company of 140. During the week, meetings were held every evening with an average attendance of 35, Bro. Hendren preaching, our Bro. did not spare himself and we are indeed grateful to the church in Belfast in allowing him to be with us during this past week.

On Lord's Day evening, our concluding meeting, we were delighted when one came forward and acknowledged Jesus as her Lord and Master deciding to obey Him in His appointed way. We pray that our Sister McVee will be kept in the faith and be a blessing and a glory to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ all the days of her life. We also thank our brethren for their prayers and assistance in the work of the Lord in this area.

W. H Allan

**Tranent**.—We have just concluded a two months' mission, with Bro. Dougall as the preacher. Though the ground proved hard and strong, we are happy to say that some seed fell on the good ground, sprang up, and bore fruit to the saving of a precious young soul. John Colgan, son of Sister Agnes Colgan, heard the gospel ably preached by our brother, and decided to put on his Lord in baptism. This was carried out that same hour, of the night, August 5th. We give all the glory to God, and rejoice in the further proof of the power of the gospel unto salvation. We pray that he will remain faithful, and with God's help, be the means of proclaiming to others the Word of Truth.

D. Scott.

**Tunbridge Wells** (5 Mount Ephraim Road)—On Friday, September 21st, John Cane, aged sixteen and a half, was baptised into Christ. John has attended the meetings of the church very regularly for a number of months and his obedience to Jesus is the fruit of a long process of faithful preaching and teaching. All praise to God!

We thank our brethren at Kentish Town, London, for allowing us the use of their meetinghouse and facilities.

A. E. Winstanley.



(Conducted by  
A. E. Winstanley,  
43a Church Road,  
Tunbridge Wells,  
Kent.)

## "THE PRIVATE HELL . . ."

(Specially for Teenagers)

IN the "Daily Mail" of September 28th, there was an article with this heading: "The Private Hell of the Man Next Door." Startling? Yes! but it was about a startling subject: alcoholism.

### What is Alcoholism?

Alcoholism is alcoholic poisoning; *i.e.*, the bloodstream poisoned by alcohol. In this condition the addict (for such he is) actually drinks to live! And yet, by continuing to take alcohol into his bloodstream he is signing his death warrant as surely as if he were to drink strychnine. It is a vicious circle. He is in the grip of a tyrant. The alcohol in his system cries out for more, and more, and more; and he must have it, even though in the end it will kill him.

### How many are there?

Nobody can say with certainty how many alcoholics there are in Great Britain. About 2,500 are having treatment in hospitals. There must be many, many more, who remain anonymous. However, authorities estimate that "in a population of our size there must be about 80,000 chronic alcoholics and 344,000 in the early stages—nearly half a million."

### How Does it Happen?

On September 27th, there was launched a National Council of Alcoholism. The aims of this body are good: to give publicity to this terrible thing, to provide more and better treatment, and to encourage research. That's fine, but what a pity to read this: "the chairman emphasised that it was not a temperance movement." One paper reported the chairman as saying that he himself was "a moderate drinker." And he a Church of England "Bishop"!

Well, how does a man get to be an alcoholic? By drinking intoxicants. Just that! And where is the sense or reason of a society of drinkers which sets out to cure a condition which in turn exists by drinking?

### What is the Cure?

How can an alcoholic be cured? One treatment is by means of drugs which induce a strong revulsion to any intoxicating drink. After taking the drug, he is nauseated by even a small drink—violently sick indeed. Isn't this a strange thing? The average healthy

person is nauseated by the first drink. His system cries out: "I don't want this," and tries to throw it out. That's the body's safety mechanism, put there for our safety by the merciful Creator. (The same thing happens when a person smokes for the first time.) Yet (unfortunately) many people persist until they have "acquired the taste for it," and laid the foundation for physical death and spiritual ruin. Acquired the taste? By that time the poison is really in the bloodstream and the process leading to chronic alcoholism has begun.

### Is this Logic?

Is it logic to say that you want to cure the alcoholic, but that you do not wish to persuade people not to drink? Put it like this: alcoholism is a disease. It kills people. The condition depends on drinking. In order to be cured, the alcoholic must stop drinking. Isn't it simply commonsense to say: Don't drink at all? Of course it is. Prevention is better than cure. Young folks, don't ever trifle with this terrible, powerful thing: alcohol. Don't ever think you'll be able "to take it or leave it alone." Don't take it, ever. Always leave it alone. Remember, every drunkard (that's an old-fashioned word for alcoholic) began with the first drink. The drink never to take? The "first," of course.

## FOR YOUNG CHRISTIANS

The theory of evolution does not agree with observed facts. It is the rule without exception that every species in the vegetable or animal kingdom, brings forth "after its kind." Like produces like. Read Genesis one and note that this law was ordained by the Creator in the beginning. The seed in the plant is the means of procreation—that by which the same plant is brought forth again. The same principle is true with regard to animals and human beings. (See Genesis 1:24-28). In the spiritual kingdom the same is true. Jesus said that the "seed is the Word of God" (Luke 8:11). When the pure word of God is received into the good soil of an honest heart, believed and obeyed, it produces a Christian. The Word of God **only** produces Christians only.

UNCLE ALBERT.

## OBITUARY

**Blackburn (Hamilton Street).**—It is with regret and sorrow we record the passing of another of our faithful aged members, in the person of our Brother Robert Pritt, aged 70. Up to sickness coming upon him, he was faithful at the Lord's Table and other services, faithful in his adherence to the Word of Christ and His apostles. Although not a platform man, his manner of life was a sermon in itself, in that he was of a meek and quiet spirit, and where the Christian faith was being undermined in his presence, he was there up and doing for the Master. Though sad at his loss, we rejoice; for we know in whom he believed and trusted. Our elder brother, John Pritt, conducted the funeral services at the chapel and the grave side. The floral tributes were a testimony in themselves to our late brother. For his sorrowing wife and family, we pray God will comfort them all. **H.W.**

**Hindley.**—It is with deeply-felt sorrow we report the passing of Bro. George Muskett on Lord's Day, September 30th, 1962, at an age of 70 years.

He was added to the Lord on November 5th, 1950 and since then was a consistent follower of Jesus.

Although he passed through much tribulation in his closing years, he was a testimony to the refining grace of the Saviour.

To his sorrowing loved ones, we tender our sympathy, and commend them to the

love of God who is able to sooth every sorrow and wipe away every tear.

"Thought we are called to part,  
Amid these scenes of pain,  
Yet we remain still joined in heart,  
And hope to meet again."

Tom Kemp.

### NOTICE

Will any Church desiring the service of Bro. Tom Nisbet during 1963 please send application to R. McDonald, Aldersyde, 10 Mardale Road, Bennett Lane, Dewsbury, Yorks?

### CHURCHES OF CHRIST HOLIDAY FELLOWSHIP

AFTER careful thought, it has been decided to use the above title instead of Vacation Bible School. This is to help remove a misconception in some minds. We have learned that some who have not attended previous Bible Schools wrongly imagined that we had two weeks of meetings—morning, afternoon and night! This is not the case. During the fortnight, every weekday afternoon is free time. Two days a week there are no morning meetings or evening meetings. In other words, there is adequate free time for rest and recreation, whilst there are also times set aside for study, worship and service.

After applying to scores of places all over the country, we have been able to find a place for the Holiday Fellowship, 1963. It will be held, if the Lord will, at Duncan Hall School, Scrabby, near Great Yarmouth, for two weeks, July 20th to August 2nd. In view of the distance involved, it is hoped to reduce charges for accommodation. This will offset the extra cost of travelling. Further details in due course.

A. E. Winstanley.

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

**NYASALAND Mission:** Contributions to **W. STEELE**, 31 Niddrie Road, Portobello, Edinburgh, Mid Lothian.

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