

# The SCRIPTURE STANDARD

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

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## *Practical Faith*

ANY subject, for example music, art, building, requires first a grounding in its theory. But theory alone is of little use; practice counts even more. In other words, after we have learned the theory, action is required. It would be of no use if, in the erection of a building, the sand, bricks, cement, frames, etc. were sent to the job, and the workmen simply stood there and looked at them. Although the plan and the materials were there, these alone without action would not put up the building.

### **Salvation in the Old Testament**

The same applies from a scriptural standpoint. The plan and guide for the church are found in the one and only source, the Bible. All matters of faith and practice are laid down by the divine Architect—God. In Heb. 2:7 we are told that “Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, prepared an ark to the saving of his house.” Although Noah was given the pattern how the ark was to be built, although he knew what was to be done, if Noah had done nothing about it he and his family would not have been saved. What saved them was the practical exhibition of faith, for “he was moved with fear,” and he enjoyed the blessedness of his active faith.

When Abraham was called of God (Gen. 22) to take his only son as an offering to God, had he merely heard without gathering the wood for the fire, the rope for tying up Isaac, saddling the ass, etc., his faith would not have become practical and acceptable to God. When he moved towards Mount Moriah his faith became practical and resulted in great blessing—that in his seed should all the families of the earth be blessed.

When Naaman the leper (2 Kings 5) was told by Elisha the prophet to wash in the Jordan river, if he had merely stood on the bank of the river he would not have been cleansed. Only after he went into the water and washed did he come out clean. Practical faith.

One other example from the Old Testament: when the Israelites left Egypt for the promised land, the Egyptian army was behind them and the Red Sea in front. Moses encouraged them with the words, “Fear not: stand still and see the salvation of the Lord.” Yet even these words would not have saved his people. They had to “Go forward,” to show their faith in Moses and God by activity. Active faith brought safety.

### **Salvation in the New Testament**

Let us come now to the New Testament. In John 9 the blind man was told to “Go and wash in the Pool of Siloam.” Had he remained there, however much he believed, his faith would have availed nothing. It must be practical. The woman

who had been ill for twelve years (Matt. 9:20-22) said within herself: "If I may but touch the hem of his garment I shall be whole." She had the faith, but only when she moved forward and touched Jesus's garment was she made whole. This was affirmed by Jesus, "Thy faith hath made thee whole"—her active faith. The lesson is driven home by James (2:22): "Seest thou how faith wrought with works, and by works was faith made perfect?" Practical faith is faith made perfect.

One of our greatest examples is Saul of Tarsus. Determined to persecute the Christians, he had received letters of authority from the High Priest at Jerusalem to bring them bound to prison. In the rage of his fierce opposition he heard a voice saying, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" Realising his guilt he became penitent and asked "Who art thou, Lord?" His faith in Him who called brought about repentance, and he responded by asking "What wilt thou have me to do?" He was told to go into Damascus—to do something, to act. Ananias, a disciple of the Lord, was told to go and tell Saul what he must do: "And now, why tarriest thou; arise and be baptised and wash away thy sins, calling upon the name of the Lord" (Acts 22:16). Although Saul had faith, would he have received salvation if he had not done what he was told? We know that it was only when he arose and was baptised, calling on the Lord's name, that his sins were washed away through the blood of Christ.

#### Hearers and Doers

Christians too are saved by their practical faith. In reference to the Lord's supper Jesus said, "This do in remembrance of me" (Luke 22:19). To read about the Lord's table, think about it, accept it as true would avail nothing unless we carry out the Lord's commands to observe it.

In every instance quoted we see that it was not simply the hearing of the advice or commands given, nor mere faith in their truth that brought blessing but doing, activity. James writes (1:25), "Be ye doers of the word and not hearers only" and that "Whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the word, this man shall be blessed in his deed."

Are you, dear unsaved friend, among those who hear the preaching of the gospel, enjoy it, or read of it, believe, have faith, but are not willing to show active faith toward God and His word? "Repent and be baptised for the remission of your sins" (Acts 2:38) and fill the ranks of the faithful doers of the word.

T. W. HARTLE.

## *Extracts from David King's Memoirs*

### The Bible in the School

WE shall never see a kingdom whose subjects are of the highest order unless the Bible finds its way into the hands and hearts of the people. Without the Bible they will not be influenced to that preparation needful for the higher glory of the future life. Bible truth is the true regenerator of mankind. Education without that truth is incomplete and inefficient. We need the Bible in the church, in the family, in the school, and in the hand of every individual able to gather its meaning. (p. 101).

### State Religion

"The government should assert the Christianity of the nation," say some, "and the church should be united to the State." These men contend that the Bible should be supplied at the cost of the nation, and that the Bible and religion should be taught in rate-aided schools. The result has been a vast expenditure of national funds . . . upon an already rich and endowed State church which, by baptismal regeneration, teaching semi-popish and open worldliness, has made more infidels than Christians, more sceptics than believers.

Willinghcod is the great law of the Bible and of Christianity. To man is not committed the authority to compel his fellow men to worship; nor . . . to pay for the worship of others, nor for printing, circulating, preaching, teaching the Bible. To the church—to those who will—is left the honour, the responsibility, the labour, the cost of disseminating the Bible and its truths. (pp.101-2).

#### A Church of the Right Kind

Mere outward proprieties will not make a useful church. There are scores of churches where there is no discord in music, and no breach of taste in the preaching, and where the congregation, like the Amalekites that Gideon saw, sleep in the valley like grasshoppers for multitude. Splendidly executed anthem and solo roll over the cultured taste of gaily apparelled auditory, and the preaching may be like the pathos of Summerfield, or the thunderclap of George Whitefield. Upholstery may bedeck to utter gorgeousness, and chandeliers flash upon a fashionable congregation, in which you see not one poor man's threadbare coat, and yet that church may be a ghastly sepulchre, full of dead men's bones—an ecclesiastical ice-house.

One enterprising church! How many tracts it might scatter! How many hungry mouths it might fill! How many poor churches it might help! How many lights it might kindle! How many songs it might inspire! How many criminals it might reclaim! How many souls it might save! (pp.204-5).

#### The Old Church

(1) Rise and progress of the apostasies, sectarianism, and disunion result from the abandonment of that one perfect faith and order, given to the primitive church by the apostles of Jesus.

(2) Union of believers in one body and the full efficiency of the church cannot be realised without a complete return to that faith and order.

(3) Strict adherence to the things taught, instituted, and commanded by the apostles is fully sufficient to secure that complete return.

(4) Writings of the apostles and evangelists . . . in the N.T. are clear, ample, and the only requisites to a right understanding of the things commanded and instituted by the apostles.

To the Bible then, without any human law or creed, let us give ourselves up. That which cannot be proved from Scripture let us abandon—that which can be thus proved let us retain, or, if departed from, restore. Let us seek the "old paths where the good way is" . . . Let us make Christians—not Episcopalians, Independents, Presbyterians, Wesleyans. (pp.207-8).

#### Church Membership

Continued association with the church depends upon *life*, not upon baptism, not upon an ordinary amount of morality, not upon the absence of great sins—drunkenness, lying, fornication, and others—all of which exclude until repented of, but upon *life*. (p.217).

#### Concerning the Church

We hear of denominational churches, as Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, etc., but there are no denominational churches in the Scriptures. The church in the N.T. is not an invisible church, not a denominational church, not a national church (p.225).

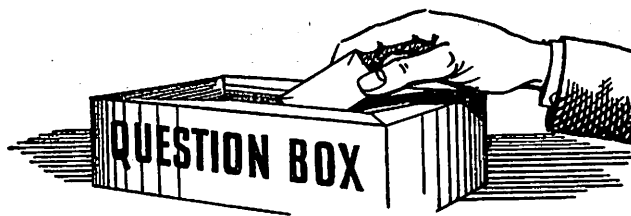
#### The Church and the Apostles

The works of God, like Himself, are perfect. Legislation for the church of God was perfected ere the apostles fell asleep in Jesus!

The churches they set in order were designed as models till the end of the age—not in the defects and sins of their members, but in the faith and polity established by the apostles. To this end they have left us imperishable documents as the only standards of appeal.

The Christian is called upon to regard not only the commands of the apostles, but the approved examples of the churches. (1 Cor. 7:17; 1 Thes. 2:14).

In every instance of deviation from the Jerusalem model, even by churches fully sincere, failure has been the result. A sectarian and powerless church is folly surpassing that of the builders of Babel. (p.225).



CONDUCTED BY  
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**Q.** In Gen. 5:24 we read, "And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him." What does this mean?

**A.** Enoch was born 622 years after Adam and was contemporary with him for 318 years—"the seventh from Adam" (Jude 14).

By the statement that he "walked with God," is meant literally that "he pleased God." It is so translated in the Septuagint, from which it is taken in Heb. 11:5. But it suggests even more, for it is a relic of the finest paradise when man walked and talked with God in holy familiarity. The ground of Enoch's walking, however, was faith (Heb. 11:5) and not sight. This is remarkable in an age of limited revelation (although special revelation was granted Enoch, see Jude 14-15), and amidst increasing wickedness of the world, which was eventually to lead to the Flood.

Enoch lived for 365 years, which was a comparatively short life for those days. But this was a reward for his righteousness, for we are told that "God took him" (Gen. 5:24). If this were the only statement it might be construed just to mean that he met an early death, but Heb. 11:5 says, "By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death." The word "translated" is the Greek word *metatithemi*, which literally means "to transfer to another place." Enoch was therefore suddenly removed from mortality to immortality, without experiencing death as other men, although the manner of the "translation" is not revealed, and it is idle to speculate.

This is reinforced by the expression in Gen. 5:24, "and he was not; for God took him." The inspired writer to the Hebrews expands this by saying, "and was not found, because God had translated him." The only other Old Testament character who was "translated" was Elijah. After Elijah's removal the sons of the prophets sent out fifty men who searched diligently for three days but failed to find him because God had taken him (2 Kings 2:17), although in this case the manner of his "translation" had been observed. And so also it seems to have been in the case of Enoch. His friends no doubt searched diligently for him, but he "was not found" for God had removed him from the earth.

*"Working in you that which is  
well-pleasing"*

(Heb. 13:21)

(Substance of ten-minute message given at the conference of brethren at Tranent on April 16th).

THIS passage of scripture revolves around the key word WORK. The scriptures teach that no matter what God would have us be, nothing can be accomplished without our co-operation. God gave us wills of our own so that we should be free people, free to a large extent to do as we please. But without the help of God we cannot be what Paul states in Rom. 8:17: "And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." So God without our help cannot make of us that which is well-pleasing to him.

**"Working in you that which is well-pleasing"**

This passage of scripture comes at the end of a letter which is full of do's and don'ts, and what to look out for and forward to. The last chapter is a summing up. Paul starts it this way: "Let brotherly love continue," then tells us to be content with what we have; we are to obey them that rule over us; and then, as it were, a blessing by which means we arrive at our text, "Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, **working in you that which is well-pleasing.**" The Twentieth Century New Testament reads, "May God make you perfect in everything that is good, so that we may be able to do His will." Weymouth renders it, "Fully equip you with every grace that you may need for the doing of His will." Moffatt in his translation reads, "Furnish you with everything that is good for the doing of His will, creating in your lives by Jesus Christ what is acceptable in His own sight."

What does all this add up to? One thing and one thing only, and we would do well never to forget it. God can only make of us what we allow Him to, nothing more and nothing less. Some time ago my occupation took me into the home of a man whose hobby was wood carving. Two pieces of work took my eye, one a person struggling on the sea of life and trying desperately to reach a cross on a rock, underneath the words, "Rock of Ages." The other was a hatless man well fed and of good means, surveying some work either in progress or completed, with the title, "The Master Mind." I suppose those two pieces of wood were at the beginning of no particular shape or size, but under the skilful hand of the carver with his mallet and chisel, they became what I saw.

God in the beginning said, "Let us make man in our image" (Gen. 1:26); and His desire is that we should go through life as such, in the very likeness of God Himself, allowing Him to mould and fashion us in a way which the world knows not of, working in every one of us that which is well-pleasing to Him and to Him alone. What is it we read in Jer. 18:6 (and I fear there is a note of sadness here. Do you detect it?) "O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the Lord. Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in mine hand, O house of Israel."

But we must be aware at all times that we individually play a most important part, that of allowing the sculptor to chip off the pieces He knows are not needed, shaping the features so as to reveal an intelligent yet humble type of person, eyes that can be far-seeing yet hold a look of loving-kindness and sympathy; a mouth firm and bold, but harmless in its speech, from which flows a knowledge of Christ Himself, and words that will help some poor sinner to find his way back to God. A well-developed body to carry on the work of the Lord in an unselfish manner; arms and hands full of strength, yet tender to those who are young in the faith; feet prepared to go anywhere they are asked to further the cause of Christ, and shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace (Eph. 6:15).

It is only when this is accomplished that He can work in us that which is well pleasing to Himself. Let us really mean it when we sing:

"Have Thine own way, Lord, have Thine own way;  
Thou art the Potter, I am the clay,  
Mould me and make me after Thy will,  
While I am waiting, yielded and still."

**CORRESPONDENCE***'This Do . . .'*

Dear Bro. Editor,

Why all this concern over cups? Since the Restoration Movement started we have all been divided on the number used: one, two, four and individual have been with us for years. At Albert Street,

Wigan, a container and two cups have been used since 1878 and no person ever found fault with us.

The Lord's Supper consists of unleavened bread and the fruit of the vine, which is grape-juice. It is spoken of by Jesus as the cup, the contents being referred to by the name of the container: "For as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup ye do show forth the Lord's death till he come" (1 Cor. 11:26); "Take, eat, this is my body" (Matt. 26:26); "Drink ye all of it for this is my

blood of the new testament" (Matt. 26:29). The essential point is eating and drinking in remembrance.

If we seek to win souls for the Master we must make provision that they will be able to enjoy the fellowship and to worship in spirit and in truth with reverence and devotion. As the cup is the means of conveying the wine to each member, if few in number only one is needed; if more, two, and each member is able to fix his mind on things above without fear of dropping or spilling the contents and all things are done in order. Each congregation must decide for itself, but let us do all things in love.

W. SMITH.

Dear Editor,

The course of the controversy under the above heading (if so one-sided a correspondence can be thus described) has been more notable, we think, for its omissions than for what has been written.

Emphasis has been placed on the autonomous nature of the government which each church has of right, but there is surely something that is not right about a practice which, in effect, separates one community (or more) from others that only a short time before were in friendly association of like faith and order.

The right of a church to autonomy carries with it an autonomy of another kind; the right of each individual member of that church to hold and express—at the right time and place—his own opinion. In a quite small community unanimity may conceivably be achieved, but with increased membership divergence of opinion—on this matter under consideration—will inevitably develop. Individual cups are separatist both in effect and in intention; the one\* cup is social—communal—in effect, and believably also in intention. So wide a difference cannot be reconciled.

What then? One may envisage a body of people, some of whom favour the use of individual cups, while others of the same community favour the one cup of old custom, each with the right to follow its own way of thinking—which the church must grant to them. One party will keep the feast with many cups, the other with but one—a procedure which

[\*By one cup, we do not mean one cup only, but as many as are necessary while retaining the communal aspect of the feast.]

would be quite feasible, if the whole Church were in earnest about it. But what a sorry illustration it would be of that unity of which they had probably each sung: "We are not divided, all one body we"!

The one vital thing that is missing in the correspondence so far as it has gone, is the explanation of why and how individual cups came into being. There is, or was, a reason—a motive for it somewhere. Is there no-one prepared to attempt to justify their use? Two brethren opposed to them in their letters have declared that it is hygienic teaching which has produced them, one emphatically affirming that "individual cups are used upon hygienic grounds only." For ourselves, we are not so sure.

Not having been provided with a clear statement of purpose for the use of individual cups, we may allow ourselves to suppose three reasons, or motives for their action: (first) for the individual's sake, those of hypochondriacal state of mind, who carry about with them the fear of contagion wherever they go; (second) for the sake of others (which is as it should be) those who are not themselves troubled by such fears, yet for the sake of those who are, to minister to them in their fears; (third) for the sake of oneself and others, that is, for health's sake in general. If there is anything in Scripture that supports such actions as any of these in connection with the feast, we do not know of it. We would have thought if there had been, those who support the use of individual cups would have speedily produced it. If there is no scriptural support then it must have come from outside, say, the medical profession.

Whether too much notice can be taken of what the doctors tell us is a matter of opinion. I believe it to be perfectly true that medical history through the years has not been of such a character as to warrant any great belief in its teaching. One may be assured about this, that the recorded Scripture of the Lord—the Alpha and Omega—beginning and ending of all knowledge—at the institution of the feast, passing the cup, from which He Himself had partaken, on to His disciples, saying "All of you drink of it," set an example which will give more satisfaction to most believers than the most profound declaration of any doctor of this on any other age.

This writer confesses to almost com-

plete ignorance of how and when this movement for individual cups sprang into being. Racial antipathy which, in late years, has been so clearly revealed by the newspaper press, is more widely spread and deeply seated, we think, than was at one time realised, reaching back a long, long way into the past. With this in mind, we are driven to think that there may be more behind the individual cup than hygiene. That spirit which is now showing itself in demands for racial segregation can find no place for a communal rite which includes all kinds of people, without exception. Individual cups are a form of segregation, and are a way out of what may seem a difficult situation. But it is not God's way, "who has made from one blood every nation of men" (Acts 17:26 Mod. Version). What God has made "one", none may separate.

W. BARKER.

### "THIS DO . . ."

Dear Editor,

It would seem that our examination of the cups question is now fairly exhaustive. The complete lack of evidence for individual cups makes victory for the one cup virtually certain. We are therefore at the stage when a detailed examination of remaining objections (which have only served to confuse the issue) may be dealt with.

*The size of the assembly:* When one cup is no longer sufficient, what happens? In this case we have come to the point where a certain commandment cannot be complied with in a scriptural way. It is therefore necessary to resort to one of two possible expedients. We must either (a) split the congregation, or (b) split the cup. In either case it is evident that the same principle must apply, *i.e.*, the splitting process should not be any greater than absolutely necessary. If two congregations can use two cups (one cup each), there is no point in setting up ten separate assemblies for this purpose, and there is simply no question of each man worshipping alone. Similarly, since the whole principle of the matter is that we have a communal cup, there is no need to have ten cups where two will do, and the question of individual cups does not arise. This is a matter which must be left entirely to the local assembly to decide. They must act according to their knowledge of local conditions, *e.g.*, suitable premises, available men, etc. By

all means, when the question is one of essential expedients, let us have freedom.

*Hygiene:* I am a firm advocate of hygiene. In all our places of assembly we should have the best facilities we can afford to promote health and cleanliness. But we can go too far in this matter. The child brought up in a glass case and screened from every source of infection is most vulnerable when exposed to the rigours of close human contact. In most cases our best defence against disease is a dose of the very germ concerned, through close contact with others, or by inoculation. We are all aware of these facts. Certainly, we may contract certain diseases via the communal cup, but the disease of sin is more terrible than this by far (Matt. 23:25).

It is my firm conviction that there is a much greater chance of infection through the bread than through the cup. The hand is ever in contact with many things, the mouth seldom; but again we can go to extremes. I firmly believe, also, that disease is more often spread by infection through the breath than by any other method. Does this mean that we should refrain from coming together in meetings in confined spaces? If so, we shall henceforth meet no more as churches. Families will be disbanded, sweethearts will nevermore embrace in love, husband and wife must separate. This state of chaos would be the logical result of scientific hygiene. But there are compensating factors for the possibility of contamination through the communal cup.

Any other question remaining springs from the desperate attempts of some who seek to justify an unscriptural practice, and who sow their doubts in the fields of figurative language, in which they would demonstrate that many cups are one cup, etc. Our clear case is that one cup was used in one assembly, and that this is scriptural and a command, while individual cups are not.

I would advise any who are yet in doubt to examine my original article on the "Cup of the Lord" (*S.S.*, May, 1957) and to examine closely the historical and social influences which gave rise to this sinful innovation and scourge of the brotherhood.

JOHN M. WOOD.

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The history of human opinions, is scarcely anything more than the history of human errors.

## The Discontented Pendulum

IN an old "Reader" is a story that strikes at one of the greatest failings of mankind, the sin of procrastination and indolence. As the story goes, there was an old clock that had stood for fifty years in a farmer's kitchen, faithfully serving its owner without complaint. One day, for no apparent cause, it suddenly stopped. The shocked and surprised parts began to accuse one another. Finally the dial decided to launch an investigation as to the cause of the stoppage.

At last the pendulum gave a faint tick and confessed that it was the cause of this alarming situation. The pendulum had, as the story goes, simple become tired of its way of life. The pendulum said, "I happened, this morning, to be calculating, how many times I should have to tick in the course of only the next twenty-four hours; perhaps some one of you, above there, can give me the exact sum." The minute hand, being quick at figures, replied, "Eighty-six thousand, four hundred times." The pendulum went on to explain that the very thought of this was enough to wear one out, and when it began to multiply the strokes of one day by months and years, the prospect seemed impossible. Hence, it just decided to stop.

The dial replied, "Mr. Pendulum. I am really astonished that such a useful, industrious person as yourself, should have been seized by this sudden weariness. It is true, you have done a great deal of work in your time; so have we all, and are likely to do; which, although it may fatigue us to think of, the question is, whether it will fatigue us to do. Would you now do me the favour to give about half a dozen strokes, to illustrate my argument?"

The pendulum complied, and ticked six times at its usual pace. "Now," replied the dial, "May I be allowed to inquire if that exertion is at all fatiguing or disagreeable to you?" "Not in the least," replied the pendulum; "It is not of six strokes that I complain, nor of sixty, but of millions." "Very good," replied the dial; "But recollect that, although you may think of a million strokes in an instant, you are required to execute but one; and that, however often you may hereafter have to swing, a moment will always be given you to swing in."

This argument of the dial was irresistible, and upon its conclusion the wheels began to turn, the hands to move, and the pendulum to swing. The whole incident could have been avoided, had the pendulum attended to present duties, and allowed the morrow to take care of itself.

Many people who could have been successful are pitiable failures because they burden the present moment with the cares of the next. Someone said, "Take care of the minutes, and the hours will take care of themselves." We can't recall the past, and we have no assurance of the future. The present cares are burdensome enough without worrying about tomorrow. Jesus said, "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." The only responsibilities that we have are those of this very moment. We are inclined to despair, not of present duties, but of borrowed troubles.

As we approach our daily tasks, let us remember that "If you must swing, a moment will always be given you to swing in." We must not borrow tomorrow's burdens for we cannot borrow tomorrow's time to reckon with them. Thinking about future labour may prove to be more fatiguing than doing today's work. Let us cope with immediate problems. If we overload the present moment with the burdens of the future, it will become an impossible load that need never be borne.

The Alcoholics Anonymous organisation recognises that it is easier to resolve not to drink for one day than it is to resolve never to drink again. Their members are urged to cope with only one day at a time. This is simply a recognition of the fact that today is the only day we have anyway. If we will attend to present duties, we shall find that there is time for each of them, but if we try to do tomorrow's chores too, we shall likely neglect the opportunities of the moment, and fail in both.



Illusions of "a more convenient season" tomorrow are deceitful like a mirage in a desert; yet one of the most common errors is to postpone today's duties on the supposition that they can more readily be done tomorrow. While admitting that today's responsibilities have been shirked, we are prone to console ourselves by resolving to do right tomorrow. We pass our lives with resolutions for the future which the present never fulfills.

Remember that the race is not always to the swift. Perseverance often is the difference between success and failure. The Bible teaches us to work while it is called today, and never to give up. Paul said, "Let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap if we faint not" (Gal. 6:9). Invest your minutes wisely, and your hours will pay rich dividends. This thought is well put by Kipling:

"If you can fill the unforgiving minute  
 With sixty seconds worth of distance run,  
 Yours is the earth and everything that's in it,  
 And, what is more, you'll be a man, my son."

Franklin said, "Dost thou love life? Then do not squander time, for that is the stuff life is made of." To waste time is as sinful as wasting money or prostituting talents. Time is a trust; it comes to us as to God's stewards, to be wisely and profitably used. But think of the time that is lost! Many live beyond the allotted three score years and ten with scarcely an accomplishment except the accumulation of years. Others are cut down early in life, yet leave behind them lasting footprints on the sands of time. Jesus Christ spent but thirty-three years on earth, but in that short time, moved the world. The value of a life is not measured by length, but by quality of living.

Let us see that we attend to the present. It is all the time we have. "Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth" (Prov. 27:1). If we make the most of the present, we have done all that we can do. God never imposes a responsibility without supplying the means to discharge that responsibility. If we must work, there will be time in which to work; if we must give, there will be money to give; if we must suffer, there will be grace to bear it. Therefore, "Let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Heb. 12:1, 2).

—ROSS W. DYE in "Firm Foundation."

# SCRIPTURE READINGS

## FOR AUGUST

7—1 Chron. 17:16-27.	Matt. 20:17-34.
14—2 " 31:2-21.	" 21: 1-22.
21—2 " 34:14-28.	" 21:23-46.
28—Ezra 3.	" 22: 1-22.

### Saul

We pass from the consideration of Samuel's life and character to one far different. Samuel's work continued into his old age, and he appointed his sons to follow in his steps, but they did not. Read in particular 1 Samuel 7:15 to 8:3. It seems clear that the elders of Israel recognised the sad difference between parent and children, and this in part led to their request for a king. It was their departure from God's law that necessitated Judges or Leaders in place of High Priest, Priests and Levites. Samuel was in fact a prophet rather than a priest. He ruled by God's appointment, and no successor seemed to be in view. God therefore instructed him to appoint a

king in spite of the weakness and disobedience indicated by the request. They *would* have a king, to be like the nations around.

Which was the greater grief to Samuel? Was he most disappointed that the people were not satisfied with his rule, or in the bad behaviour of his sons—following in the footsteps of Eli's, in spite of warnings—or in the people's desire to be like the nations around instead of a peculiar people set apart for the worship and service of God?

The circumstances of Saul's appointment are described in 1 Samuel 9 and 10, and indicate a person of position in Israel, his father being a man of wealth, a willing and obedient son, handsome and exceptionally tall. He did not covet the position appointed to him, and shrank from the honour when the choice was made known to his people. More important still was it that God "gave him a new heart", a gift of prophecy, and a nucleus of faithful warriors. Moreover, he had the special blessing and promise of God through Samuel, of victory over the enemies of Israel.

At what point in Saul's career his

failure began we cannot be sure, but it was quite early when he made the mistake, due to fear, of thinking he could undertake the duty which belonged to the priests alone. This was nothing less than disobedience to God and disrespect for Samuel. From Samuel's rebuke we gather that Saul knew perfectly well that his action was against God's law. We must not suppose that he was unsuccessful as a king in all respects. Obviously he was a good leader or he could not have rallied the people as he did against the Philistines and other enemies, but he failed in moments of crisis. He should have waited for Samuel (1 Sam. 13:8-14) and not have been led astray by the wishes of the people (15:15 and 24). Perhaps he failed to realise the great responsibility of his position. He, so to speak, was the special ambassador of God Himself (1 Sam. 15:17).

From the time of his rejection of God and God's rejection of him and his sons as the monarchy, his life was clouded over with an evil disposition, named an "evil spirit from God". The affliction is spoken of in this way in the same sense that "God incited David" (2 Sam. 24:1; see also 1 Chron. 21), that is he permitted Satan to influence him. The picture is given in Job 2, but Job continued to trust God's goodness and power and so overcame. In the cases under notice Saul and David allowed Satan to master them. It was what we would call "natural" that Saul should give way to jealousy, both when "David slew his ten thousands," when David's talent with the lyre was exercised, and when David's wisdom was manifested in his behaviour. Finally when he knew that David was the chosen successor to the throne. At the same time he manifested at times a humble confession of his wrong-doing, exciting the hope of a sincere repentance.

It is a very sad story of falling away from the favour of God, and a warning indeed to us all of the power of evil to wreck a life begun with the favour of God, and high privileges and responsibilities. "God gave him a new heart," but he lost it through presumption and disobedience. There could hardly be a greater contrast than that between the Saul who sought Samuel for advice about his father's asses, and the Saul who, in despair because there was no response from God, sought Samuel through the forbidden agency of witchcraft. The king who had obeyed the law of God in cleansing the land from mediums and

wizards sought help from them in his distress.

Everyone who rejects the gospel of Christ comes to that point ultimately. In the touching words of Simon Peter, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life" (John 6:68, R.S.V.). To which the Saviour replied: "Did I not choose you, the twelve, and one of you is a devil?" May God strengthen us against every temptation, and give us grace for ready and willing obedience, however reasonable and attractive disobedience may be, and in however small a matter it may appear.

R. B. SCOTT.

## *Lesson Outlines.*

### SERIES 1, No. 16

**Conversion:** Jews and Gentiles in Iconium.

**Lesson Verses:** Acts 14:1-7.

**Memory Verse:** Acts 14:1.

**Objective:** "If you suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God in this name" (1 Pet. 4:16).

**Time:** A.D. 47-48.

**Place:** Iconium, modern Konieh in Asiatic Turkey, is a very ancient place about 300 miles east of Ismir, ancient Smyrna, with which and the Bosphorus it is connected by railway. In 1927 its population was about 47,500. In the midst of a fertile district it has carpet and silk industries.

**Persons:** Paul and Barnabas; Jews and Greeks. Paul and Barnabas again declared the Message first in the synagogue.

**Message:** They spoke so that a great number of Jews and Greeks believed. They remained a long time in Iconium, speaking boldly for the Lord, who gave attestation to the Message of his grace, granting signs and miracles to be done by Paul and Barnabas.

**Results:** The disobedient Jews against the brethren so that the Gentiles poisoned the minds of the Gentiles split into parties, the one part for and the other against the apostles. When Paul and Barnabas became aware of the Jews' intention to molest and stone them, they withdrew to Lystra and Derbe.

**Emphasis:** v. 2: Christians are called brothers (see John 21:23; Acts 1:15; 9:30; 11:1; 12:17; 15:1; 16:2, 40; 21:7, 17; 1 John 3:14, 16; 3 John 3, 5, 10). "Timothy

was well spoken of by the brothers of Lystra and Iconium" (Acts 16:2). v. 3: The attestation of the Lord to his gracious Message. "The apostles preached everywhere, the Master working with them and confirming the Message by the signs that authenticated it" (Mk. 16:20, Auth. N.T.).

"How shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation. It was declared at first by the Lord, and it was attested to us by those who heard him, while God also bore witness by signs, wonders, and various miracles, and by gifts of the holy Spirit distributed according to his will" (Heb. 2:3, 4, R.S.V.). "God, who knows the heart, bore witness to them giving them the holy Spirit, just as he did to us; and he made no distinction between us and them, but cleansed their hearts by faith" (Acts 15:8, R.S.V.).

vv. 2, 4-6. Jews and Gentiles in active opposition to the Message; "When they persecute you in one town, flee into the next." Words of instruction from Jesus in Matthew 10:23 (see also Acts 13:51; 14:20; 17:13, 14; 20:3). Gentiles persecute Gentiles (1 Thess. 2:14; 2 Thess 1:4).

Paul to Timothy: "Now you have observed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, my persecutions, my sufferings, what befell me at Antioch, at Iconium, and at Lystra, what persecutions I endured; yet from them all the Lord rescued me. Indeed all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted."

A. HOOD.

1955, and second, to visit brethren and missions in the Rhodesias. This second wish, however, took twenty-five years to materialise.

On April 7th, 1960, when I set off on my first missionary journey to the Rhodesias, I was welcomed at Bulawayo station by members of the congregation there. This was but a foretaste of the welcome supper at the home of the Bankstans, full-time workers in the Church of Christ, Queens Park West. My visits spread from Bulawayo to congregations at Gwelo, Salisbury, visiting members at Livingstone, and various missions at Kalomo, Namwianga mission.

I was also privileged to visit the African work as well, and preached and conducted a scripture class for Europeans' children. Did the same at Bulawayo, amongst various European schools, but while there was opportunity to do so at non-European schools my time did not avail me. Bulawayo, Gwelo and Salisbury and Livingstone are European congregations, and a great deal of work by them is done among the Africans where very many churches have been established, which are growing rapidly.

My stay in the Rhodesias with fellow-Christians, in which I covered some six thousand miles, has enriched me spiritually. It shall ever live in my heart, including the wonderful hospitality. For those who made my trip possible financially, I am very thankful to God.

T. W. HARTLE.

## NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

### Brevities

Do not reproach a man for the sin which he has committed, when God has forgiven him.

There is one way to be a gentleman, and there are a hundred ways not to be.

The trouble with blowing one's own horn is that it seldom leaves any wind for climbing.

It's easier to get folks to agree to do better tomorrow than to get them to do their best today.

There is no such thing as "idle gossip". Gossip is always a busybody.

Man may dress a wound, but God heals it.

He is a fool who cannot be angry; but he is a wise man who will not.

**Morley.**—We have pleasure in reporting an addition to our number, which has given us great joy. Whilst attending the Bible School at Hindley, Sis. A. Bishop was baptised on Lord's Day, June 5th. Our sister has been attending our meetings for some time. We rejoice at this further evidence of the power of the gospel, and our prayer is that she may remain faithful and be a loyal servant of the King of Kings.

HAROLD BAINES.

**Woodstock, Capetown.**—Two wishes of my heart have been fulfilled: first, to do full-time evangelistic service for the Lord, which was fulfilled in December,

## OBITUARY

**Devonport.**—It is with great sorrow that we record the passing away of our beloved sister in Christ Adelaide Allan, on Thursday, May 19th, at the age of seventy-three years. Baptised August 12th, 1953, she remained faithful to our Lord up to the time of her calling home. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord."

W. LAKEMAN.

### COMING EVENTS

Wigan, Albert Street: Week-end Rally on Saturday and Sunday, October 1st and 2nd (D.V.). Saturday 3 p.m.: Devotional service. Speakers, Bro. G. Lodge (Dewsbury), Bro. Jack Nisbet (Haddington). 4.45: Tea in schoolroom. 7.30 p.m.: Gospel meeting. Speaker, Bro. Edward Jess (Dalmellington). Lord's Day: 10.30 a.m., Breaking of bread; exhortation, Bro. Jack Nisbet; 2.15 p.m., Bible school; 7.30 p.m., Gospel meeting; speaker, Bro. Edward Jess. We cordially invite all members and friends to these meetings. Those desiring to stay over week-end write Walter Smith, 262 Scot Lane, Marsh Green, Wigan, Lancs.

Loughborough, Oxford Street. The church extends an invitation to all brethren to join in our anniversary rally on Saturday and Lord's Day, October 1st and 2nd. Saturday, tea 4.30; evening meeting six o'clock, to be addressed by Bren. J. Thomasson of Dewsbury and Paul Jones of Birmingham.

### CLEVELEYS AUTUMN RALLY

The rally will be held (God willing) in the Co-operative Hall, Beach Road, Cleveleys, on Saturday, September 10th.

There will be two speakers at the afternoon meeting which commences at 2 p.m. They will speak on subjects of their own choice and time will be allowed for discussion. Bro. J. Pritt (Blackburn) will be one speaker and he has chosen for his subject "Vessels of honour." After tea, which will be provided at a local café, Bren. L. Morgan (Hindley) and R. McDonald (Dewsbury) will preach the gospel.

Bro. W. Crosthwaite (Ulverston) will serve the church on the Lord's Day. We hope that those who can will stay over and enjoy a full week-end of witness and fellowship.

As always, it will help us to know approximately how many to expect for tea on the Saturday. All correspondence to Bro. Eric Winter, 77 Kelvin Road, Norbreck, Blackpool.

### CHANGE OF SECRETARY

Morley: Bro. Donald Hardy, 58 King Street, Drighlington, nr. Bradford, Yorks.

### CHANGE OF ADDRESS

From August 1st, 1960, until further notice: Harold Baines, c/o 26 Perry Street, Wendover, Bucks.

Bro. and Sis. W. T. Hurcombe, 61 Ladies Lane, Hindley, Wigan, Lancs.

An acre of performance is worth the whole world of promise.

Everything in the world may be endured except continual prosperity.

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**EVANGELIST FUND:** Contributions to R. McDONALD, "Aldersyde," 10 Mardale Road, Bennett Lane, Dewsbury, Yorks.

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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