

# The SCRIPTURE STANDARD

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

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Vol. 64 No. 3

MARCH, 1996

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## TO GOD BE THE GLORY

I'm sure that we sometimes use words from the N.T. without fully understanding their exact meaning. "Glory" is one such word which comes to mind. Congregations using the *Scripture Standard Reading Cards* will know that we have now reached John Chap. 17 where Jesus mentions the words "glory" and "glorify" many times. Even in the very first verse (in the prayer which is truly "The Lord's Prayer") Jesus says "Father the hour is come, *Glorify Thy Son, that the Son may also glorify Thee,*" (and at v.4) "I have *glorified Thee on earth,*" (and at v.5) "And now O Father, *glorify Thou Me with Thine own self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was.*" Perhaps this tiny sample of the many times "glory" is mentioned in John's gospel (and the Bible generally) illustrates the difficulty some of us may have in forming some idea of what is meant by "glory".

To quote just one other brief example; (in Acts 7:55) we read that when the first Christian martyr, Stephen, was about to be stoned to death "he, being full of the Holy Spirit, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God." How can any of us possibly imagine what Stephen saw, when he saw the glory of God (which was, apparently something quite separate from Jesus, who was, at the time, at the right hand of God). Clearly, we shall never quite know what Stephen saw but the subject is a challenging one. Prompted by our readings in John (and especially Chap. 17) I have taken a fairly superficial glance at "glory" and offer the following comments for what they are worth. When we remember that the word "glory"; "glorify", and its other variations, occur about 470 times in the Bible, it is clear that only a few of those references can be mentioned.

### A HIGH OPINION

The English word "glory" comes from the Latin *Gloria*, but obviously we are more concerned with its *Biblical* origins. Vine in his *Expository Dictionary* informs us that, in the N.T. "glory" comes from the Greek word *Doxa* which signifies, primarily, *an opinion* or *estimate* and relates to the *honour* resulting from a *good opinion*. "Glorify" is from *Doxazo* and refers to "a supposition" from which we accord praise and honour to whom it is due (and especially to God). "Doxologies" (those short signatures to hymns of praise) come from the Greek *Doxologia*.

Thus, "Glory" depends upon what we "suppose" about God: i.e. what is our opinion of God, or what is our estimate of God? How do we perceive the nature and the works of God? How do we react when confronted with God's self-revelation of Himself? God has partially revealed Himself in His works of creation (in the world around us and in the firmament: Ps. 19:1): and has also revealed Himself in the person of His Son, and His word. The vast preponderance of humanity seem to be quite unmoved by these considerations and have a low opinion of God, or, indeed, no estimation at all. On the other hand, there are some who

have such a high regard for God that they would praise and honour Him, and this honour, according to Vine, is the outcome of their high regard. "Glory then, consists of admiration, deference, praise, and honour which is based upon our high opinion of God.

#### THEOPHANY

"Theophany" is the technical term for God's self-revelation of Himself and, as we can imagine, His glorious appearances not only command undivided attention, but attract fear, respect, deference and homage from men. John says that "no man hath seen God at any time" (1:18) and Paul confirms this by saying "God dwelleth in light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen nor can see." (1 Tim. 6:16). However, although God has never actually been seen, or can be, HIS GLORY has been seen a great many times. By the very nature of God it is unlikely that His appearances could be other than mysterious, frightening and awesome. Certainly when Moses saw "the glory of God" on Mt. Sinai he "did exceedingly fear and shake."

✦ God's initial self-revelation was through His angels (Gen. 16:7 etc.) but the first mention of God's "Glory" is in the Exodus when God led Israel out from their bondage in Egypt "in a pillar of cloud by day, and a pillar of fire by night" (Ex. 13:21). God was present in the cloud and "His glory" was seen there. A little later God descended upon Mt. Sinai in the fire and earthquake, and "His Glory" so frightened onlookers that they were paralysed with fear. "A cloud covered the mount and *the glory of the Lord* abode upon Mt. Sinai, and the cloud covered it for six days. And the sight of the glory of God was like devouring fire on the top of the mountain in the eyes of the children of Israel." (Ex. 24:17). This is perhaps the nearest we get to finding out what the glory of the Lord looked like, for the onlookers saw it as resembling "devouring fire on the top of the mountain". The only other hint we get is from Ezekiel who says, "As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord. And when I saw it fell on my face and I heard a voice of one that spake" (Ezek. 1:28). Later Ezekiel also added, "And behold *the glory of the God of Israel* came from the way of the east and His voice was like many waters, and the earth shined with His glory" (Ezek. 43:1).

When Moses asked to see God's glory, God replied that He would pass before Moses but added, "Thou canst not see My face: for there shall no man see Me and live. . . . and it shall come to pass while My glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a cleft of the rock and will cover thee with My hand while I pass by. And I will take away Mine hand, and thou shalt see My backparts: but My face shall not be seen". (Ex 33:18). Surely this must be one of the most mysterious scenes in the Bible. Eventually those transient manifestations of God become more permanent in nature, and "God's glory" resided, first of all, in the Tabernacle. When the Tabernacle was erected the Lord took possession of it, and when Moses entered it, a cloud hovered at the door and God spoke there with Moses "face to face" (Ex. 33:10). The cloud dark by day but luminous by night, covered the tent and "the glory of the Lord" filled it to such a degree that sometimes Moses could not enter it (Ex. 40:34). "God's glory" was also present on the Mercy Seat, between the wings of the Cherubims of the Ark of the Testimony (Num. 7:89; Ex. 25:22). Probably the glory was not seen continually but gleamed forth occasionally from the cloud which concealed it. At length, when the Temple of Solomon was dedicated, the cloud so filled the House that the Priests could not stand to minister "for the glory of the Lord filled the House" (1 Kings 8:10).

Thus temporary manifestation of God gave place to the abiding presence (or Shekinah) of God in the tabernacle and in the temple. However, when we reach N.T. times the presence of God is found in His Son. The Word became flesh "And we beheld HIS GLORY, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14).

#### THE GLORY OF THE ONLY BEGOTTEN

From the above para., it will be obvious that the English language lacks the vocabulary

to describe, in even meagre fashion, the "Glory of God" and it seems evident that we shall have to make do with such words as "bright, wonderful, majestic, radiant, powerful and awesome", inadequate as they are.

In these last days, God's presence is seen in His Son. Paul (in Heb. 1:3) says that Christ is "**The brightness of God's glory: and the express image of His person**". Peter recalling the transfiguration and refuting any charge of exaggeration, claims that those present were "**eyewitnesses of Christ's majesty. For He (Christ) received from God the Father honour AND GLORY, when there came such a voice to Him from the EXCELLENT GLORY, 'This is MY beloved Son in whom I am well pleased!'**" (2 Peter 1:17). In short, God had such a high opinion and high estimation of Christ, and was so "well pleased", that He bestowed *honour and glory* upon the Son. This seems to confirm the meaning of the Greek word *Doxia* (i.e. "an opinion") as mentioned previously.

God's glory attached itself to Jesus at all stages of His life and ministry. Space allows only a very brief mention of the fact Christ was not only glorified in His deeds (signs and miracles) and ministry, but also in His crucifixion and in His resurrection. For instance, with reference to His miracles we read that when Jesus heard of the illness of Lazarus, He said, "**This sickness is not unto death, BUT FOR THE GLORY OF GOD, that the Son of God might be GLORIFIED thereby**". Subsequently, when Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, the onlookers were described as having "**seen the glory of God**" (John 11:40). John also says (re the turning of water into wine) "**This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth His GLORY, and His disciples believed on Him**" (2:11).

At the end of His earthly ministry, only a few hours before His crucifixion, Jesus could say, "**I have GLORIFIED THEE on earth: I have finished the work Thou gavest Me to do. And now O Father GLORIFY Me with Thine own self with THE GLORY I had with Thee before the world was**" (John 17:5). Here we have Christ claiming restoration of the glory He shared with the Father prior to creation: all by virtue of Christ having glorified God during His lifetime on earth: and now about to glorify God in the manner of His death.

Also at the resurrection the glory of God was bestowed upon the Son. We read that "**Christ was raised from the dead by THE GLORY of the Father**" (Rom, 6:4) and Peter adds that "**God raised Him up from the dead AND GAVE HIM GLORY, that our hope and faith might be in God**" (1 Peter 1:21).

From these scanty references we can perhaps see that God's glory now rests with the Son, and that God "glorified" the Son because the Son was faithful and glorified the Father. Each has shown the other up, in a good light.

#### VAIN-GLORY AND SELF-GLORIFICATION

We should be aware of the fact that whereas men ought to glorify God, they greatly neglect to do so, but indulge, rather, in self-glorification. This, of course, is not new and even Jeremiah, back in his day, had cause to say, "**Thus saith the Lord, let not the wise man glory in his wisdom; neither let the mighty man glory his might; and let not the rich man glory in his riches. But let him that glorieth glory in this: that he understandeth and knoweth Me: that I am the Lord which exerciseth loving kindness, judgment and righteousness in the earth; for in these things I delight saith the Lord**" (Jer. 9:23). Hundreds of years later, Paul could say (to Christians) "**Let us not be desirous of vain-glory, provoking one or envying another**" (Gal. 5:26). Self-glorification is certainly not uncommon and can affect us all. Jeremiah was well aware that the so-called "wise" man loves to revel in his own sagacity; the strong man likes to reflect upon his uncommon strength; the successful business-man likes to exult in how prosperous he has become, and, on perhaps a smaller scale, we all like to boast mildly about something or other, even if its only in how clever our offspring are.

Paul speaking to the Christians at Corinth, said "**For who maketh thee differ from one another? And what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now, if thou didst receive it,**

why dost thou, glory as if thou hadst not received it" (5:7). And so, whatever we have, or are, in this world, is based entirely upon the grace of God, and, constitutes no reason for us to glory or boast in ourselves. Pilate was a man who revelled in the power and authority he carried. When Jesus refused to answer his questions Pilate warned Jesus that he (Pilate) was not to be meddled with, but had the power to release Jesus but also the power to kill Him. Jesus, in turn, informed Pilate that he (Pilate) had, in fact, no power at all: and could only have power if God was disposed to give it to him.

Paul, writing to the Christians at Corinth, calls upon them to look around at themselves, and to look at the Church, and to notice that "not many wise men (after the flesh) were called, not many mighty, not many noble were called. For God hath chosen the foolish things . . . the weak things . . . and the base things in the world". (why?) "THAT NO FLESH SHALL GLORY IN HIS PRESENCE" But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord". This then is Paul's grand conclusion based on "that which was written" (doubtless in Jeremiah) "That he that glorieth let him glory in the Lord". Or, as Paul said in another place, "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ".

#### OUR DUTY

Readers may feel that, apart from avoiding the spirit of self-glorification and complacency, there is not much for us to take from this subject: i.e. it is all rather academic and remote. These concluding paragraphs will hopefully persuade us that "the glory of God" is something to which we *can* all contribute: indeed, we *must* all contribute. Paul says, "For ye are bought with a price, therefore GLORIFY GOD in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Cor. 6:20). The apostle Peter said, "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye, for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you; on their part He is evil spoken of, but on your part He is GLORIFIED" (1 Peter 4:14). There are a great many other passages to similar effect; i.e. that we, by our words and actions can glorify God, and that we have a *duty* to glorify God.

Jesus charged all His disciples to "Let their light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and GLORIFY YOUR FATHER which is in heaven". It would seem that even a hostile world can be impressed with good deeds, and if the good works are genuinely done in God's name, the world revises its "opinion" of God in an upward direction, and thus God "is glorified". In a similar vein, Jesus said, "Herein is my Father GLORIFIED, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be My disciples" (John 15:18). How is God glorified? by His followers bearing much fruit: i.e. good works.

How then can we sum up. "Glory" comes from the Greek *Doxa* ("an opinion") and constitutes admiration, praise deference and honour directed toward any object for which we have a very high opinion, and which in a religious context, is epitomised by God Himself, and the Lord Jesus Christ. When we read of "the glory of the Lord" (especially in the O.T.) it usually refers to the mysterious and awe-inspiring self-revelation of God: or theophany. In the N.T. the glory of God is revealed chiefly in the Son; in His ministry; His works; His death; and His resurrection. Clearly we should avoid any tendencies towards vain-glory, or self-glorification, or the glorification of any other person or thing, but rather should seek "with one mind and one mouth TO GLORIFY GOD, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 15:6).

As the hymnwriter has said:-

To God be the glory: great things He hath done,  
so loved He the world: that He gave us His Son,  
Who yielded His life; An atonement for sin,  
And opened the lifegate: That all may go in.

**GLEANINGS**

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

**KEEP THY SELF PURE**

"Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God" Matthew 5:8

"Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep thyself pure" 1 Timothy 5:22

**FOR OUR LEARNING**

**BLESSED - HAPPY**

Blessed are the poor in spirit	Matthew 5:3
Blessed are they that mourn	4
Blessed are the weak	5
Blessed are the merciful	7
Blessed are the pure in heart	8
Blessed are the peacemakers	9
Blessed are they which are persecuted	10

**THE BIBLE SPEAKS**

"Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart" 2 Timothy 2:22

"Unto the pure all things are pure . . ." Titus 1:15

"Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" 2 Corinthians 10:5

**A VERSE**

"Purer, in heart, O God, Help me to be;  
 May I devote my life wholly to Thee.  
 Watch Thou my wayward feet, Guide me with counsel sweet;  
 Purer in heart, Help me to be".

**WE QUOTE - CAMPBELL MORGAN**

"We constantly attempt to comfort our hearts with the idea that we can manipulate the results of sin so as to make them less hard to bear, and then have to prove through long and bitter experience that it is not so. There is only one moment in which we can save ourselves from sin; that is before we commit it."

**SOMEONE HAS SAID**

"Look you well to your integrity, and the Lord will look to your prosperity" C. H. Spurgeon

"Abide after cleansing where you were before cleansing."  
 "If I lose my honour I lose myself." Shakespeare

Spin carefully, Spin Prayerfully,  
 Leaving the thread with God.

**SUNSHINE MAGAZINE**

It takes two things to blow down a tree - a heavy wind outside - and rot and decay within. So it is with man. The winds of adversity may cause him to bend, but if he is strong and vigorous within, he will arise and grow to new heights after the storm passes.

(Sunshine Magazine)

**WE QUOTE - HENRY DRUMMOND**

"The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldst know His will". It is not simply a matter of presumption, it is a matter of election. Have you ever thought of this strange, deep calling of God? We are called to salvation, we have thought of that; we are

called to holiness, we have thought of that; but as great as either is this, we are called to know God's will. We are answering our call in other ways; are we answering it in this? What is God's will? Are we knowing God's will? How much have we learned of that to which we have been called? And is it our prayer continually as it was His to whom these words were said, that they may be *"filled with the knowledge of His will?"*

#### CALLED OUT

**"But ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's possession, that ye may show forth the excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvellous light."**

1 Peter 2:9 (RV)

Selected by Leonard Morgan.

### "UNEARNED" SALVATION

One of our beloved preaching brethren said it this way, "When you stand before God in judgement, you will not be saved or lost because of anything that you have done, or not done; salvation will be by the grace of God." Another, also before a large assembly, expressed a similar thought, "I don't have to satisfy God. I accept the satisfaction of God. I don't try to satisfy Him. I just try to love Him." Concerning "good works" a related thought was, "I serve Him because I am saved, not in order to be saved". What is your reaction to such statements? I'll share mine with you.

When properly understood against a backdrop of careful teaching those statements were intended to emphasise the cardinal truth that each one of us is saved by grace through faith, and that not of ourselves, i.e., **"it is the gift of God; not of works, that no man should glory"** (Eph. 2:8,9). What gratitude and joy fill our hearts in that realisation! What a motivation to faithful, loving service that is! But when I heard those expressions there was no balancing with the need for obedient faith. Certainly we can't earn our salvation, nor can we by our goodness warrant God's grace. How we do cringe form any legalistic concept that leans in that direction. But how we do also fear that hearers - especially the young - will be inclined to feel that nothing is expected as obedience of faith in order for them to be saved. A very real danger is that a hearer can be far removed from a life of chaste living and zealous service and yet feel quite comfortable in his or her relationship to God. Surely, "God loves you in spite of any sin you may have committed" does not mean that a license to sin has been granted. For the untutored, "Because he is in Christ . . . there is no sin, and no sin imputed" can be interpreted very loosely as "indulgencies".

#### PURIFY PEOPLE

Here is an excellent "balancing" passage: Titus 2:14 - **"Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a people for His own possession, zealous of good works."**

Saved from sin. **"He gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity."** We are saved from sin. Teaching about sin has taken place, the means to salvation has been made distinct, the call to repentance has rung out - the offered salvation has been claimed on the Lord's terms. Salvation by grace through faith is a personal reality!

Continuing Purity. **"And purify unto Himself a people for His own possession."** Purified people! How blessed it is to know, **"if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous: and He is the propitiation for sins"** (1 John 2:1,2). Even while walking in the light we sin (see 1 John 1:6-10), but **"if we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness"** (verse 9). Christ alone is our propitiation. So, as quoted earlier, the good

brother could say, "I accept the satisfaction of God." And in that sense, he could also say, "I don't try to satisfy him." Yet there is further teaching on the subject. Continuing purity also depends upon "if we confess our sins" - upon godly sorrow, upon repentance, upon confessing sins and asking forgiveness. In this sense, I am endeavouring to please Him because He has continued to cleanse me in the precious blood of Jesus. It is also my loving desire to walk in purity of life. After all, "If ye love Me, ye will keep My commandments" (John 14:15). "And this is love, that we should walk after His commandments" (2 John 6). To walk in purity of life is not just a sweet impulse or a strong desire, it is **the Lord's standard** for His purified people. "As children of obedience, not fashioning yourselves according to your former lusts in the time of your ignorance: but like as He who called you holy, be ye yourselves holy in all manner of living; because it is written, ye shall be holy; for I am holy" (1 Peter 1:14-16). This is a fundamental part of pure religion (James 1:27). This is the Lord's will and it must be the Christian's commitment to life (see 1 Cor. 9:27; Gal. 5:16-25; Col. 3:5-17. Sinners can't come in to Christ's kingdom accompanied by their sins (they have died to them, Romans 6:1-7; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11, nor can they enter the eternal heavenly kingdom having lived in sin as "Christians". Walking in the light involves "buffet" and "Put to death" on our part, as well as mercy and forgiveness on the Lord's part. It involves "confess" on my part, as well as "faithful" on His part.

#### ZEALOUS OF GOOD WORKS

We remember from the reading of Titus 2:14 that we are saved from something (all iniquity) and that we are saved for somebody (Jesus). Yes, and we are saved for something - "to be zealous of good works." How strong the motivational gratitude is! Because He is our Saviour, how eagerly we serve - how energetically, how joyfully. That is why our brother could say. "I served Him because I am saved, not in order to be saved". All the good works of a lifetime couldn't earn even one little corner in heaven! All of us surely must understand that. Yet repeated scriptural exhortations are given to command and motivate us to zealous service, with our expectancy about God's blessings and the heavenly "reward" relating to our faithfulness of service. Consider:

**Liberality Rewarded.** "But I say, He that soweth sparingly, shall reap also sparingly; and he that soweth bountifully shall also reap bountifully" (2 Cor. 9; read also vs. 7-11; Matt. 6:33; Phil. 4:8,19).

"Laying Up in Store". "Write, Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth: yea saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; for their works follow with them" (Rev 14:13); "Charge them that are rich in this present world, that they be not highminded, nor have their hopes set on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, that they be ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on the life which is life indeed" (1 Tim. 6:17-19; see also Matt. 6:19,20,25:31-46).

So, say with the apostle Paul and with me, "Wherefore also we make it our aim, whether at home or absent, to be well-pleasing unto Him. For we must all be made manifest before the judgement-seat of Christ; that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (2 Cor. 5:9,10). Confident sense of security, YES. Comfortable lukewarmness. NO.

C. Rogers.

## MY EBENEZER

In the great old song "O Thou Fount of Every Blessing," there is a line which is not understood by many. It goes, "Here I raise my Ebenezer, Hither by thy help I've come. And I

hope by Thy good pleasure safely to arrive at home."

Few today know that the Ebenezer was a stone. It was a "stone of help", a monument commemorating the Lord's help.

This stone was placed between Mispheh and Shen by Samuel the prophet and judge of Israel. It commemorated Israel's victory over the hated Philistines and their despised bondage over the Jews.

The victory was not Israel's, but the Lord's. When Israel and the worshippers of Baalim and Ashtaroth met in battle, the scriptures say that "the Lord thundered with a great thunder on that day upon the Philistines, and discomfited them; and they were smitten before Israel". In other words, God "softened up the enemy" and the Israelites "finished them off!" The credit was given to the Lord. It was done so when Samuel set up a stone and said, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us" (1 Sam. 7:12).

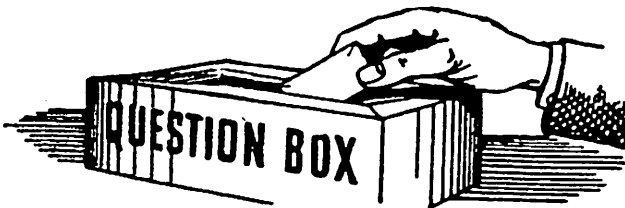
#### MY EBENEZER

As long as Israel was selfish and independent in attitude they stayed in trouble. During the days of the judges they were in bondage much of the time, God was punishing them again and again. But when the Jews repented and turned to Jehovah, Jehovah turned back to them and freed them from servitude and bondage.

When did the Lord free you from the bondage of sin? Where and when did you raise your Ebenezer? Do you remember? Wasn't it a glorious day? Wasn't it a grand feeling to know the relief of forgiveness of sins? Wasn't the unburdening of the heart a rich experience? Does a thinking back to that glorious occasion continue to thrill you, to encourage you, to inspire you to greater things?

Let us never forget our Ebenezer, our remembrance or memorial of God's help in our life. Let God's goodness, like a fetter, bind your wandering heart to Him. And may you never wander from Him, never leave the God you love. But take your heart and let Him seal it. Seal it for His courts above!

W. Sawyer.




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Conducted by  
Alf Marsden

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"I read recently a newspaper article which suggested that evil deeds done by people affect us all. Would you like to comment on this?"

I have read the article, and it referred to some well-publicised and evil cases recently going through the courts. The writer was asking the question that as we are all of the same human species as those who committed the crimes, do *their* evil actions harm *all of us*?

#### THE HUMAN CONDITION

There is obviously something in the human condition which will respond to sin, otherwise there would be no need for the Gospel, but we cannot equate sin and evil to the extent that we could say that everyone was an evil person in the sense of his or her actions committed against society as a whole, and is against *society* that some of the most heinous crimes are committed.

The reader should appreciate the delicate balance of line I am drawing. If **all** are sinners, then **all** live under the dominion of Satan, the Devil, the Evil One; therefore, simple logic would suggest that being under the dominion of Satan, all would of necessity be evil people.



This is manifestly not true in the relationships we have with people in general, because society, as I have said, views evil acts in a different way.

There is a definition in the Bible for sin, "**Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law; for sin is the transgression of the law**" (1 John 3:41). We can readily see that the commandment of God can be transgressed. See Matt. 15:3. Transgression means literally '*overstepping the limits*' separating chastity from licentiousness, sanctification from sin, etc.; many times referring metaphorically to such 'breaking of the limits'.

Evil is referred to as overt acts, openly done, and unconcealed. The act of murder is an overt act **in itself**, whether or not the body is concealed or destroyed. In John 21:33ff, Jesus speaks the parable of the wicked husbandmen. These men committed evil acts against the householder's servants; they beat one, killed one, and stoned another. They then saw the son, cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him. All for personal gain. This sort of action is the frightening face of evil.

This then, is what we have to consider in our modern society; 'Are the acts of evil which seem to occur with startling regularity, having a harmful effect on **all** of us?'

### INFLUENCE

The best way I can describe influence is to say that it is an invisible force, exercised by people, actions, and events, which may have a profound effect on some people, but little effect on others. When I was quite young, a special treat was to go to the local cinema: invariably it was a 'western', and was shown in black and white, and silent. The 'goodies' always shot the 'baddies'. Later in life, I was to serve seven years in World War 2. I can say that neither of these experiences made me 'gun-happy' and want to go out and shoot people; rather, they taught me the futility of such things, and made me abhor killing. You can say, of course, these events were influential in my life, and you would be right, but personally I would class the influence as 'good' from the point of view of my involvement in society. So then, I believe we can say that some people are influenced to good, and some to evil.

### PEOPLE ARE DIFFERENT

That is a truism which hardly needs stating; not only are we different in outward appearance, but we are also different in our inward perceptions. There are so many things which shape each individual: parentage, upbringing, education, employment, and all sorts of social contacts. All of these things, an others, affect the way in which a person behaves.

Society sets a standard which it considers to indicate normal behaviour; anything which 'oversteps' the normal is said to be abnormal. It is true, however, that society, over a given period of time, can loosen its standards, so that the behaviour which once would be classed as abnormal can become accepted as normal. However, the majority of people can still pass a jeweller's shop without throwing a brick through the window and stealing the jewels; nor do they kill indiscriminately. Furthermore, when particularly heinous crimes are committed against the person, then a sense of revulsion is felt which varies with the level of brutality or bestiality inflicted on the victim(s). This indicates to me that most peoples' intrinsic values of right and wrong are still in place.

Therefore because people are different, they will be affected in different ways by what goes on around them. If the questioner means that all people would be affected **emotionally**, then I would be inclined to agree. If, however, it is meant that the experience, whatever it might be, will affect them in such a way that some of the evil perpetrated by the evil-doer will be transferred to **all**, then I would be inclined to disagree.

### COUNSELLING

The article makes it clear that counselling was offered to those who had been directly involved in some of the more horrendous murders. I can understand that, but I can't understand **indiscriminate** counselling to those who have not been directly involved. There

is a vast difference between those who carry out the odious task of digging up the remains of victims, and those who just read about it or see it on T.V.

But what about those who took part in the ultimate offence against society - war. There must have been hundreds of thousands of men - and women - who had seen death dealt out in the most violent way, both on battlefields and on the home front. I am quite sure that some needed counselling, but the majority lived ostensibly normal lives when the war was over; I myself am one of such. The point I am making is this: man is very resilient, both physically and mentally. Of course there will be some who will need help after experiencing the results of brutal and sadistic killings, but I am convinced that the vast majority will not.

#### IN CONCLUSION

The question, as posed, demands a specific answer; my answer is this. I am not your eternal pessimist in that I see the social order crumbling before our very eyes. There are problems, of course, but society in general keeps within the normal limits of behaviour, and even though most are not 'saved' in the N.T. sense, nevertheless they live decent, respectable lives.

I do not believe that evil 'rubs off' onto **all of us** in the sense of what we are considering. We sometimes see things with a jaundiced eye. The other day I saw a young man help an old lady across the road. The eternal pessimist would say. "Huh, he's trying to get near enough to steal something from her". The optimist (and the Christian) **should** say, "That indicates concern and social responsibility". Perhaps we should extend the scope of our counselling!

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

## COMPLETELY EQUIPPED

In many denominational circles today the emphasis is away from the plain teaching of the Bible and more toward the feelings. "If I have a 'great feeling in my heart' how can I possibly go wrong?" Or, "If we are so sincere in our feelings toward the Lord, then how can God possibly condemn us?" This attitude has some very serious implications because it involves matters of the soul.

A person may be genuinely sincere but dead wrong! No doubt Cain was sincere when he offered an unacceptable sacrifice to God in Genesis 4. The apostle Paul declared that his intentions were sincere when he had Christians put to death prior to his own conversion.

There is an interesting passage of scripture which provides a wealth of vital information concerning our deep spiritual needs and how those needs can be satisfied properly. It tells us how we can be completely outfitted for service to God. This way we can be sincere in the right way toward Christ. Sincerity is of value **only** when it is firmly established upon truth.

**"All scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work"** (2 Tim. 3:16,17).

#### THE TERMS

The term "scripture inspired by God" relates to the message of the Bible. It never refers to any other writings. It was originally used to designate the Old Testament, but before the New Testament was completed it was also used to refer to it.

Paul in our text pointed out that the scripture is all that is necessary to equip one for every good work before God. Taken negatively his statement implies that unless man has been "indoctrinated" with God's word then he is not equipped for any acceptable work. If in the positive sense the word equips man to serve, then negatively without the Scriptures man

is totally unprepared to serve God acceptably. Therefore man is dependent upon God's revelation in order to worship.

The word translated "teaching" in the RSV and "doctrine" in the KJV is *didaskalia*. Either meaning of the word is acceptable if we fully understand the meaning of the original idea. "Doctrine" literally means "teaching" or "that which is taught". We use the same thought in expressing the idea of "indoctrination" (i.e. thorough training). If the word is used in the active sense, it means the act of teaching. If it is used in the passive sense, it means that which is taught, doctrine, instruction or learning. This word is from a family of words all connected with the processes of indoctrination or thorough training. It can describe the function of a teacher, the things which are taught and the things which are learned.

For a person to say "I want Christ, but I don't want doctrine," is to say, "I want Christ, but don't attempt to teach me His teaching". This is to remain in ignorance. No one can know Christ without His teaching or doctrine. Doctrine/teaching also refers to the great themes of the Bible such as sin, the Church, salvation, death, faith, justification, sanctification.

The word translated "reproof" is from *clenkos*. It is translated as "evidence" in Hebrews 11:1 (KJV): "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen"; or, "convictions of things not seen" (RSV), (Emphasis mine E.L.). In other words, the word of God is sufficient for evidence to produce faith or conviction which will lead a person to repentance from that which is evil.

The word translated "correction" is *epanorthosis* and is used only here in the New Testament. It literally means "a restoration to an upright state, or a right state". In classical Greek usage it meant correction or improvement in life and character. If one is looking for another text to justify the restoration principle, here is one!

The word *artios* is translated "equipped" in RSV and "thoroughly furnished" in the KJV. It means exactly that: fitted, complete or perfect in relationship to special aptitudes with which to serve God.

The word *ophelimos* is translated "profitable" in the KJV and "of value" in the RSV.

### CONCLUSION

**From this brief study, we can see that the inspired word of God will:**

- (1) Educate and train us in mind and morals.
- (2) Chasten us when we go astray.
- (3) Both discipline and nurture us.
- (4) Help us cultivate the virtues of the soul.
- (5) Help us curb the passions and lusts.
- (6) Provide thorough training which is necessary to know Christ and to serve God.
- (7) Produce convictions based upon evidence of truth.
- (8) Reprove us when we fail to be what we should be or when we fail to use our knowledge to the glory of God.
- (9) Provide values which are profitable in righteousness.

If that is what you desire, the *sound, healthy doctrine/teaching* is what you need. Now, if I desire unbridled liberty to do my own thing, I will fight against sound doctrine and anyone who attempts to teach it. This is exactly what is happening in many places today.

In Romans 6:17,18 Paul pointed out that obedience to doctrine is necessary in order to be delivered from bondage to Satan, sin and death.

Regardless of what others may think or say concerning Christ and His doctrine/teaching, as for me and my house, we want to serve the Lord - so give us *sound doctrine!*

## SCRIPTURE READINGS

April 7	Neh. 9:22-31	2 Peter 1:
April 14	Num. 22:21-41	2 Peter 2:
April 21	Gen. 6	2 Peter 3:
April 28	Prov. 2	Ephs. 1:1-14

**AUTHOR:** the apostle Peter.

**THOSE ADDRESSED:** "... *them who have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and Saviour Jesus Christ*" (1:1).

**DATE:** uncertain, but probably AD between 60-70.

**KEY TEXT:** 3:1. "*This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you: in both which I stir up your minds by way of remembrance...*"

**OUTLINE:** "1) Secret to Christian growth. 2) Antidote to error. 3) Key to certainty of the future" (*The Hodder Bible Handbook*).

**2 PETER AND JUDE:** "It is evident to the most casual reader that the most of Jude 4-18 is found in 2 Peter" (David H. Wheaton).

### THE LADDER OF CHRISTIAN VIRTUE

We read: "*And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness love. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that you shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ*" (1:5,6). Faith is the Greek word *pistis* and speaks of absolute reliance upon God and total obedience to God. Everything goes back to faith. *Virtue* is *arete* and is a word that describes supreme moral excellence and courage. *Knowledge* is *gnosis* and is the Greek term for practical knowledge. "It is that knowledge which enables a man to decide rightly and to act honourably and efficiently in the day to day circumstances of life" (Barclay). *Temperance* is *enkrateia* and speaks of self-control. Plato described

it as "self-mastery". A man who is master of himself can be a true servant of others. *Patience* is *hupomone* and is synonymous with "steadfast endurance". The Greek term refers to patience in respect of things and not persons. Cicero, whose writings I have been studying recently, defined the Latin equivalent as: "The voluntary and daily suffering of hard and difficult things, for the sake of honour and usefulness". *Godliness* is *eusebeia* and describes that piety which is well pleasing to God. Walter Scott wrote: "This is a grace so great and noble that the very foundation of character would be imperfect without it. It is in translation of the Greek word *philadelphia*, which literally means "love of brethren". Christianity is strong on personal relationships. The ladder ends in Christian *love*. The word is, of course, *agape*. One writer has described it as: "The unceasing, undying, uninhibited concern for another's good, manifesting itself in positive action to promote that good". *Agape* extends even to the Christian's enemies.

### FALSE TEACHERS AND THEIR DESTRUCTION

Peter in this letter foretells the appearance of false teachers, of the impiety of their followers and the judgments that would overtake them. He writes that the godly will be delivered, as Lot out of Sodom. The conduct of the profane and blasphemous seducers is clearly described.

There is much evil in the world. This is true of the twentieth century as well as the first century. But things were worse away back in history. We read in the book of Genesis: "*And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the Lord that He had made man on the earth and it grieved Him at His heart*" (6:5,6). Moses went on to reveal that then only one man found grace in the eyes of the Lord - and that man was Noah. Peter described him as "*a preacher of righteousness*" (2:5). He must have warned the people in his day of the coming

judgment of God, but all to no avail.

The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah is mentioned by Peter (2:6). These cities were destroyed because they were dens of iniquity, rife with homosexuality. What happened to them was a tremendous warning to future generations. The warning has generally gone unheeded. But all saints should take great comfort from the fact that righteous Lot was rescued at that time (2:7,8). *"The Lord knows how to rescue the godly out of temptations and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished . . ." (2:9).*

### THE DAY OF THE LORD

There is a judgment day coming when Jesus will judge the world in righteousness (Acts 17:31). This day will come *"as a thief in the night"* (3:10), when people will least expect it. The heavens and earth, as we know them, will be destroyed and there will be inaugurated *"new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwell righteousness"* (3:13). People scoff at all this (3:3,4), but rather than scoff they should repent given the long suffering of God. They will thus escape the certain wrath to come (3:7). *"It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God"* (Hebrews 10:31).

### EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS

**AUTHOR:** the apostle Paul.

**THOSE ADDRESSED:** *" . . . to the saints who are at Ephesus and to the faithful in Christ Jesus . . ." (1:1).*

**PLACE:** Rome.

**THEME:** "His great theme in this letter is God's glorious plan to bring men of every nation and background together in Christ" (The Lion Handbook of the Bible).

**CHURCH ESTABLISHED:** by Paul himself in about AD 54 (Acts 18 & 19).

**EPHESUS:** the most important city in the province of Asia. Indeed, it was the commercial, political and religious centre of Western Asia. Here was sited the temple of Diana or Artemis of the Ephesians - one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. It is said that the worship of this goddess made the people fierce, superstitious and immoral.

**COMMENTS:** "The divinest composi-

tion of man" (Samuel Taylor Coleridge). "No real Christian can read the doctrinal part of the epistle without being impressed and roused by it, as by the sound of a trumpet" (James Macknight). "Ephesians is the Queen of the Epistles" (William Barclay).

**ADDITIONAL LETTER:** The other epistles to the Ephesians should be read in conjunction with this one. See Revelation 2:1-7.

### UNITY

The Ephesian letter is a great dissertation on unity. Indeed the key word is *together*. We read: *" . . . having made known unto us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He has purposed in Himself: that in the dispensation of the fulness of times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth; even in Him . . ." (1:9,10).* Please note the phrases *"in Christ"* and *"in Him"*. Unity is to be found only in Jesus. As one commentator has put it: "The expression 'in Him' sounds like the staccato blows of a power hammer as the apostle beats out a rhythm of oneness. We are chosen in Him, in Him we have redemption, in Him we have obtained an inheritance. He is the centre of life". Thank God for Jesus!

Ian Davidson, Motherwell.

## WHAT IS PERSONAL WORK ?

1. It is **DISCUSSING** Christianity or studying with a friend.
2. It is **GIVING** him a **TRACT** on a particular subject.
3. It is **TELLING** and **SHOWING** your **NEIGHBOUR** the happiness of being a Christian.
4. It is **INVITING** the **POSTMAN** or **MILKMAN** to worship with you.
5. It is **RINGING DOORBELLS** on a Sunday afternoon in the name of Christ.
6. It is **TEACHING** a **COTTAGE MEETING** in the home.
7. It is **VISITING** in the home of a

STUDENT in your Bible study.

8. It is GATHERING the NEIGHBOURHOOD CHILDREN into your home for Bible study.
9. It is TELLING the BOSS about Jesus, the WAY TO HEAVEN.
10. It is PLANTING the Word in someone's heart.
11. It is the ENCOURAGEMENT given to new members.
12. It is EXHORTING one another to ASSEMBLE in the scheduled services of the Church.
13. It is TEACHING, REPROVING, and REBUKING the worldly, indifferent, and wayward.
14. It is ENCOURAGING and STRENGTHENING the FAINT-HEARTED and COMFORTING the BEREAVED.
15. It is VISITING, READING THE BIBLE WITH and ADMONISHING those who FORSAKE the assemblies.
16. It is BRINGING SUNSHINE and CHEER to those who are HOSPITALISED or SHUT-IN.
17. It is SEEKING and SAVING the lost. It may be a drop-out, a lamb that is bewildered, or a sheep that has strayed.

### TEST YOUR BIBLICAL KNOWLEDGE

1. Solomon compared his lover to what two flowers?
2. What happened to the king of Ai?
3. Who succeeded Abijah as king?
4. Who was Manoah?
5. How many golden calves did Jeroboam set up?
6. Under what kind of tree did Deborah sit to judge?
7. Who found Nathanael and brought him to Jesus?
8. In which province was Tarsus?
9. In which city did Paul meet Elymas?
10. Whom did Paul strike with blindness?

### TREASURER'S REPORT

Those who study my report each year

will have noticed that the balance between Income and Expenditure is mainly affected by the level of gifts we receive. I received a generous amount in gifts in 1995; up by over £700 on the previous year. In consequence our Income and Expenditure very nearly balanced.

Perhaps you wonder why the subscription rate is not increased to cover the total cost thus making the magazine independent of gifts. This course of action has been suggested to me. The actual cost of printing and posting a single copy for one year is £7.90. Bundles save on postage, so that enables me to fix the subscription rate based on the average costs. However an increasing number of copies are sent free, particularly to African countries, and it is to cover these costs that I apply your gifts. The decision to support that part of our work therefore remains with you. I would like to thank you, on behalf of those who receive 'free' copies, for your generosity.

Two items under the Expenditure heading require a little clarification. The Reading Cards item covers two years, 1995 and also this year. The sundries item covers the cost of envelopes and also the partial refund of a payment for Bound Volumes that I was not able to fully supply.

#### BALANCE SHEET FOR 1995

<i>INCOME</i>		
Bank Account 1/1/95		£805.62
Bank Interest	£41.67	
Subscriptions	2571.24	
Gifts	<u>2002.00</u>	4614.91
		<u>£5420.53</u>
<i>EXPENDITURE</i>		
Printing	£3912.00	
Postage	697.94	
Reading Cards	109.60	
Sundries	<u>41.75</u>	
		£4761.29
Bank Account 1/1/96		659.24
		<u>£5420.53</u>

J. K. Kneller (Treasurer).

*I have examined the Books, Receipts, etc. and find them to be correct and in good order.*

J. H. Currie (Auditor)

## NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

**Buckie:** On the 24th January, 1996 Alana Cheyne daughter of Brother Bruce and Sister Lynn, granddaughter of Brother Bill and Sister Eleanor H. Pirie, was immersed in Baptism.

Alana has progressed through Sunday School and decided the time was right to follow the Lord, may the Lord bless her and we ask for your prayers for our young Sister.

H. Pirie.

## OBITUARY

**Kentish Town, London:** The Church here records with great sadness the passing of Sister Nellie Irwin. She was baptised in August 1952, and has been a very faithful member until physical weakness prevented her attendance from May last year.

We have missed her presence, but rejoice that she is now present with the Lord.

Brother Tom Walton officiated at the Chapel and the Crematorium.

Dorothy Proud (Sec.).

**Beulah Road, Kirkby-in-Ashfield:** It is with great sadness that we have to report the loss of two of our elderly Sisters.

On January 13th, our beloved Sister Lois Stevenson passed away after a relatively short illness. Our Sister was well loved and respected in the Church and in the community and having reached the age of 88 years, left behind her a good record and example to her Brethren. She was a staunch Christian of long-standing and a cheerful loving member of this Christian community, loved by all. If anyone was ill, Lois was there with an encouraging gift of either fruit or flowers although she could ill afford it. She will be sadly missed for

the way she graced the Name of Jesus and spread His love among us.

Our deepest sympathy goes to her son Les and her daughter and family. The funeral service at the Mansfield Crematorium was conducted by Bro. Tom King who gave a moving address in memory of our dear Sister.

Shortly after the above sad occurrence, on January 15th, news reached us of another elderly Sister leaving the scene of action. Sister Winnie Jackson (nee Hill) died suddenly at the age of 87 years in the Springfield Home at Hucknall, having been active up to the moment of her passing. Winnie was a faithful follower of Jesus right through her closing years which were spent at the Springfield Home, to whom we extend our thanks for their loving care. Her Church life earned much respect and love from the Brethren and Sisters. Winnie had been formerly the wife of our late Bro. Alfred Jackson, also sister to our late revered Brother Ray Hill whose children and families came to mourn her passing. The funeral service was conducted by Winnie's nephew, Adrian, who expressed a fitting tribute to her memory.

Thanks be to our Heavenly Father for the lives of our two cherished Sisters in Christ.

Tom Woodhouse (Sec.).

## COMING EVENTS

*(A note for your diary)*

### TRANENT ANNUAL SOCIAL

16th March, 1996  
at Loch Centre

### KIRKCALDY ANNUAL SOCIAL

20th April, 1996  
Speaker: ALEX STRACHAN  
Time: 3.30 p.m.

### KIRKCALDY LADIES DAY

18th May, 1996  
Speakers:  
PAM MITCHEL (Hyvots Bank)

LINDA FERNIE (Northside)  
 Theme: Blessings  
 Time: 10.00 a.m. Refreshments

**BUCKIE ANNUAL SOCIAL**  
 Saturday, 1st June, 1996, 3.30 p.m.  
 Speaker: JOE NISBET  
 Students from Harding University  
 Led by Dwight Smith  
 27th May - 9th June

### GHANA APPEAL

I would like again to express our thanks and appreciation for the continued support for the Lord's work in Ghana which we receive from our Brethren. It's uplifting to see the results of this in, not only the relief from illness, but the continuing growth of existing congregations and the increase in the number of individual Churches. Although we are unable to provide meeting places for new congregations, those still under construction are at an advanced stage and must be completed first. However, Bibles, hymn books and benches to sit on are necessary requirements.

Two brothers suffering from mental illness have responded well to treatment and now one appears to be cured.

Unfortunately he was injured in a motor accident, but was discharged from hospital the day after admission. I am told that when arrived at the assembly, leaning on his stick, his brothers and sisters became very happy to see him.

I feel very close to our Ghanaian Brethren, especially when reading their letters and am reminded of their zeal for the Lord. Together we have achieved much. Let us continue the work that the Lord's harvest may increase further.

Bill Cook.

Anyone wishing to assist in this work please contact Graeme Pearson, 13 Fairways, Dunfermline, Fife. KY12 0DU. Telephone: 01383 728624.

Cheques should be made payable to "Graeme Pearson (Ghana Appeal)"

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1. Rose and Lily (Song of Solomon 2:1)
  2. He was hung (Joshua 8:29)
  3. Asa (2 Chronicles 14:1)
  4. Samson's father (Judges 13:2)
  5. Two (1 Kings 12:28)
  6. Palm (Judges 4:5)
  7. Phillip (John 1:45)
  8. Cecilia (Acts 22:3)
  9. Paphos (Acts 13:6)
  10. Elymas (Acts 13:11)

### ANSWERS

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THE SCRIPTURE STANDARD is published monthly.

PRICE PER YEAR — POST PAID BY SURFACE MAIL.

UNITED KINGDOM and COMMONWEALTH.....	£	7.50
CANADA & USA.....	\$	14.00

AIR MAIL, please add £2.00 or \$3.00 to above surface mail rates

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