

The SCRIPTURE STANDARD

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

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COUNTING THE COST

As the ministry of Jesus began to gain momentum, larger and larger crowds began to follow Him; so much so that He had, occasionally, to escape from them by boarding a small ship, or by snatching a few hours privacy up in the mountains. On several occasions He had to miraculously feed these multitudes, for they apparently lost all sense of time and place, and this sometimes involved catering for as many as five thousand men (not counting thousands of women and children). Understandably, when word got around amongst the towns and villages that there was a prophet of God in the neighbourhood who could successfully and instantaneously cure all forms of disease and illness, completely free of charge, the crowds searching for this man would steadily grow. Christ's purposes, in His miracles and good works were, of course, entirely philanthropic, but they were much more than that. He was proving His claimed credentials as the long-awaited Messiah: was seeking to establish the Kingdom of God and was preparing men and women for entry into that Kingdom. Human nature being what it is, many in the crowds thought more in terms of the material benefits from following Jesus; i.e. the 'loaves and fishes' and the curing of blindness, palsy, leprosy, etc., than they seemed to think of any spiritual blessings or advantages. Indeed, in John 6:24 we read of Christ's necessity to reprove this general attitude: viz. "When the people therefore saw that Jesus was not there, neither His disciples, they also took shipping and came to Capernaum, seeking for Jesus. And when they had found Him on the other side of the sea, they said unto Him, Rabbi when camest thou hither? Jesus answered them and said, Verily, Verily, I say unto you, Ye seek Me not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves and were filled. Labour not for the meat that perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of Man shall give unto you; for Him hath God the Father sealed. They said unto Him, What shall we do that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent." The Lord's counsel to the multitudes given then, is just as pertinent to the multitudes now. We are all engrossed in the meat that perishes: neglecting the "meat that endureth unto everlasting life".

THE HEAD AND THE HEART

Luke, also, comments on Christ's reaction to the behaviour of the multitude. It seems that there was a careless, or even a kind of 'carnival' or circus atmosphere amongst the crowds; often found when very large numbers of people gather together. It's certainly true that people behave in crowds as they would never behave as individuals. It may well be that some regarded it as very good fortune, and even good fun,

to be amongst the throng 'dogging' the footsteps of this elusive man who could cast out demons, walk on water, heal the sick and even raise the dead. This state of affairs could not be allowed to continue, and for a second time Jesus had to reprove the general demeanour of the those pressing upon Him. His sombre words on 'discipleship' must have had a profoundly sobering effect upon His hearers and brought to a sharp halt any traces of whimsicality. To those in the crowds aspiring to discipleship, Jesus had a rather blunt message: i.e. that He could not promise them a rosy path but a life fraught with danger, persecution, and a disposition for self-sacrifice. Luke says, (14:25) **"And there went great multitudes with Him, and He turned and said unto them, If any man come to Me and hate not his father and mother, and wife, and children and brethren, and sisters, yea and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and comes after Me cannot be My disciple."** Jesus was not, of course, suggesting that His disciples should "hate" anyone, but that they should "love less" those related to them, and ever give pre-eminence to Christ in all aspects of life. At that time Christ's hearers must have been puzzled by His mention of bearing 'a cross' but they would later live to learn. Jesus went on to say, **"For which of you intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and COUNTETH THE COST, whether he have sufficient to finish it, lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him. Or what king going to war against another king sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand men to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand men. So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath cannot be My disciple"**.

And so Jesus advised the multitude, (and indeed advises men in every age), to COUNT THE COST and give careful thought to any proposal of becoming one of Christ's disciples. Quite often, men and women embark upon the Christian life for the wrong reasons, or with false impressions, and after a few years give up and return to the world (as per the parable of the sower). Quite often their original decision was founded upon some unsettled mood at the time, or even upon a surge of religious fervour induced by the highly-charged atmosphere of some large religious gathering. It seems to be that some present-day evangelists seek to capitalise upon human emotion in their meetings, (similar perhaps to Dr. Billy Graham's famous rallies). Such meetings with thousands in attendance, seem orchestrated to play upon the emotions; with a special style of preaching, with 'backing groups' and background music from large choirs. Many, caught up in a state of religious excitement "step out" and make a life's commitment to Christ which may, in the cold light of the following day, appear to have been a slightly rash decision. This is certainly not always the case, of course, and emotion obviously plays a part in conversion, but there should be much more to it than heart: the head should also have a say. Jesus certainly did not exploit anyone's emotions or 'sock it to them' with high-powered preaching: rather the reverse: He advised His hearers to think long and hard before taking such a serious step. COUNT THE COST: don't start something that you won't finish for the latter end is worse than the beginning.

DISCIPLESHIP

In this modern, sophisticated and scientific age where the bulk of mankind enjoy the very maximum of creature comforts the word 'disciple' must seem an almost antiquated word relevant only to an age that has long since gone. Small wonder, then that modern man has only a hazy idea of what the word means and knows even less of its full implications. The words of Jesus (in Luke 14:33) are therefore likely to draw us up short, **"So likewise whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple"**. Surely such a statement must make us all think, and not a little ruefully about the 'Jaguar' at the door, the 'hi-fi' on the sideboard and the

cabin-cruiser out in the bay. It would seem that Jesus understood that being one of His disciples would (and should) entail sacrifice, self denial and a fairly ascetic and frugal life-style. Thus being a disciple of Christ involves a renunciation of all our possessions, if necessary, our own family if necessary and even our own life if necessary. The words "if necessary" do not, of course, appear in the scripture and have been inserted by me without any authority for doing so. Clearly it is necessary to remind ourselves from time to time about what Jesus said concerning the kind of disciples He expected, for it is so easy, in our day to day living, to forget.

From the quotation from Luke 14:26 it appears that to become a disciple, one must **'come to Jesus'** rather like the way in which an apprentice enrolls himself under the guidance, teaching and discipline of the master-craftsman. Indeed in classical Greek I understand that the word 'mathetes' meant the pupil of a philosopher or teacher. A **'disciple'** therefore is one who willingly and gratefully places himself, or herself, under the training and teaching of a master and hopes to be disciplined by that master (for the word is derived from the other). Such disciplines existed, and still exist, in all forms, and includes all the arts and sciences. By virtue of the definition, many of the world's prominent men have had disciples. **John the Baptist** had disciples and we read in the New Testament of a verbal conflict between them and Jesus. **"Then came to Jesus the disciples of John the Baptist saying, "Why do we and the Pharisees fast oft but Thy disciples fast not" (Luke 5:33).** Similarly we read in John 9:28 of the **disciples of Moses** and how they reviled the blind man whom Jesus had healed, viz. **"Then they reviled him and said, Thou art His disciple but we are Moses"; disciples. We know that God spake unto Moses; as for this fellow, we know not from whence he is".** Even the **Pharisees** had disciples and sent them, with the Herodians, to tempt Jesus (Matt 22:16). Thus the disciple of Jesus Christ is one who has sought Him out and has expressed the wish to be His pupil and follower. It is possible to be a student in a detached way, studying a subject that gives little pleasure (Like a chemist studying diseases), but discipleship involves more than being merely a student of a master; it means a follower of a **particular master**. A follower who is prepared to be disciplined by the master; In the realms of music, painting, architecture, sculpture some disciples have outshone and become greater than their masters. The Prentice Pillar at Roslin Chapel is a small example of this but the jealousy displayed by the master in this case must surely be uncharacteristic of masters who are eclipsed by their pupils. Surely most masters must take pride in the progress of their pupils and be very pleased to see evidences of the master's influence in the student's work. Disciples of Jesus will be hard pressed to emulate their Master let alone try to excel Him. Jesus said, **"The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his Lord. It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master and the servant as his Lord"** (Matt. 10.24).

And to be a disciple, we must **become** one. And how do we become one? We must resolve to "learn of Him" and to obey Jesus in all things. Before ascending to heaven Jesus sent His apostles into all the world to **"preach the gospel to every creature for he that believeth and is baptised shall be saved."** Thus we must hear the gospel and believe that Jesus is the Son of God; repent of our past life-style and sin; be immersed for the remission of our sins and continue in the doctrine of Christ. Thus we rise from the watery grave **"to walk in newness of life"** (Rom 6) and continue to walk in the footsteps of the Master. **"He that endureth to the end, shall be saved"** said Jesus.

None of us are strangers to the concept of "counting the cost": indeed we do it in almost every aspect of life. Business-men do it; housewives do it; even school children do it. Prudent people continually assess the potential consequences of their actions: whether serious or trivial. Obviously in major transactions, such as matrimony or house buying, we give the matter the consideration it deserves, but even in mundane

things like running a car, planning a holiday or even just keeping a pet we certainly assess the cost. In some of the decisions we make, the heart rules the head, and vice versa. How long should it take us to count the cost of becoming a disciple of Christ? Clearly it will vary from person to person depending upon our age, experience of life and present commitments, but in Acts of the Apostles we read of some being baptised “the same hour of the night”, whereas we know of some baptised after ten or twenty years attendance at gospel meetings.

Jesus came to save a doomed world. He also died to save us all. He is “**not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance**”. Therefore, in challenging the multitudes to “count the cost” before embarking upon discipleship, Jesus was not trying to discourage them from becoming disciples but merely warning them to take it very seriously. Jesus certainly wants ALL men and women to be disciples: requires all men and women to be His disciples and will be satisfied with nothing less. Disciples (called “Christians” first at Antioch) are rescued from the clutches of Satan and are “**translated into the kingdom of God’s dear Son**”. (Col. 1:13). It is not, therefore, solely a question of “Can I afford to be a disciple but rather, “Can I afford not to be Christ’s disciple”. Do we opt for heaven or hell? Jesus knew that if we counted the cost, we could consider the alternatives: and a Christless grave is unthinkable. It has been truly said that if we live as if Christ had never died, we shall die as if Christ had never lived.

CONCLUSION

Jesus mentioned the builder. All that we can build to take into the next world is character. We can also build up “a good deposit” of good works in the heavenly bank. No man can build a character that will survive the Great Judgement and so we must depend upon Christ’s grace and mercy and seek to follow Him here below. Jesus also talked about a King going to war and petitioning for peace. We too should sue now for peace and enlist in the army of Jesus. As mentioned previously, there are, sadly, many who have put their hand to the plough of discipleship and have looked back. Of them, Peter says, “**For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them.**” (2 Peter 2:20).

Paul, on the other hand, like most of the twelve disciples, suffered much as a disciple but remained sure and steadfast until the end. We can read (in 2 Cor.11) a brief description of how his discipleship was regularly punctuated with perils in every possible direction; with weary journeyings; and shipwreck; with floggings and beatings with rods, and once he was stoned to apparent death. Yet he endured it all quite cheerfully and could say near the end, “**For I am now ready to be offered and the time of my departure is now at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only but unto all them also that love His appearing.**” (2. Tim.2:4). And so Paul, not only counted the cost at the beginning of his ministry, but is recounting it here at the end, and in spite of all his privations and sufferings found it very much worth while: a cost well worth paying. The reward, a “Crown of Righteousness” (life eternal in heaven), is given not to Paul only but to all others who will follow his example. But as the hymnwriter says, “only he who bears the cross may hope to wear the glorious crown.”

Take up thy cross and follow on,
Nor think till death to lay it down,
For only he who bears the cross,
May hope to wear the glorious crown.

EDITOR.

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

"I bring my sins to Thee,
 The sins I cannot count,
 That all may cleansed be
 In Thy once opened Fount.
 I bring them, Saviour, all to Thee,
 The burden is too great for me.

F.R.H.

AN HIGHWAY FOR OUR GOD

"And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein." (Isaiah 35:8)

THE GOSPEL IN PERSON

God's people looking forward.

"And an highway shall be there, and a way."

"In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight." (Matthew 3:1-3)

"And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins; As it is written in the book of the words of Esaias the prophet, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight."

"Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways shall be made smooth; And all flesh shall see the salvation of God." (Luke 3:3-6)

"The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." (John 1:29).

THE SENDING OUT OF THE TWELVE

"These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as ye go, preach, saying, the kingdom of heaven is at hand." (Matt. 10:5-7)

THE SENDING OUT OF THE SEVENTY

"After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come.

Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest. Go your ways: behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves. Carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes: and salute no man by the way. And into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, Peace be to this house. And if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it: if not, it shall turn to you again.

And in the same house remain, eat and drink such things as they give: for the labourer is worthy of his hire. Go not from house to house.

And into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you:

And heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you."

(Luke 10:1-9)

AND AN HIGHWAY SHALL BE THERE, AND A WAY

“And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his WAYS;

To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins.

Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us.

To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.”

(Luke 1:7-79)

I AM THE WAY

“And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.

And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know.

Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?

Jesus saith unto him, I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.”

(John 14:3-6)

BY A NEW AND LIVING WAY

“Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus.

By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh.”

(Hebrews 10:19-20)

GOD'S PERFECT WILL

“The one and only law of life that sets a man free from all the forces that blight and destroy is the Will of God. Show me a man who lives for one day wholly, utterly, in word and thought and deed in the Will of God, and I will show you a man who is antedating heaven, and who for that day reaches the plane of life which is at once broadest, freest and gladdest.

TRUTH IS A SANCTIFYING FORCE

The word of God is given to man not that he may have a correct theory, but that he may have the truth. Truth is a sanctifying force, and a man holds the truth only when he is held by the truth. When truth possesses a man, all its glory and beauty are manifested through his life and character. The truth the Bible reveals is the Will of God for man. Sanctification by truth is the bringing of man into the Will of God.

THE MEANS OF GRACE

‘The means of grace’ are means to an end, that end being the realization of the Will of God. Every one of them tends to that issue.

‘The hope of glory’ is the hope that ultimately the Will of God will be done upon the earth as in the heaven, or that the spirit of man, passing into the heavenly state, shall realize all the full blessedness of that Will.”

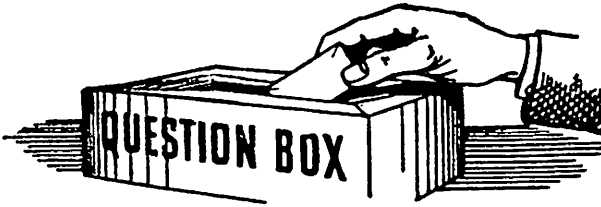
Campbell Morgan.

STAND PERFECT AND COMPLETE

“Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ, saluteth you, always labouring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the Will of God.”

Colossians 4:12

Selected by Leonard Morgan



Conducted by
Alf Marsden

“Would you please explain what it is meant by Paul in 1 Cor. 5:5 when he says, ‘to deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord’

This verse can only be explained adequately by referring it to the context in which it occurs. Some commentators have entitled 1 Cor. 5 almost like a detective novel by calling it, “The Case of the Incestuous Brother”, and have either stated or implied that the person concerned was guilty of having had sexual intercourse with his own mother; the text of 1 Cor. 5, however, does not support this interpretation, nor would a dictionary definition of incest. I have said that the context will help to explain the main question, so let us start there.

THE CONTEXT

Paul says, **“It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you”** (v1). The word commonly (A. V.) means literally ‘actually’ (R. V.). Reported means literally **“it is heard”**. So the start of v1 could read, **“Fornication is actually heard of among you”**. Possibly this sad news had come from the house of Chloe, for in 1 Cor. 1:11 we read, **“For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you”**. The Greek word for fornication is PORNEIA and may be defined as, “illicit sexual intercourse”. The sexual intercourse being spoken of was evidently of such a revolting character that it wasn’t even named among the Gentiles (the nations). Isn’t it sad that these Corinthians, ostensibly trying to convert the nations to Christ, should be practising sins which people of the nations would not even practise. Small wonder that Paul was in an abrasive mood.

The nature of the sin was, **“that one should have his father’s wife”**. As I have indicated, this does not necessarily mean that the woman was the man’s mother, nor are we told whether or not the father was dead or divorced, but it would seem that the union of the man and the woman was of a permanent nature. It is interesting to note that the Jewish law was quite explicit concerning such a sin. In Lev. 18:8 we read, **“The nakedness of thy father’s wife shalt thou not uncover: it is the father’s nakedness”**. Again in Duet. 22:30, **“A man shall not take his father’s wife, nor discover his father’s skirt”**. In his second letter to Thessalonica Paul demanded withdrawal from such an offender (See 2 Thess. 3:6). It was disorderly conduct.

The attitude of some of the Corinthian brethren seems to have deeply offended the Apostle for, he says, **“ye are puffed up”**. Several times in this letter he refers to those who adopted this attitude (See 4:6, 19, 20), and he seems to find it hard to believe that this inflated pride could actually condone the sin of the one who was acting despicably. The very least they could have done was to have mourned because of his sin, and to have seen to it that he was expelled from the community of believers so that a good example could have been given to those both inside and outside the Church. Remember, the Corinth of Paul’s day was a very immoral city, and for the Church to be seen to be condoning heinous sin was bound to have a very serious backlash against the Gospel. The saints in the Corinthian church should have felt no inflated pride in the man’s sin.

Although Paul was absent in body from them, he tells them that he has made an apostolic judgement in the case as though he were present with them. He makes the point that he was, in fact, present with them **in spirit**, and this is a perfectly valid point for him to make because he, along with them, was a brother in Christ. He makes them understand that their inflated pride should not make them believe that they were masters of their own destiny; by extension this is a good lesson for all Christians. When we meet together, we meet in the name, and under the authority, of the Lord Jesus Christ. If Christians bring shame upon themselves, then they automatically bring shame on the One who died to save them. If we **glory** in our sin, then surely we compound the agony of the One who died to relieve us from sin. The message that Paul sent to Corinth was that the heinous sin which they were condoning could not be tolerated in the presence of the Holy One of God. His apostolic judgement had been made. The offender should be expelled from the community of believers. What did this mean in the longer term?

TO DELIVER TO SATAN

This is the main thrust of our young sister's question. Paul's judgement to the church at Corinth was that they should **"deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh"**.

The phrase **'deliver such an one unto Satan'**, is not new so far as Paul is concerned. You may recall that he used the same sort of condemnation against Hymenaeus and Alexander (See 1 Tim. 120). Of them he said, **"whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme"**. It is quite clear that in 1 Cor. 5 and 1 Tim. 1:20 that Paul certainly means expulsion from the church. We must not, however, think or infer that by putting the offenders out of the church, Paul is consigning them to eternal damnation. When he wrote his second letter to Thessalonica he said, **"And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother"**. (2 Thess. 3:14,15). Perhaps the greatest difficulty for a church to exercise discipline by expulsion from the fellowship is that such an action tends to induce hatred, either passive or active. In the case of an **enemy** it would be **active** hatred, and this is probably why Paul says that the erring brother must not be treated as an enemy.

We must not lose sight of the fact that the offender is to be **'delivered to Satan'** for a very specific purpose, i.e., **"for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord"**. The punishment – drastic though it is – is intended to be **remedial**. The sins – such as fornication, disobedience, consciences seared as with hot iron, blasphemy, love of the world instead of love for Christ – these must be renounced and remedied so far as the erring Christian is concerned: they must be destroyed. They are, if I can coin a phrase, 'thorns in the spirit'. The **inward** remedial struggle to destroy the fleshly desires, which once they have complete control, can only result in spiritual death, can be extremely painful **in the flesh**. It is an undeniable fact that fleshly excesses can, in many cases, be the cause of bodily illnesses, quite apart from the trauma of the mind. I recall that in my early twenties I was smoking some 40 cigarettes a day. I realised that I was not my own master, and that I was, to a large extent, under the influence of nicotine. I determined that I had to stop smoking, and I did, but I was so beside myself for two or three months that I wasn't really fit to live with. It makes sense to destroy the excesses of the flesh, so that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord. We must never allow **our** faith to be shipwrecked because of the lusts of the flesh, and the destruction of our consciences; remember Hymenaeus and Alexander.

Brethren, we must always remember that no matter how delightful the excesses of the flesh may seem, our goal is the final salvation from sin in the day of the Lord. The

message for the Church is that we shall not achieve this desirable goal by condoning sin.

THE PERVASIVE POWER

To complete the picture, Paul tells the Corinthian saints that to glory in the man's sin is not good; "**Do you not know that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump**"? Such is the pervasive power of leaven, that only a **little** of it can affect the whole lump (mixture). Isn't this like the effect of small germs spreading disease throughout the body? Some Christians seem to think that what they call **little sins** can be tolerated in the Church, but beware, the whole Church could soon be affected; such is the pervasive power of sin. It has to be purged out before it is too late.

There is, however, a positive side to all this. Even if the remedial action fails, there is, after the purging, a new lump, unleavened. This new lump would then be in the ideal and normal state of Christians, uncontaminated. No wickedness, no malice, says Paul, but exhibiting the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. This is surely what the Church should be like, and we should ask ourselves, "Why should it **not** be like this, with Christ as its Head? It is the task of us all to keep it pure and unadulterated.

(All questions, please, to Alf Marsden,
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THE NEED OF PATIENCE

Be patient, be still. In this day and age in which we live it might be with difficulty that we pay heed to this. Nevertheless we are exhorted to do just that (read Romans 15:5,6). Patience is indeed a fruit of the Spirit and consequently we must endeavour to develop and encourage it, both in self and others. Never forget the source, it comes of God. When we lack patience in full or part, it is the soul that suffers. Our spiritual welfare could well be on the decline! Take care! In the reading we are exhorted to be 'like-minded' one toward another. We have to be **patient**, likewise, one toward another. Practise the art of being patient, it works wonders. Christian love, Christian patience, Christian humility, Christian fellowship go hand in hand, all to the benefit of the soul.

In Christ all things are possible, patience included. When we meet the awkward brother, person, friend remember the source of patience. We are to live as one in fellowship with Christ, for a special reason: that we might with one mind and one voice **glorify God**. Patience, humility and love are essential to the well-being of the Christian. Develop, develop and develop, the art of being patient. Christ is the greatest example of patience (Isa. 53:7; Acts 8:32; Mat. 27).

We see Jesus on his way to the cross, knowing full well the outcome, yet He was patient, and humble, to the will of God.

We are in the race of life. We as Christians must exercise patience with greater care (read Hebrews 12:1). Patience they say is a **virtue**, to the Christian this is indeed true. In patience we may experience more of God's love.

Heb. 6-12 "**Be not slothful but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.**"

We notice, an inheritance through faith and patience. The stronger the both, the greater the possibility of the inheritance. A promise of God.

Heb. 10:12 "**Ye have need of patience, that after ye have done the will of God. ye might receive the promise.**"

A promise for the Christian and the family of God. Be patient, but active glorifying God, as He would have us. We have need of patience.

A.P. Sharp,
Newtongrange.

THE DENOMINATIONS

Churches with Peculiar Doctrines

3. — UNITARIAN AND FREE CHRISTIAN CHURCHES

The Unitarian and Free Christian Churches, as they are officially called, number about 320 in the British Isles, mostly in England and Northern Ireland. They represent the extreme left wing of Nonconformity and stand for the principle of freedom of thought in religion. Strictly speaking, membership requires nothing more than belief in a spiritual principle in the Universe and the practice of the good life. Actually most Unitarians believe much more than this, and their forms of worship imply a great deal more.

Foundation

The name Unitarian is unfortunate and misleading. It springs out of a controversy which was raging in the eighteenth century. At the time of the Reformation there were groups which refused to accept the orthodox doctrines of the Person of Christ and the Trinity. It will be remembered that Servetus was burnt in Geneva, suspect of Christological heresy. Faustus Socinus was more fortunate, and was able to spread his doctrine, which denied the pre-existence of Christ; but withal, unlike modern Unitarianism, was thoroughly supernaturalist. This was the beginning of things, however. In the seventeenth century in this country, there were separatist Churches which sat loose to elements of Christology, and after the ejection of 1662 a number of Presbyterian, Independent and Baptist Churches tended to Unitarian views of the Godhead. These were, however, mainly Presbyterian. In the closing years of the seventeenth century Presbyterianism was far stronger in England than either Independency or the Baptist Churches. At the close of the eighteenth century it was a weak remnant. Most of the Presbyterian Churches had turned to Unitarianism. About one third of the present Unitarian Churches date from this period. It was an unfortunate controversy which raged in the eighteenth century. Most of the orthodox understood the doctrine of the Trinity in Tritheistic form, and rationalism of the hard logical type dominated both sides. The two great names of the eighteenth century are Joseph Priestly, the discoverer of oxygen, and Theophilus Lindsey. Penal laws against Unitarians were not revoked till 1813.

Development

At the same time strong Unitarian Churches developed on the Continent, especially in Poland and Transylvania, and to a less extent in Holland. The movement early spread to America and in the nineteenth century was greatly strengthened by the learned Dr. Channing and by Emerson. In the nineteenth century the whole movement was greatly influenced and modified by thinkers like James Martineau, Stopford Brooke, Dr. Drummond and L. P. Jacks. At this period, too, it made rich contributions to hymnology. There must be few hymn books which are not indebted to Unitarian hymn writers.

Conflicting Emphases

Unitarians and Unitarian Churches are only alike in that they are 'non-subscribing,' that is, they subscribe to no doctrinal standards whatever. Most of them practise infant Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Some have liturgical services and some have not. They mostly use Martineau's Hymn Book, in which Trinitarian hymns are absent, but some use it with a supplement in which some such hymns and hymns which ascribe a Lordship to Christ are brought back. Many who belong to Unitarian Churches and many Ministers are not Unitarians in the strict sense of the term, but hold a Trinitarian conception of the Godhead in one form or another. In some Churches one will still find an absence of warmth of devotion and a dry intellectualism surviving from the

eighteenth century; in others quite the reverse. Curiously enough, in some books of devotion one will find a kind of Jesuolatry, devotion to Jesus as a man, not unsimilar to what one finds in Roman Catholic books expressing Devotion to the Sacred Heart.

Most Unitarians, however, would hold to an extreme Liberal form of Christianity, looking askance at anything supernatural, though there are not wanting some who have a deeper insight into the Gospel, and for whom Jesus is much more than the greatest of the prophets and the Exemplar of man. Thus they have manifested in their ranks in more recent years the desire for definite and clear theological teaching and statement, alongside the older desire for complete religious freedom. It is perhaps true, however, that the majority of Unitarians would demand no more than belief in the Fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man, the leadership of Jesus, the Kingdom of God as the victory of good over evil, and eternal life. Their hesitancy to go further precludes them from joining in with such bodies as the F.C.F.C. and the World Council of Churches.

W. Robinson.

GIVERS AND TAKERS

People fit into two categories: the givers and the takers. Of which class are you?

We all begin life as takers. Our parents must supply our every need. We have nothing of substance to give back. Infants are self-centred and selfish – and that is as it should be. No one expects a baby to support his parents.

Somewhere along the way, we ought to make the transition from being principally receivers to givers. There will always be situations in which we receive physical things, love, and care from others, without being able to reciprocate. However, our basic stance should change to that of givers.

Our Lord said, **“It is more blessed to give than to receive.”** Every giver knows this by experience. Self-respect is one of the blessings of being a giver. Joy and good feelings come to us as we freely give. We are privileged in this way to be like our Master – for He was a giver.

Christians fall into these two groups (givers and takers) also. There are those who attend worship to “get something out of the service” and those who put themselves into it. Some are always looking for ways in which the Church may serve them – while others are wanting to serve.

Elders, and other gospel ministers, will need to see their task as that of helping some of the takers in the church to become givers. Also, we need to remember that we shall always have both groups with us. Do not despair when a taker refuses to perform as a giver. He will not teach the Bible, contribute freely, nor extend himself in any way beyond his self-imposed minimum.

When Jesus deputized the twelve for their limited commission, He charged, **“freely ye have received, freely give.”**

L.D. Jones.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Aug. 1	Lev. 19:1-18	Matt. 20:1-19
Aug. 8	Micah 6	Matt.20:20-34
Aug. 15	Zech. 9	Matt. 21:1-22
Aug. 22	Psalm 118:8-29	Matt.21:23-46
Aug. 29	Daniel 3:8-30	Matt. 22:1-22

THE PARABLE OF THE LABOURERS IN THE VINEYARD

Jesus said: **“For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is a householder, who went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard”** (20:1). Jesus went on to reveal that all of them received the same reward – a penny (a Roman *denarius*)

— no matter the time of day they were hired. (A *denarius* was a normal day's wage for a working man.) Those who had "borne the burden and heat of the day" murmured against the householder because they thought they had been dealt with unfairly. The reply came: "**Friend, I am not being unfair to you. Didn't you agree to work for a *denarius*? Take your pay and go. I want to give the man who was hired last the same as I gave you. Don't I have the right to do what I want with my own money? Or are you envious because I am generous? So the last will be first and the first will be last**" (20:13-16, N.I.V.).

What are the lessons from this parable? Edwin W. Rice has written: "The main teaching is: 1. That priority of entering service does not insure priority of reward. 2. The reward is not in proportion to the length of service. 3. Nor to the burdensome nature of that work. 4. Working expecting a reward for sacrifices and because of long service will place one last, not first, in the kingdom. 5. Entering at the last call, trusting the Master implicitly, may place one before those who entered first in a spirit which looked for so much pay for so much service. 6. The highest reward is dependent on the grace of God."

NEW CONDITIONS IN THE SPIRITUAL KINGDOM

The request by James' and John's mother for her two sons to sit at either side of Jesus' throne annoyed the other disciples. (It is obvious she did not comprehend the nature of the kingdom of Christ.) Jesus went on to say: "**... but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister: and whosoever will be chief among you let him be your servant: even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give his life a ransom for many**" (20: 26-28). Here the standards of the world are turned upside down. Jesus Himself was to set the example by laying down His life for all sinners everywhere. That is what I love about Jesus — He is the supreme leader and never asks His

disciples to do anything He Himself was not prepared to do. With Jesus it is not "do as I say," but "do as I do". Peter later wrote: "**... Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that, we should follow His steps**" (1 Peter 2:21). "Example" in the Greek is *hupogrammos* and I wish I had space to detail the educational background of this word. Suffice to say, that the Master left us not only a dauntingly perfect example (Himself), but He constantly helps us to follow it through the indwelling Spirit, who is with us every step of the way, every minute of the day.

THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY

Jesus' suffering and death were now not far away. His entry to Jerusalem at this time was a unique occasion. We read: "**And when He was come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, Who is this? And the multitude said, This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee**" (21: 10-11). He had come "**meek and sitting upon an ass and (even) the colt the foal of an ass**" (21:5). W.R. Bradlaugh has written: "It is expressly stated that the ass which was to be ridden was to be one on which man had not yet sat and, therefore, by reason of its tender age, was permitted to remain near its mother. And, in connection with this point, we would draw attention to the direction of the Mosaic law, that all animals devoted to the Lord were to be animals which had not previously been used in the service of man (Numbers 19:2; Deuteronomy 21:3; 1 Samuel 6:7; Mark 11:2; Luke 19:30). The riding of the Messiah on such an animal would indicate, according to this view that He was employed peculiarly in the service of Jehovah, and was one who had come to fulfil the promises of Jehovah to His covenant people".

THE AUTHORITY OF JESUS QUESTIONED

We read: "**And when Jesus was come into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came unto Him as He was teaching, and said, By what**

authority do you do these things? and who gave you this authority?" (21:23). Jesus was authority personified. I am reminded, for example, of an earlier passage: "And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at His doctrine: for He taught them as one having authority and not as the scribes" (Matthew 7:28-29). Simply, this man was different. "Never man spake like this man" (John 7:46). If only they had seen that He was the unique one, the perfect one, the Son of the Living God, then everything would have fallen into place. But there is none so blind as he who will not see and none so deaf as he who will not hear. Remember, Jesus once said: "Every one that is of the truth hears my voice" (John 18:37).

I am so glad that I have committed my life to Jesus Christ. I rejoice that I serve the one who once declared: "All authority is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Matthew 28:18). It is an authority beyond all question.

THE PARABLE OF THE TENANTS

The son in this parable obviously refers to Jesus. We read: "But last of all he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son. But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir: come let us kill him and let us seize on his inheritance. And they caught him and cast him out of the vineyard and slew him" (21:37-39). This is exactly what the Jews did to Jesus. Through the Roman authorities, the Lord was taken to a hill outside the city walls of Jerusalem and there crucified as a common criminal. Destruction would be the end of those responsible, as stated by the rulers themselves (21:41).

Jesus spoke of the rejected stone, which became the head of the corner (21:42). He went on to say: "The Kingdom of God shall be taken from you and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him

to powder" (21:3-44). William Barclay has written: "Jesus is the foundation stone on which everything is built, and the corner stone which holds everything together. To refuse His way is to batter one's head against the walls of the law of God. To defy him is in the end to be crushed out of life. However strange these pictures may seem to us, they were familiar to every Jew who knew the prophets."

THE MARRIAGE OF THE KING'S SON

In that day the time of a wedding feast was not stated in the invitation. When everything was ready, the servants were sent out to tell the guests to come. In response, "they would not come" (22:3) or "they made light of it" (22:5). Worse, "the remnant took his servants and entreated them spitefully and slew them" (22:6). In consequence, a universal call went out which produced a mixed multitude (22:10). The king, when he entered, spotted a man who was not properly attired for the occasion and had him bound hand and foot and cast out (22:11-13). What lessons are there here? I think it best to quote Albert Barnes: "This parable refers, undoubtedly, to the rejection of the Jews and to the calling of the Gentiles. The gospel, with all its privileges, was offered to the Jewish people; but through their wickedness and pride they rejected it and all its blessings were offered to the Gentiles and accepted. This is the general truth. Many circumstances are thrown in to fill out the narrative which cannot be particularly explained."

Ian S. Davidson,
Motherwell.

Bro. PHILIP PARTINGTON — AN APPRECIATION

Philip Partington was what I would describe as a 'straight-down-the-middle' Christian: he never deviated from what he believed to be right. This attitude was epitomised in his response to war and military service. Along with other Christians from the Wigan and Hindley areas,

he objected strongly and with a clear, Christian conscience to taking up arms with the intention of hurting or maiming anyone and, of course, he and others like him suffered for their convictions. So did their loved ones.

Philip was a Christian devoted to evangelism. He was instrumental, along with other Christians, in bringing into being the church at Petticoat Lane, Ince. After the venture at Ince failed, he spent some time as evangelist with the church at Morley. Latterly, and until the time of his death, he worked as evangelist with the saints at Cleveleys. He rendered sterling service wherever he went, and will be long remembered by all who were privileged to work with him. He was also an itinerant preacher of high repute both in the U.K. and wherever he went abroad.

I remember him best, however, for his work as evangelist, and co-Elder with me, at the Albert Street Church, Wigan. We had some thorny problems to resolve, but Philip always approached problems with the calm assurance which characterised all of his work with the brethren. He certainly made a significant contribution to whatever success we had at Albert Street. Personally, I shall always give him a high quality rating for his personal work. He worked with us for some 15/16 years before he moved on to Cleveleys; during that time he and his dear wife Beatrice visited many in their homes, helping and encouraging wherever they could. There are many of the saints who were at Albert Street at that time who will remember with affection and gratitude the benefits which they derived from such visits. This was one of the areas of the Lord's work in which Philip excelled.

His was not a volatile type of platform work; he taught accurately from the word, and all of his messages were methodical and well-structured. His sincerity in what he believed was plain for all to see; his integrity and faithfulness were never in doubt. Those who saw the serious side of his platformwork might

be forgiven for thinking that he could never be light-hearted; he was serious in his work, but he also had a keen sense of humour. He demonstrated this many times at church socials; some of his portrayals were quite hilarious.

We shall miss Philip greatly, but we know that his soul is secure with the Lord. Our hearts go out to Beatrice, the children, and to the extended family. I feel sure that the saints everywhere will give support, and underneath there are always the everlasting arms.

With remembrance deep and lasting,
Alf Marsden.

OBITUARY

Cleveleys: Philip Partington died on Friday 14th May whilst on holiday in Llandudno. He was a simple man: simply a Christian. As a "doer of the word and not a hearer only", he practised what he preached.

At 16, when his father died, he abandoned his education and took over the family business, helping to support his mother and her younger children. In wartime he staunchly stuck to his beliefs, registering as a conscientious objector, and cheerfully enduring the hardships and scorn which followed.

In 1966 he sold his shop, and began work for the church in Morley, later moving to Albert Street, Wigan, before spending the last 7 years in "semi-retirement" in Cleveleys.

Never a respecter of persons, throughout his life he echoed Kipling's lines:

"If you can walk with crowds and keep your virtue or walk with Kings, not lose the common touch ..." To his children he was a father who expected high standards of us, yet proved them to be attainable by his example. When we failed he never gave up on us, but patiently persevered. He preferred to show his love in practice, rather than reduce it to shallow sentiment.

His 11 grandchildren were each, equally, a source of joy. They all loved him. He was married to Beatrice for just

over 50 years: Mum and Dad were devoted to each other. We all miss him. We will remember his sermons repeated on visits to many churches. We will remember his jokes, repeated even more frequently.

Mum has a strong faith: with a Saviour to strengthen her, and her family around her, she will come to no harm. Please pray for her.

The funeral took place at Argyle Street, Hindley, on Friday 20th May. Our thanks to John Morgan of Hindley who led the service; to Albert Winstanley, a friend of Dad's since schooldays together, who led the singing; and to all who attended and who sent cards and messages of sympathy and support.

On behalf of the family,
Geoff Partington.

Cleveleys: It is with a deep sense of loss that we have to report the death of our brother Philip Partington at the age of 73 years. He collapsed and died suddenly whilst he and his wife Beatrice were on holiday. He was known and loved throughout all the congregations whom he had occasion to serve during his long and devoted work for his Lord and Master. Others with greater knowledge of his earlier days will write elsewhere in this issue. Some of us recently had the joy of joining Philip and Beatrice as they celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary with their family in the church building in Argyle Street, Hindley. We are saddened that he should be lost to us so soon after such a happy event. Philip has served the church here in Cleveleys over the past seven years in his capacity as evangelist and he will be greatly missed for his preaching and teaching from the scriptures of which he had a deep knowledge. We remember how, when he was seeking to save someone's soul, he would continue to persevere when others had given them up as lost. This was but one trait of his character which emphasised his concern for others and

his great dedication to the work whereunto he was called.

We are happy that his family will not sorrow as those who are without hope. Nevertheless we commend them to the comfort and solace which our Father in heaven gives to all those who love Him and whom, in His grace and mercy, He loves.

Eric Winter.

NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

Slamannan District: The Quarterly Mutual Benefit Meeting took place at Motherwell meeting-place on Saturday 29th May when the subject discussed was "Do we forgive only those who repent". Ian Davidson still suffering from jet-lag from his visit to America was in the chair, and the speakers were David Chalmers, Ayr, and John Kneller, Longniddry. Although a lesser number than usual was in attendances: some churches not represented at all, an instructive and enjoyable time was had. It was good to welcome John and Betty Dodsley from south of the border, holidaying in Scotland, and to have John's contribution to the discussion. As always the subject was less simple than it appeared and various points of view were advanced. Our next gathering will be, God willing, on Saturday September 11th when the subject will be "Was the Lord's Supper really instituted during the 'Passover'"? The venue will be in New Cumnock, the Chairman will be Harry McGinn, and the speakers Ian Davidson, Motherwell, and Mark Plain, Tranent. Our thanks to the good sisters at Motherwell for the tea and refreshments.

Harry McGinn.

Beulah Road, Kirkby-in-Ashfield: We are pleased to report the addition of a further soul into the Lord's Church. On Lord's Day evening of 25th April, we were overjoyed to witness the baptism

of Margaret Newcombe, the daughter of Bro. and Sis. Tom King, she made her decision after much enquiry and study of the Scriptures and we share with her family the great joy of this occasion.

We pray that the Lord will be with her and bless her as she takes up the new life as a beloved sister in Christ.

T. Woodhouse, Secretary.

GHANA APPEAL

In the past month we have received a letter from the brethren in Accra, requesting aid to continue the work of building a meeting place. They have received an eviction notice from the school house where they currently worship. This congregation already have an excellent site with services nearby. They have already produced 2000 hand made concrete blocks.

Shortly we intend to send the present funds, £1000 to be equally distributed among the churches for Medical Aid. At this moment there is considerable evangelistic outreach going on in Ghana especially in Ashanti region, also in the Brong Ahafo region, please remember this in your prayers. Anyone wishing to help in this building of a meeting place in Accra please contact me:- G. Pearson, 13 Fairways, Dunfermline, Fife KY 12 0DU. Tel: 0383 728624.

P.S. Thank you I.M.B. for £50 received on 22nd May, 1993 (receipt 438).

A CHURCH MEMBER

Am I an active member, the kind who would be missed?

Or am I quite content that my name is on the list?

Do I attend the meetings and mingle with the flock?

Or would I rather stay at home and criticise and knock?

Am I alert to do my part to help the work along?

Or am I satisfied to know that I at least belong?

THE NURSES PRAYER

Dearest Lord, may I see Thee today and every day, in the person of Thy sick and whilst nursing them minister unto Thee.

Though Thou hidest Thyself behind the unattractive disguise of the irritable, the exacting, the unreasonable, may I still recognise Thee and say, Jesus, my Patient, how sweet it is to serve Thee. Lord, give me this seeking faith, then my work will never be monotonous.

Men often sneeringly besmirch
The hypocrites who go to church;
Yet no one has a word to say
Of hypocrites who stay away.

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