

The **SCRIPTURE STANDARD**

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

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Our Divine Standard.

IT is generally recognised that with reference to material things we must have an authoritative standard, so we have standard weights and measures.

It is surely not less, but more, important that in the spiritual realm, in matters relating to faith, conduct, worship, and service of the Lord, we must have a reliable standard.

God's true people have always regarded the 'Scriptures of Truth' as such a standard, to which they constantly appealed. In days when people had given heed to false guides, and consequently were in darkness, Isaiah cried: "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." (viii. 20).

To our Lord Jesus the Scriptures were the Final Court of Appeal.

In His conflict with Satan, He used the 'sword of the Spirit, the word of God.' 'It is written.' 'It is written.' 'It is written.' To religious leaders who opposed Him (such are still the foes of those who refuse to depart from the Word), He said: 'Have ye never read?' 'Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of Me.' 'Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father: there is one that accuseth you, even Moses in whom ye trust. For had ye believed Moses ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?' (John v. 39-47). That is a poser for so-called higher (destructive) critics.

The Apostles of Christ constantly appealed to the Scriptures.

Peter's powerful address as recorded in Acts ii., which resulted in three thousand converts, was at least one-half quotations from the Old Testament Scriptures.

'What saith the Scriptures?' was ever Paul's cry. All the New Testament writers quote frequently from the Scriptures.

The Great Reformation of 16th Century was result of Appeal to the Scriptures.

John Wycliffe pleaded for the Bible as the sole rule of faith and practice. Luther, the Roman Catholic monk, found a Bible, and in reading it found enlightenment for his soul, and proceeded to let that light shine to dispel the darkness and gloom. The period in history called the 'Dark Ages' was due to suppression of the Bible. Priestcraft cannot live in the

pure atmosphere of the Word of God, so as far as was possible the Bible was kept from the people, and priestcraft, ignorance, superstition and tyranny held the field. Guided by the Scriptures, the Reformers did a great work; and pointed the people to the Scriptures as revealing the way out of papal darkness into God's own light.

Men who have moved the World have been Bible Men.

Wickliffe, Luther, Knox, Spurgeon, and many others could be named who did mighty work because they used 'the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.'

The world has never been moved by men who cast doubts on, and undermine the authority of the Scriptures. Souls are not won, nor believers strengthened by destructive critics. The only move resulting from their work is the move of large numbers out of the Churches.

The Pioneers of the Restoration Movement were Men of the Book

'Where the Bible speaks we speak; where the Bible is silent we are silent,' was their watchword.

Alexander Campbell said: 'The Bible alone is the Bible only, in word and deed, in profession and practice; and this alone can reform the world and save the Church.' (*Christian System*, p.9). The first clause in 'The Model Trust Deed,' which all who seek aid from the Co-operation Chapel Building Committee must accept, reads: 'That the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments contain the sole and sufficient rule of faith for the Church of Christ.'

Lancelot Oliver, who for many years was editor of the Co-operation's official magazine, and trainer of preachers, said: 'The Bible furnishes an all-sufficient revelation of the Divine Will, and a perfect rule of faith and practice. We think that the human creed is not consistent with that point of agreement. If there is more in the creed than is in the Bible, there is too much in it: if there is less in it than is in the Bible, there is too little in it; and if there is the same in it that is in the Bible, there is no need for it.' (*Faith and Practice of Certain Churches of Christ*, pp. 15-16).

Such statements as the above could be almost indefinitely multiplied.

Apart from the Bible there is no reliable standard.

Elihu put to Job the question, 'Should it be according to thy mind?' Many seem to think so. An affirmative answer to that question would make man a law unto himself, and leave him free to do what is 'right in his own eyes.' The world would then not be a safe place to live in. If according to your mind, why not according to anyone's mind? Boasting reasons weak directions leave the mind bewildered in a dubious road. The moderns have a revised version of the Restoration watchword, which makes the second half to read: 'Where the Bible is silent we may speak.'

Will they tell us what cannot be said, done, and introduced under that head? That opens the door for any innovation and departure from the Divinely revealed way.

'Learn not to go beyond the things which are written.'

Therein lies our only safety. The man who without Scripture authority introduces an organ into a Christian Church has no right to complain of the men who introduces Jewish sacrifices, or the vestments, candles, incense, and the whole Romish ritual and service.

Only false religious systems need books and creeds in addition to the Bible. Real Christianity grows and flourishes on the Bible only.

It is the rejection of that Divine Standard, and substitution of other standards that accounts for the deplorable divisions, defeatism and disaster, which have made the Church so weak, helpless, and hopeless.

The Scriptures will be the standard of judgment in the last day.

Jesus said, 'He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him; the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him at the last day.' (John xii. 48). If in any matter we find that the Word of the Lord is against us, let us be wise enough to get right with that Word, for that Word changes not, it 'liveth and abideth for ever.'

On our stand for 'rightly dividing the word of truth' we hope (D.V.) to write in our next issue.

EDITOR.

Man's Disease, God's Remedy.

Man in his original state

MAN is noble even in his ruin. How much more so must he have been when he came forth from the hand of his Maker, the last and greatest work of His creative power, destined to be the lord and governor of this earth, honoured by the friendship of his Creator, receiving from Him laws for his guidance. As long as he obeyed he dwelt in safety, no disease dimmed his eye.

In his present state

Man is noble even in his ruin, but his nobility seems of hell. His passions reign supreme, producing universal confusion. Man is scattered, and would that that were all, he is prejudiced against and hates his fellow man, nationally, religiously, and individually; alienated from him, he enslaves, destroys, and despoils him, without a thought of the injustice of his actions. He is found existing in all states between boundless luxury and abject poverty. He is subject to innumerable diseases, and death eventually steps in and claims him for his own. The fear and love for his Creator has disappeared, and His presence is never sought. He is separated from his God, and is without hope in the world.

The cause

Attempting to govern himself, in preference to having God for his Governor.

The remedy

Is there a remedy for such a condition arising from such a cause? Lives there the man who will affirm the possibility of restoring man to his first state? None surely will dare to assert a system exists which will enable man to escape the grasp of death? O man! the grave is the least of your evils, to descend into its narrow cavity were not so much if it could be rendered a waiting house till ushered into the joys of eternity. But rather ask, is there a system in existence to resuscitate the morally dead world—to join man again to his God and his fellow man—to overthrow the powers of avarice, prejudice, and ambition, from their empire on the earth? Ask that, O sinner, in the sincerity of your heart, with a firm desire of seizing it to cure yourself, and aiding the restoration of your fellow sinners, and the

zeal of your heart will enable you to discover that the mercy of a God of love has reached even the most sinful of men. Never would man have obtained the presence of his God by any system of his own. His hand mars everything on which he lays it. God is separate from sin, it cannot exist in His presence. Dare man say, then, that aught he can do will be acceptable in the sight of such a God? and can his sin-polluted powers alter—without loss—any system that God might give him? Surely not. Then man's task is to receive and obey what God offers for his redemption. And what has he offered? Man never can stand in his own name before his God with acceptance, his sin has for ever prevented that. God, therefore, promised to give a Redeemer, a King, and another code of divine laws, all who would approach God did so in the hope of the coming Saviour. The book called the Old Testament teems with prophecies concerning Him and the power of His system; He came in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, the world beheld their Saviour and King. But what a spectacle. Where was the pomp? In what lay His power? Poor and despised, He wandered without a place to lay His head, despised and rejected by man, treated with contempt by His brethren; how can He be the looked for deliverer? But, man, you forget your sin. Can you tell how He could have conquered it if He had not felt it beating with all its combined power on His devoted head? He was killed; death received Him. But can you tell how He could have overcome sin, but by entering its dark territories, and tearing it from its throne? The power of the King lay in His death. As death received one whom it could not hold, its power was overcome, it was the creature of its conqueror. What need the subjects of that King to fear for He has conquered death?

To twelve Apostles or legislators, the King and Saviour gave power and authority to proclaim the glad tidings of a way opened up for the restoring of man, and the grand propositions which men had to receive, were first; that Christ (the Anointed King) had verily come and died for their sins, as prophesied. Secondly: He was buried. Thirdly: that He had risen again, as also prophesied of. Now death reigned by sin, and if He had died by His own sin, death would never have given Him up, but He had risen, and the world being subject to sin and death could look to Him alone for deliverance. The receiving of the three propositions by the sinner, constituted the surrendering of himself, spirit, soul, and body to this King. All is his, but still he is sinful and his King holy; he must know how he is to be cleansed: the Apostles are commanded to proclaim that the King had ordained for reception in His holy kingdom, baptism (or immersion) into His name for the remission of all past sins. Man can enter His presence with humble confidence; turning to the Apostles, he finds they, by the authority of the King, have developed a system for his religious, social, and moral progression. On the day the King conquered death (the first of the week) he is commanded to assemble with his fellow subjects at the King's table, thereon are Bread and Wine, the loaf unbroken to remind him of the unity of all who assume the King's name, the wine to remind him of the precious blood spilt for his redemption. There he listens to the apostles' doctrine or teaching, which is the development of the things for causing and preserving unity between himself, his God and his fellow man, which these Apostles were empowered to develop, some of them were the mutual speaking of the brethren for the purpose of edifying, exhorting, and comforting one another; the fellowship or contribution, the throwing into one common fund, that with which God has prospered them beyond their necessities, for the assisting of needy brethren and the spread of the glorious system. These with power to ask and receive forgiveness for sins and shortcomings, if asked in the name of his King are all powerful to the end designed, they are the remedy. Love is born in the mind, it becomes the bond of union; its

almighty power enables forbearance to be shown to all and it conquers by its sweetness; no confidence is put in the power of man to guide man, therefore he is never put out of his position. God, his king, is his lawgiver, all is referred to His word. Readers! is He yours? if not, make Him so; we beseech you, join with us in overthrowing all human institutions, stand with us upon that divine platform where we can meet all, enrol yourself under the banner of our holy King, and though you may struggle here with many foes His system will sustain you; peace and joy which passeth all understanding will be yours here, and joy in the presence of your God and King through eternity the ultimate result; if you refuse, you will stand condemned for withstanding God and as one who has been an enemy both to Him and your fellow man, be driven from His presence for ever.'

'OLD PATHS.'

The Light of the World.

WHEN good old Simeon beheld the infant Jesus, and taking Him in his arms, exclaimed, 'Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people: a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel,' he thus announced that the Child born of the Virgin would bring the needed light both to Gentiles and Jews. Accordingly, the Gospel by John tells of Him as the light. 'God is light,' and He is the Word that was with God and was God. 'In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came to bear witness of the Light, that all men through Him might believe. He was not that Light, but came to bear witness of that Light. That was the true Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.' The latter words are not the best possible translation, the idea to be conveyed being, that His coming into the world lighteth every man, not by some inherent, inborn Light, but by the Gospel as heard, understood, and received. But John is not left alone thus to testify. Jesus, Himself, said, 'I am the Light of the World. He that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.' Now let us hear the Apostle Paul, who, writing of the Gospel, says—"Who has saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel.' We read in place of 'abolished,' 'made ineffectual,' so as to be no more permanently able to hold the Church of Christ than to hold its everlasting head. 'Brought life and immortality to light,' fails to express the full thought, and is often taken as indicating that resurrection was not revealed before Christ. We get nearer the idea by reading 'hath illumined life and incorruptibility by the Gospel'—brought into clearer light, as though only dimly discernible under former dispensations but now made distinctly clear by the intense light of the Sun of Righteousness. Christ, the light of the world, shines in full resplendency only through the Cross. The Cross is brilliant to the true believer all through life, but when face to face with death, then its glory is effulgent. Some men, calling themselves Agnostics, declare they know nothing! What a terrible affliction to meet death in such darkness! How precious to the dying Christian the glorious light of the Cross of Christ. Its light is His light, because in that light we see what He

is, how He loves, and what He has done for us. Just here will you suffer a word of exhortation—

'Don't shut out the light of the cross!'

The light is shut out in many ways—by worldliness, by neglect of the great salvation, by disregard of the Saviour's precepts and ordinances. See to it now, or on dying bed you may wish for the light, but find only darkness. Let us live the life of the righteous, that we may die their death.

DAVID KING.

The Clergyman and the Gospel Preacher

WHEN Alexander Campbell began his restoration work, his first task was to set the people right on the clergy. The 'kingdom of the clergy' was, therefore, a favourite topic with him. But many mistook his fight against the clergy as a fight against gospel preachers! So far from his opposing gospel preachers, he was himself one of the greatest preachers that ever graced the work of soul-saving.

It was the clergy, as a separate class from the laity, or Christians in general, that he opposed. God has always had a place for the gospel preacher, but He has no place in the church for the clergy! The clergy originated with Rome and her clerical pastors have been borrowed by the Protestant sects, her harlot daughters. Before the world took over the professing church, no such 'caste' distinctions as 'clergy' and 'laity' were known. The word 'clergy' comes from *kleeros*, which means 'heritage' (1 Pet. v. 3), and is applicable to all believers. Christians, then, are God's *kleeros*, or clergy! All Christians! Not just a privileged class. Those not of the assumed priestly caste are called 'laity,' from *laos*, the common people, 'the rabble.'

'The thought of a "clergy" is a class of persons 'having officially a right to leadership in spiritual things, a nearness to God derived from official place, not spiritual power.' On account of the official place accorded to the clergyman, he is the only one in the congregation who is supposed to have authority to 'administer the sacraments': the others are mere 'laymen,' and dare not undertake such priestly duties. What portion of Scripture speaks of two classes in the Church of God, called 'clergy' and 'laity'? Where do we find mention of a class of men called 'clergy' (distinguished by a special title) appointed to conduct the service and worship of God? Are not all God's children 'priests'? (1 Pet. ii. 5-9). Have all believers not a title to 'draw near' to God and offer up spiritual sacrifices? (Heb. x. 22; xiii. 15).

Christ commended the church at Ephesus because they 'hated the deeds of the Nicolaitanes' (Rev. ii. 6). That word comes from *nikao*, 'over,' to 'conquer,' and *laos*, 'the people,' or 'laity.' 'There is no ancient authority for a 'sect' of the Nicolaitanes. If the word is symbolic it refers to the earliest form of the notion of a priestly order, or 'clergy,' which later divided an equal brotherhood (Matt. xxiii. 8), into 'priests' and 'laity'—(Scofield).

Dean Stanley, of Westminster, says, 'In the first beginning of Christianity there was no such institution as the 'clergy.'

Dr. A. T. Pierson says: 'The terms "clergy" and "laity" were the invention of the devil in the "Dark Ages." The introduction of this distinction into the Church of Christ was not only of the devil but a master stroke of Satancraft.'

But the gospel preacher existed from the very beginning of the Church. But he was not a clergyman! Neither were apostles, prophets, etc. So far

from our being opposed to preachers of the gospel, we would like to see them multiplied by the thousands. So long as a man is in the field faithfully proclaiming 'the unsearchable riches of Christ' he is doing good and not harm. His duty is to preach the gospel, which consists fundamentally of the facts as to the death, burial, resurrection, etc., of Christ (1 Cor. xv. 1-3) It includes such statements as 'He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved' (Mark xvi. 16); 'Repent, and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins' (Acts ii. 38), etc. Where there is not a faithful Church to take care of those baptized the true gospel preacher should stay with them and teach and train and help them to develop until they are able to take care of themselves; then he should go on to other inviting fields.

Gospel preachers should be supported. 'The labourer is worthy of his hire.' 'God ordained that they that preach the gospel should live of the gospel.' 'Ye sent once and again unto my [Paul's] necessity.'

While every Christian man has a right to preach the gospel and should do so to the best of his ability, men are needed who are really 'mighty in the Scriptures.' Catholicism, Mormonism, etc., are on the march. We need men who are able to refute them. Every one cannot do this. Let us rejoice that some can!—*The Truth (U.S.A.)*

At a Veterans' Camp Fire.

AN address delivered by J. W. McGarvey, at Pittsburgh, U.S.A., on October 16th, 1909. J. W. McGarvey was author of a Commentary on Acts of Apostles, and many other books and writings.

Fathers and mothers in Israel: No words that I have been able to command can fully express my thoughts and emotions on this occasion. I am awed by the fact that my days have been prolonged to eighty years, not by reason of strength, as said the Psalmist, for I have never been strong, but by reason of manifold favours at the hand of my God and Father. I am further awed by this great gathering of the faithful, reminding me of that other of which we sing:

At the sounding of the trumpet when the saints shall gather home,
And greet each other by the Crystal Sea,
With our friends and all our loved ones there awaiting us to come,
What a gathering of the faithful that will be!

And now that I stand here, by the favour of your venerable president, to make a somewhat formal address to an assembly of travel-worn pilgrims, every one of whom has rounded out the allotted threescore years and ten, how shall I address you? If such an assembly ever convened before, the fact has escaped my knowledge.

I can not address you as I have many hundreds of other congregations, with warnings and entreaties respecting the perils of an untried way stretching before unsteady feet, for all these lie now in the past of your experience. You have been fighting the good fight of faith for lo these many years, and the victor's crown is now almost in sight. You have passed through many deep waters, but the rivers of sorrow have not overwhelmed you. In your fiery trials the flames have not hurt you, 'their only design, your dross to consume, and your gold to refine.' When you and I were yet young, we learned to sing:

Through many dangers, toils and snares
We have already come;
'Tis grace has brought us safe thus far,
And grace shall lead us home.

We sang these lines then with little knowledge of their meaning. Now we know it all, and we trust as never before their gracious assurance. The grace that has led us through our long past will surely lead us through our short future; and have we not sung a thousand times:

The soul that on Jesus has leaned for repose,
I will not, I can not desert to his foes;
That soul, though all hell should endeavour to shake,
I'll never, no never, no never forsake.

It has become a custom to style you, and others like you, 'The Old Guard,' taking the figure, like some of Paul's metaphors, from military phraseology. When Napoleon's Old Guard were being slaughtered, and almost annihilated, at Waterloo, a generous British officer cried out to their commander, 'Surrender and save the lives of your brave men.' But the answer came back, 'The Old Guard can die, but they can not surrender.' So it is with you. You can die, and you are dying rapidly, but the word 'surrender' is not in your vocabulary. Your foes are the world, the flesh and the devil. The world is losing its hold on you; the flesh is growing weak, and you will soon have your heels on the head of that old serpent, the devil.

For, oh, we stand on Jordan's strand;
Our friends are passing over;
And just before, the shining shore
We may almost discover.

We are growing old. We are already old; but we are not like leafless trees standing here and there in an old field whence all their early companions have been cut away. We are not like the Irish poet who so sadly sang:

When I remember all the friends so linked together
I've seen around me fall like leaves in wintry weather,
I feel like one who treads alone some banquet hall deserted,
Whose lights are fled, whose garlands dead, and all but me departed.

No, though all of us are older than that poet was, and have seen falling around us many more friends than he did, and they are still falling faster than ever, none of us is alone; for we are members of a great, growing family, and younger brothers and sisters have constantly sprung up to take the places of the older, and we are daily drawing nearer to the hour when all the worthy whom we have lost, will be restored to us to remain with us forever:

One army of the living God,
To his command we bow;
Part of the host have crossed the flood,
And part are crossing now.

Did you ever sing in the olden time, at the close of some happy and successful meeting, while every hand in the audience was clasped in another,

How sweet the hours have passed away
Since we met here to sing and pray!
But, pilgrims in a foreign land,
We oft must take the parting hand.

Our eyes were dim with tears, and our voices almost choked with weeping till we reached the last stanza, when we almost shouted,

O blessed day, O glorious hope!
My soul exulteth at the thought
When in that holy, happy land,
We'll take no more the parting hand.

When I was a boy, and lying sick on a pallet in my mother's room one summer day, I heard two Christian women who were on a visit to my

mother, teaching her a new hymn which I have never seen in print. I remember not of it except the chorus, and that I can never forget. It ran thus:

What! never part again! No! never part again!
 There we shall meet at Jesus' feet,
 And never, never part again.

Those three women have long since met at Jesus' feet, and I fondly hope, after a little while, to hear them sing that song again.

You all know something of Uncle Sammy Rogers, one of the most heroic, both living and dying, of our Kentucky pioneers. After he was eight-four years of age, he made a tour of the places at which he had preached, to bid his converts a final farewell. On his return home, he wrote the closing paragraph of his autobiography, which reads as follows: 'I have now well-nigh spoken all my farewells on earth, and shall soon begin shaking hands with the loved ones gone before. And though I know not where those greetings shall end, yet I do know where they will begin. I shall greet first of all my Father whose hand has led me all the journey through, and my Saviour whose grace has been sufficient for me in every day of my trial and suffering. And next, I shall look around for her whose love and goodness have imposed on me a debt of gratitude to God I can never repay. When we meet, shall we not gather up the children and grandchildren and sit down in the shadow of the throne, and rest?'

When the old hero finally came to his last night on earth, his son, John I., from whose lips I learned the story aroused him from a deep stupor, and said: 'Father, the doctor asks me to tell you that he thinks you will die before morning.' The father who was quite deaf, demanded in a loud voice, 'What is that, John?' 'The doctor thinks you will die before morning.' 'What! that soon? That is sooner than I expected. John, shall I really see your mother before morning?' 'So the doctor thinks.' 'Then glory be to God.' And these were his last words.

When you and I were young, we learned to admire the closing lines of *Thanatopsis*, which was then a new poem:

So live that when thy summons comes
 To join the innumerable caravan
 Which moves to that mysterious realm
 Where each takes up his chamber in the silent halls of death,
 Thou go not as a galley slave at night, scourged to his dungeon,
 But, sustained and soothed by an unfaltering trust,
 Approach thy grave as one who wraps the drapery of his couch around him
 And lies down to pleasant dreams.

But we also learned and loved the more majestic lines of that now neglected hymn:

You saints who once languished below,
 But long since have entered your rest;
 I pant to be glorified, too,
 To lean on Emmanuel's breast.

Though dreary the empire of night,
 I soon shall emerge from its gloom
 And see immortality's light
 Arise from the shades of the tomb.

Then welcome the last rending sighs,
 When these aching heartstrings shall break;
 When death shall extinguish these eyes,
 And moisten with dew the pale cheek.

No terror the prospect begets,
 I'm not mortality's slave;
 The sunbeam of life, as it sets,
 Leaves a halo of peace o'er the grave.

My beloved brethren and sisters, the most of us shall soon give one another the parting hand for the last time in all eternity; for when we meet again, it will be where parting is no more. 'God be with you till we meet again.'

Juvenile Misbehaviour.

THE last twenty-five years has seen a 'remarkable increase' in misbehaviour among the young, Mr. R. P. Trueblood (Manchester) told secondary school assistant masters at Weston-super-Mare recently.

He was speaking as retiring chairman at the annual meeting of the Masters' Incorporated Association.

There was a chorus of 'Hear, hears' when he said that the same period had seen a remarkable decline in old-fashioned teaching, and the rise of that form of juvenile freedom so beloved of the educational psychologist. Many children were going out into the world resentful of any form of restraint.

Former virtues were regarded almost as vices. Civility was now considered servility. Too many could not appreciate the honour and privilege of indicating respect for their elders.

So much was done for children today that they were rapidly becoming incapable of realising their obligations to others.

Teacher on 'Soft Psychology'

Mr. W. D. Farrell, of London, in his presidential speech to the Catholic Teachers' Federation conference in Chester recently, blamed the 'soft psychological ideas which had permeated official and public opinion' as the main reasons for the misbehaviour of children.

Some of our psychologists, he said, exerted an influence on public opinion which the rank and file had neither the courage nor knowledge to question. This 'soft psychology' had interfered in the sacred relationship between parents and child. *News Chronicle*.

CHURCH ETIQUETTE

1. Come. Never miss a service unless it is absolutely necessary.
2. Come early. Rushing into the building at the last minute is not conducive to true worship.
3. Take a place toward the front of the auditorium: leave the rear seats for those who may be late and for visitors.
4. Be thoughtful of the comfort of others—never make a 'haystack' out of yourself at the end of the bench and expect others to crawl over you to reach a seat.
5. Be devout—the church building is not a theatre, nor a place of amusement. You come to worship God; not to whisper, nor lounge, nor sleep. The house of worship deserves our utmost respect.
6. Always remember that strangers are the guests of the church members. Treat them with the same courtesy you would if they should visit you in your own home.

7. Join heartily in the singing of each song. And, remember to sing with the spirit and the understanding.

8. Never rush for the door after the benediction. There is no call for acting as though the house were on fire. Pause to speak, and be spoken to.

9. Don't stay away from the services because the church is not perfect. How lonesome YOU would feel in a perfect church!

10. Remember at all times you are in the house of worship and act accordingly.—Selected.

Christian Unity.

AT the Quadrennial Conference of the Methodist Church, Bishop Oxnam suggested, when six to ten different Protestant Churches desired union, they select representatives to get together and draft a plan of union. It seems sensible. The doctrines that made for division in the first place are relatively unimportant or largely forgotten by the average member, if he ever realised what were the differences. We can only make one real objection to the proposal. Who are these representatives? Wasn't it fellows much like them that got together and made the division in the first place? Who authorised them to 'draft a plan'? Is it possible those Bishops have never heard of a plan of union already written out by the Highest Authority? What new and worthwhile doctrines can they possibly agree on, that they cannot find in the New Testament? If they talk and pray together, can they get the inspiration that will enable them to edit and improve on the writings of Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Paul, Peter, James and Jude? The presumption of some mere men is really appalling!

A.C.R.

BIRTH

ON Tuesday, 7th December, to Bro. and Sis. G. Philips, the gift of a daughter—Leah.

BRO. F. WORGAN: Address until end of March, c/o Bro. Robertson, 8 Abbeygrange, Newton Grange, Midlothian, Scotland.

Important.

CONFERENCE: Preliminary Notice
The next Conference will be held (D.V.) on 16th April, 1949.

The Church of Christ, Hamilton St., Blackburn, Lancs. invites the Conference to Blackburn. The Chapel will be too small, judging by Conferences of late. The Blackburn brethren will provide fuller details later.

A. HOOD (Secretary)

Hospitality Secretary: Sister Alec Allan, 18 Herbert Street, Blackburn. Other enquiries to Bro. H. Wilson, 2 Hollin Bridge Street, Blackburn.

"A CLEAN CHURCH"

THIS is the title of a book, written by Bro. Carl Ketcherside, and is an earnest plea for discipline in the Church, according to the teaching of the Word of God.

We have read the book with great interest and profit. It deals with a chief source of weakness in Churches of Christ. We remember days when strict discipline was exercised, and consequently the Churches were much stronger spiritually, and the number of members increased much more rapidly than now. The great need in Churches is for a really efficient eldership, keen on carrying out all that the New Testament demands.

Bro. Ketcherside deals very fully with Paul's exhortation to 'withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition he received of us,' and with his insistence on discipline being exercised in the Church at Corinth.

Bro. Ketcherside insists that the object of discipline must be the good of the offender, and the purifying of the Church. We wish that all members, and especially leaders, of the Churches of Christ could read and heed this book.

EDITOR 'S.S.'

SCRIPTURE READINGS

(Matthew's Gospel, v.17 to vi.34)

Continuation of the Sermon on the Mount.—We may regard the first sixteen verses of chapter v. as introductory, and perhaps also as being addressed more particularly to the closest disciples of the Lord. The blessings pronounced in the 'beatitudes' would appear very contradictory in some respects to the regulations of the law of Moses. The address to those disciples as the salt and light upon earth would indicate a superseding of the power and position of the Scribes and Lawyers—the religious authorities of the time. Jesus now proceeds to refer particularly to that law, and to develop His fulfilment of it in various precepts.

(1).—**A general view of the matter** (v.17-20). Note the changes in the R.V., verse 17: 'am come' to 'came'; verse 18 'all be fulfilled' to 'all things be accomplished.' In how special a sense Jesus came, see Matt. xi.3, John i.9 and 11—and in how complete a sense He accomplished all things (Matt. iii.15, John iv.34, vi.38, xix. 30, Rom. x.4, xiii. 8, etc.). 'Jot' is the smallest letter; 'Tittle' is one of the smaller strokes or parts of a letter, which nevertheless might make much alteration in meaning. Perversion of any part of the law of Moses remained a sin against God until, so far as ceremonial observance was concerned, Christ had abrogated that law, and the neglect of obedience to its moral requirements, as developed by the Lord in the later part of this address, remains still sin against God. The actions of the Scribes and Pharisees did not accord with the law, nor even their teaching of it, and they perverted it on many points. The 'till heaven and earth pass' is repeated in a more complete sense in xxiv.35, Mark xiii.31 and Luke xxi.33.

(2).—**Murder** (v. 21-26). Though it might well be obvious that hatred or anger in the heart is closely related to murder, the Saviour's words put this matter very emphatically before us, and elsewhere in the New Covenant scriptures the same thought is similarly emphasised. 'He that hateth his brother is a murderer' (1 John iii.15). Even the presence in the heart of resentment, hatred, or contempt bring us under condemnation, as well as the expression of such feelings. Likewise we are warned that our own reconciliation with God is hindered unless we are first reconciled to any who have a grudge against us. The reference to legal procedure illustrates this need. An unkindly spirit brings punishment from God, which cannot be escaped.

(3).—**Adultery** (v. 27-32). Here again the teaching of the Saviour cuts deeper by striking at the root of the matter. The figures of the right eye and the right hand serve to illustrate the extreme importance of cleaving to the right. The R.V. rendering 'cause to stumble' is much preferable to 'offend.' We understand the passage to mean that we must turn away altogether from using our members as servants to sin. We can hardly regard the instruction as literally intended, but it is certainly true that it would be better to be without the members referred to than to perish in the punishment symbolised by physical destruction in the foul flames of the rubbish dump. This is a parable of something more terrible than itself.

"Our flesh and sense must be denied,
Passion and envy, lust and pride . . ."

The abuse of divorce was very common in our Lord's time even among the religious leaders. The permission of the Mosaic Law was made an excuse for the satisfaction of lust. Christ's ruling on the question is entirely uncompromising.

(4).—**Swearing** (v. 33-37). Read Matt. xxiii. 18-22 as throwing light upon the traditions of the Scribes on this point. See also Lev. xix. 11 and 12. The Mosaic law allowed for a solemn declaration to be accompanied by an appeal to God as a witness. Using that sacred name in vain has become so common that we do it without being conscious of it—or even meaning it. There are expressions of emphasis we should never use as Christians, and an extreme simplicity of speech is the only safe way. Some, like the writer, regard the prohibition as applying even to judicial oaths.

(5).—**Retaliation** (v. 38-42). Eye for eye and tooth for tooth is justice. Personal revenge or retaliation never would end there as many a feud has illustrated. The teaching and the practice of Christ are far different. These few verses present (1) submission to violence, (2) generosity to the intentional thief, (3) willing service upon compulsion, (4) help for the suppliant. The real and genuine practice of these injunctions would arise from a heart conformed to the image of Him who brought us out of darkness into His marvellous light. 'The disciple of Christ, when he has suffered wrong, is to eliminate from his motives the natural desire to retaliate or accuse' (E. H. Plumptre). We should note that both the Saviour and Paul protested under injustice while they did not resist (John xviii. 22 and 23; Acts xxiii. 3). A practical advice on the point is given by Paul in 1 Cor. vi.7.

(6).—**Attitude to enemies** (v. 43-48). Who can think of anything more shocking to the ordinary human being than the series of injunctions in these few

verses; on another occasion, the people said 'this is a hard saying, who can hear it?' These are not the words of a misguided fanatic, but the age-abiding instructions of the Son of God. The mere being a decent fellow and doing good where one can, sinks into insignificance, and takes its place as a commonplace obligation (incidentally, very seldom fulfilled in any full sense), and here is the Christian's work and obligation to His Lord to be like His heavenly Father. It is repeated in one form or another throughout the New Testament, and perhaps most clearly epitomised in Romans xii. 21.

(7).—**Giving** (vi. 1-4). Most folk like to be well-thought of—perhaps even Christians have a special weakness in that direction, seeing they do seek to be good. It would be a natural outcome of this to let our generosity be known. Our Saviour would not have it so. We must give quietly, secretly, with our thought upon God, not men. 2 Cor. ix. 7 gives explicit instruction. Any wrong motive renders our giving offensive, and brings condemnation rather than approval in the sight of God.

(8).—**Prayer** (vi. 5-15). Here again purity of motive is essential. Secrecy, brevity, simplicity are enjoined, and a very simple model prayer is given for the disciples to use. Its repetition as a part of public worship is not in keeping with this passage. There is a strong emphasis too on the condition of the heart in relation to our fellows while we pray, and a contrite spirit is necessary—'Forgive us our trespasses.' We observe that Christians must pray in Christ's name, and this prayer of the disciples was given before He completed His work.

(9).—**Fasting** (vi. 16-18). Fasting, as a religious observance, was common among the Jews, as many Old Testament passages indicate. Doubtless too it was a good thing—and would still be so, if observed with entire sincerity, and in accord with the instructions here given.

(10).—**Worldly care and anxiety** (vi. 19-34). These verses deal with another matter in which the religious leaders failed signally. For the most part they were rich and loved money. This is fatal for true service to God. It prevents the placing of the whole trust in God, because it fastens the affections upon earthly things. It divides the heart, it darkens the spiritual sight. The disciples of Christ must be undivided in allegiance. They need not be anxious surely with such a Father. They are better than the birds. They cannot increase their stature by worrying. They are infinitely more important than the grass, and

after all, those who know nothing of God's care are those who may be excused for seeking as an end and object, food, drink and clothing. We may be assured that such a Father knows our needs, and if we do His will, He will see to them, and leave us free of such cares.
R. B. SCOTT.

BE CALM

NOW, 'all things work together for our good';
Our Heavenly Father says so in His word,
So, exercise thy soul to tranquil mood:
Be calm!

Each sparrow's fall our gracious Lord
doth heed;
The blossom thrives despite the stifling
weed,
And golden virtue tempers human greed:
Be calm!

Though friends forsake, and loved ones
cause you pain,
Though all the good you do may seem in
vain,
Though Satan seeks to triumph o'er
again:
Be calm!

'Let not your heart be troubled,' He is
nigh,
Angelic hosts are ever standing by,
The Lord of Life and Glory reigns on
high:
Be calm!

A. F. ADAMS.

OBITUARY

Dunfermline, Priory Lane. It is with deep sorrow we have to report the sudden passing on the 11th January, last, at the age of sixty-four years, of our beloved sister, Martha Hoggan, widow of the late Bro. J. Hoggan, Evangelist. Coming after a period of rejoicing at the recent additions to the Church, the news came as a great shock, tempered only by the sure knowledge that our sister has indeed gone to be with the Lord whom she loved.

It is difficult to find words adequate enough to describe the high regard in which Sister Hoggan was held, not only here, but in the wider field, for her loyalty and devotion to the Lord and His Church, over a period of some fifty years. Truly she did justly, and walked humbly before her God, and her whole life was an example to us all in this respect. Our deep sympathy goes out to her family and relatives, whom we commend to the God of all comfort and peace in their time of need.

The services at the home and graveside, on Friday, 14th January, were conducted by Bro. David Dougall, Evangelist, assisted by the oversight of the Church.

W. BROWN.

COMING EVENTS

HINDLEY BIBLE SCHOOL

Preliminary Notice

THE brethren at Hindley have decided to hold another Bible School (D.V.), on Saturday, June 4th, to Thursday, June 9th, 1949.

Make your plans early, and write booking dates. Further particulars later.—L. MORGAN, 'Glen-Iris,' 44 Lord Street, Hindley, Wigan, Lancs.

Morley Church Anniversary and Special Mission, Saturday, February 26th. Tea at 4.30, public meeting, 6 p.m. Chairman: Bro. R. McDonald (Dewsbury). Speakers: Bren. D. Dougall (Scotland) and L. Channing (London).

Bro. Dougall will serve the Church at East Ardsley on Lord's Day, February 27th.

Following the anniversary, Bro. L. Channing will commence a fortnight's Special Mission, in which the Churches of Ardsley and Dewsbury will be associated.

Bro. Leonard Morgan, of Hindley, at a special Gospel week-end, February 20th.

Nelson, Southfield Street.—Bible School anniversary and prize distribution will be held on Saturday and Sunday, February 5th and 6th. Speaker: Bro. F. C. Day (Birmingham).

Tranent.—Annual social, Saturday, February 26th, to commence at 5 p.m. Speakers expected: Bren F. Worgan and A. E. Winstanley.

 REVIVAL

A small Gospel paper issued monthly, to further the cause of New Testament Christianity. Suitable for Mission work door-to-door distribution, hospital visitation, sending in letters.

Back numbers available undated. Samples sent on request. Prices: 50 for 2/6, 100 for 5/-, 250 for 12/6, 500 for 25/-, 1,000 for £2 (all post free). Times of meetings printed 2/6 extra.—L. Morgan, 'Glen-Iris,' 44 Lord Street, Hindley, Wigan.

 SPECIAL OFFER

Two books, 'The Bible and the Church,' 'Forward—Back to Jerusalem'—lectures given at Hindley Bible School; three booklets, 'The Old Paths,' by Walter Crosthwaite, 'Is Christian Union Possible?' by Walter Crosthwaite, 'Is Evolution True?' by Walter Crosthwaite.

All for five shillings (post free).—L. Morgan, 'Glen-Iris,' 44 Lord Street, Hindley, Wigan.

THE CHRISTIAN'S GLORIOUS AID

WHEN I am tired, the Bible is my bed;
 When in the dark, the Bible is my light;
 When I am hungry, it is vital bread;
 When sorely pressed, 'tis armour for the fight;
 When I am sick, 'tis healing medicine;
 When lonely, in it, thronging friends are mine. —AMOS R. WELLS.

NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

Aylesbury, Bucks.—We meet in a wooden building on a brick base, which will seat about one hundred. This building is between the old town and the new housing estate.

We have had the fellowship of brethren from London and Luton. Many friends are interested, including the mayor of the town. In a town of fifty thousand souls we are few in number, yet strong in our faith in Him we serve, and in our desire for the salvation of souls. My brother, Ernest, is with us during January, and the Church at Kentish Town is sending Bro. L. Channing for most of the following two months.

Our thanks are due to those who have helped us in many ways: Bren. L. Morgan (Hindley), Daniel (Bristol), Clifton (Eastwood), the brethren meeting in the home of Bro. Hurcombe (Hengoed), and the Church at Kentish Town. The help and prayers of the brethren are greatly appreciated, and we trust the progress of the cause of truth here will be an inspiration to all. W. J. COLE.

Blackburn (Hamilton Street).—We wish to express our appreciation of the services of Bro. Frank Worgan, during the months of November and December. He gave of his best and our only regret is that we do not see any fruit of his labour as yet, but we believe the Word so faithfully sown will yield an increase in the Master's own good time. Our Brother, by his bright and illuminating addresses, has interested several hard-cased sectarians on the subject of Baptism. They are still with us, and we pray that the impression made on them will finally break the shackles of creeds and dogmas, and give place to the liberty wherewith Christ our Lord can make them free. We pray God will abundantly bless our young Brother wherever he may go. H. WILSON.

Capetown.—Bro. W. L. Brown, his wife, and two sons who arrived in Capetown on September 23rd, 1948, from Nhowe

Mission, Macheke, Southern Rhodesia, sailed for the U.S.A. on November 26th, 1948. Their stay with us for the two months was very highly appreciated, especially for the very uplifting addresses which were given by Bro. Brown at our Gospel services, and also at the Young People's meetings.

On Thursday evening, November 25th, a farewell meeting was convened, presided over by our Bro. Kannemeyer, of the Woodstock Assembly, and was well attended. Speeches were given by Bro. Gray, of the Woodstock Assembly, and Bro. Christians, of Claremont. Bro. A. Rule, on behalf of the young people, voiced appreciation of the services of Bro. Brown. A hymn was rendered by Bro. and Sister Riley, who are out here from England on a lengthy vacation. Light refreshments were provided by the sisters.

The atmosphere of the meeting was as that experienced by the Apostle Paul (Acts xx.). Finally, Bro. and Sister Brown in turn expressed their thanks and appreciation for the hospitality rendered them and their two sons. We pray that the blessing of the Lord, His guidance and protection may be with Bro. Brown and his family on their voyage to the U.S.A.

Most of all, as the days seem to be getting darker, may we hold fast and contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints, and ever looking forward for the coming of the Lord, who hath declared: 'I will come again.' T. HARTLE.

Priory Lane, Dunfermline.—It is with great joy that, on approaching the close of Bro. David Dougall's mission, we have to report five additions to the Church here, by immersion into the ever-blessed name, of Margaret Cranston, Margaret Guiney, Jessie Hutchinson, Alan Brown, and George Clark, Sister Guiney and Bro. Brown being children of members. This brings our number up to twenty-seven.

This is a great encouragement to the Church in its stand for the truth in this corner of the Master's vineyard, and should inspire us to even greater efforts towards the extension of His kingdom. Four of the candidates were immersed in the baptistery at Rose Street, Kirkcaldy, kindly lent for the occasion, on Saturday, December 11th last, whilst Jessie Hutchinson was immersed in the Wallacestone baptistery on Friday, December 17th, the necessary facilities being kindly provided by the Church there. It is our prayer that they may grow in grace and prove to be loyal servants of the Lord, in order that in the end they may receive the crown of life.

Bro. Dougall's all too short sojourn with us ends on December 31st next, when he goes to Rose Street.

W. BROWN.

Hindley.—The brethren at Hindley have decided to 'launch out into the deep.' We are to attempt to start a New Testament Church, in a town about two miles away, with a population of over 20,000. We feel, as so many of our brethren do, the need to evangelise new fields, and have chosen the town of Ince for this effort. The brethren have decided that Bren. Frank Worgan and Tom Kemp be brought back home when they conclude their services at Newton-grange and Tunbridge Wells respectively at the end of March and work in Ince during April, May and June. If a further period is necessary, arrangements will be made later. The brethren hope to raise over and above their usual collections, the sum of £200, to pay for the expense of the effort. We should be glad to have the support of sister Churches in this hard and difficult task of extending the Master's kingdom. We invite all who can to come along and help us in door-to-door personal work, distribution of 'Revival' open-air meetings and work with the young people. We should welcome brethren who would like a **working holiday**, working with us and with God, for we are God's fellow-workers. Brethren, pray for us. This is our first effort. We feel weak of ourselves, but we go forth with this task in the strength of God, trying to win **Ince for Christ**

L. MORGAN.

Morley.—The Church has been richly blessed by a further addition of one by immersion, in the person of Bro. Albert Crosby. Our brother has been attending the Gospel meetings at Ardsley for the best part of a year, but has also attended meetings at all three Churches in Yorkshire, and especially our Tuesday night Bible Class, where much good teaching has been imparted.

It was at an Ardsley Gospel meeting that the decision came, the writer being privileged to be the speaker, but we pay tribute to the many that have been associated with his conversion, in private talks and preaching. Paul hath indeed planted, Apollos watered, and God hath given the increase.

This makes the eleventh addition for the year 1948, eight by immersion. We thank God for His many blessings. Bro. Crosby decided for Christ on Lord's Day, December 19th, was immersed on December 21st, and received into the Church on Lord's Day, December 26th. The Ardsley Church made him a presentation of a Bible. We pray for a long and successful life in Christian service.

H. BAINES.

Pennyvenie.—It is with much pleasure we record the addition of one young man, Harry McGinn, to our assembly,

the youngest son of our Bro. and Sister T. McGinn, who, having confessed his faith in the Lord Jesus, was buried with Him in baptism on Lord's Day evening, January 9th. The scene was very touching as we witnessed the father immersing his son under the light of the moon in the streamlet that flows past Cam-larg Crescent, bringing to our memory the practice of the early Christians.

Next Lord's Day we hope to receive our young Brother into fellowship and commend him to the care of Him who is able to keep him from falling. We trust he will remain faithful unto death and gain the promised crown.

WM. BLACK.

Slamannan District.—The New Year social was held in the Blackridge Church meeting-house on January 1st, 1949. It was inspiring to see such a large gathering, about two hundred and thirty being present. Great credit is due to the Blackridge brethren and sisters for the excellent provision they made for so many.

The chairman, Bro. T. Nisbet, exhorted us to keep the faith—by giving it away; and urged that all, in this New Year, would go out and preach the Gospel message to a world needing salvation.

Bro. David Dougall spoke on 1 Timothy vi, 12, and exhorted us to make our lives a continual confession of our Lord and Master Jesus Christ, fighting at all times the good fight of faith.

Bro. A. Gardiner, junior, spoke of Isaiah's vision. (Isa. vi.) He urged the need for recapturing the vision of our youth. We need a fresh vision to enable us to teach and baptise at all times.

During the meeting choir pieces were sung by Blackridge and Motherwell companies, and solos, duets, and quartettes by brethren and sisters, which were much appreciated.

With such a good send-off for the New Year we look forward to a happy and prosperous year in the work of the Lord.

H. DAVIDSON.

OBITUARY

Loughborough.—With regret, we record the death of our Sister Kidger, on December 8th, aged eighty-two. She was one of our oldest members, and was sister of the late Joseph Barker, and of William Barker, of Heanor. Having joined the Church in her teens, she has maintained a keen interest in the Church throughout her life, and was never absent from the Lord's table through any fault of her own. She was of a kindly and loving disposition. We extend our sympathy to her husband, son, and daughters, and commend them to God, the source of all comfort.

After a service at her home, the interment took place at the Loughborough Cemetery, the writer officiating.

EDMUND HILL.

Portnockie.—Again we have had to bid farewell to one of our aged brethren. Bro. John Findlay, of Cullen, was removed to the infirmary on December 15th, where, gradually growing weaker, he died on January 4th, in his 77th year. Bro. Findlay had been a member with us for fifty years. He took an active part in the Church and though his home was a mile from the meeting-place he came twice every Lord's Day, until a year ago, when failing health compelled him occasionally to take the bus. Bro. Findlay's life was one of many sorrows and hardships, but his faith never wavered. It can truly be said that he was one of those who 'came out of great tribulation and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.'

At the funeral, on January 7th, the service at the house was conducted by Bro. A. Mair, and at the graveside by Bro. J. Wood. We pray that God will bless and comfort his wife, and other members of the family.

M. MAIR.

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