

The SCRIPTURE STANDARD

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

VOL.40 . No. 1

JANUARY, 1973

* **THE MERCIES OF GOD RECALLED AND TRUST EXPRESSED** *
* "But this I call to mind, and therefore I have hope; the steadfast love *
* of the Lord never ceases, His mercies never come to an end: they are *
* new every morning; great is Thy faithfulness. 'The LORD is my portion' *
* says my soul, 'therefore I will hope in Him'." (Lamentations 3:21-24) *
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**GOD BLESS THY YEAR:
THY COMING IN, THY GOING OUT,
THY REST, THY TRAVELLING ABOUT,
THE ROUGH, THE SMOOTH,
THE BRIGHT, THE DREAR:
GOD BLESS THY YEAR.**

GREAT DOCTRINES OF SCRIPTURE

I THE OMNIPRESENCE, THE OMNISCIENCE, THE OMNIPOTENCE OF GOD
OUR God is the "OMNI" God. Omni means "all": it is most commonly used in the word "omnibus", a vehicle on which all can ride.

The words of our title are not general Bible words. Only the last one occurs and that only once. But the words express very definitely three great aspects of God's nature; God is "all-present", "all-knowing", "all-powerful". These descriptions apply *ONLY* to God.

God's Omnipresence

Moses urged the children of Israel to "lay it to thine heart that the Lord, He

is God in heaven above and on the earth beneath". In the book of Isaiah God asks: "Heaven is My throne and earth My footstool, so what kind of house will ye build Me?" Solomon stood amazed when the presence of God filled the newly-built temple, and said, "Will God in very deed dwell upon the earth? Behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain Thee."

If, then, God is all-present non can hide Him or escape from His presence. There is no place to go! David brings this out beautifully in the 139th Psalm: Where shall I go or where can I go to get away from God? In heaven or in Hades; in the sky like a star or in the air like a bird; shall I find a deserted atoll in an uncharted sea? God has been there before me and He will still be there when I am gone. Everywhere He leads me, even if I travel round the world in perpetual darkness, (that which can shield me from the sight of men) even that is useless, for darkness and light are both alike to God. Even when I go to sleep, oblivion to myself, when I awake God is still with me.

Since God is everywhere and man *cannot* and by the word of God (Amos 9:2-3) *shall not* be able to escape from His presence, it behoves all men, everywhere, to repent, be reconciled to God and enjoy His presence.

God's Omniscience

God is not only all-present but He is all-knowing. This fact adds greatly to the importance of the former statement. One might stand in front of a marvellous computer, but without the necessary knowledge of how to handle it, it would be of no use.. God, not only *knows*: He also *UNDERSTANDS*. God not only knows; He also *KNOWS WHY*.

The extent of God's knowledge is shown by Heb. 4:13: "There is no creature that is not manifest in His sight; but all things are naked and laid open before the eyes of him with whom we have to do". The Psalmist comments (Psalm 139:14 - 16) God has sieved, sifted, separated and catalogued every atom of me. He knows my simplest action; He understands my thoughts and even knows the words I am *GOING* to utter. Praise be to God: He not only knows, He understands, He knows *why*!

God's knowledge so surpasses that of man because it is *CLEAR*, Unclouded by the possibility of doubt or the need to await developments; it is *PURE*. Untainted by "current thought" or by tradition; it is *UNBIASED*: God is no respecter of persons.

God has imparted some of this knowledge to man. He has given him a conscience. This is that which, within me, prompts me to do what I believe to be right. It assures me that (1) God knows that I know what is right; (2) that I know that God knows that I know what is right; and (3) that God knows that I know that God knows that I know what is right! The outcome is this: because of God's Omniscience, I am urged to do what I know to be right. His hand is certainly laid upon me.

God's Omnipotence

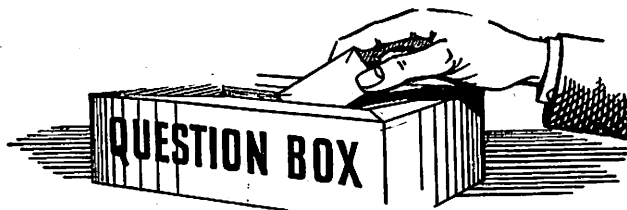
Those who remember Brother Jack R. Francis, son of R. K. Francis, will recall the magnificent manner in which he used to say, "ALMIGHTY GOD". He made his hearers realise that they were concerned with One who is truly all-powerful. Our God is All-Mighty, All-Powerful! Consider Job's contrite confession, (42:1): "I know that Thou canst do all things and that no purpose of Thine can be restrained." God alone can fully "please Himself": "He hath done whatsoever He pleased" (Psalm 115:3). No man or power can stop or reverse that which God will do or has done; except where God places a limit upon Himself.

God has limited His own power in His way of salvation: "It is not the will of God that any should perish", but a person who refuses to accept God's offer of

salvation upon God's own terms will perish. Here is a way in which man can come between God and His purposes, between God and His will. What then of the person who stands defiantly in the way of Almighty God? How do you think of the Omnipotence of God? The raging of the relentless sea? The wild, uncontrollable wind? The violence of the storm with lightning and thunder? The fierce, all-consuming heat of the sun? These all speak of God's great power. But *real* power is power *controlled*. It is said that an elephant can crack the shell of a hazel nut with its foot, without damaging the kernel. How many times do the New Testament writers say, "Our God is able"? We hear Shadrach, Meshach and Abed - Nego defy the king with, "Our God is able." Paul well expresses this thought (Eph. 3:20): "Him, who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us." With such assurance as this let us plead with ALMIGHTY GOD to use us to the salvation of those we love.

Indeed, Our God is the "OMNI" -GOD, all-present, all-knowing and all-powerful. "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." (Heb. 10:31).

PAUL JONES



Conducted by
James Gardiner

"Please distinguish between the baptism administered by John the baptist and the baptism authorised by Jesus in Matt. 28:19".

FIRSTLY I mention that "baptist" was not part of John's name, nor was it a title of any kind. His name was John. The angel said so (Luke 1:13); his mother said so (Luke 1:60); and his father said so on the writing tablet (Luke 1:63). John is described as "John the baptist" because he carried out the baptising with his own hands, Jesus made and baptised more disciples than John (and John baptised multitudes) but did not personally immerse anyone - his disciples did the baptising (John 4:2).

There are three kinds of baptism mentioned in the New Testament: baptism in water, baptism in the Holy Spirit, and baptism in fire (see Luke 3:16,17). The first is a *command* to be obeyed; the second was a *promise* to be bestowed on certain disciples in the early years of the church; and the third will be a *punishment* meted out to all those who refuse and reject Christ. Obviously men had no control over the baptism in the Holy Spirit, and equally have no say in precisely who will incur the baptism of fire. Thus the only baptism which directly concerns us in this life is the baptism in water. Baptism in water, despite what some may say, is the "one baptism" mentioned in Eph. 4:4; and it was commanded both by John and by Jesus.

Water baptism is of two kinds, *prospective* and *retrospective* - the one pointing forward to the establishment of Christ's kingdom, and the other pointing back to it.

John's Baptism

John's baptism was prospective, and was completely valid until Pentecost (Acts 2:1) and was administered by both John and his disciples and the disciples

of Christ. John the baptist was the forerunner of Jesus, to prepare the people for the coming of the Lord (John 1:23). There was great need for such preparation. From the close of Malachi's prophecy and for about 400 years, God had left the children of Israel to be guided by the Old Testament, but they drifted far away from it. Various sects, like the Pharisees and Sadducees, arose and the people were corrupted both religiously and morally. "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" was the

cry which John sounded forth. Vast multitudes came to him knowing him to be a prophet of God, and were baptised by him. Mark 1:4,5 says "John did baptise in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. And there went out unto him all the land of Judea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptised of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins." We notice that his baptism was a baptism of repentance just as his message was a call for repentance:

"Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance..." (Luke 3:8) was a prerequisite of John's baptism. Christ's baptism also requires to be preceded by repentance. Candidates for John's baptism confessed their sins prior to baptism, but this does not seem to be required prior to Christ's baptism. We notice also from Mark 1:4 that John's baptism was for (or unto) the remission of sins, just as Christ's baptism is for the remission of sins. We appreciate of course that this was part of the *prospective* nature of John's baptism, Christ's blood not yet having been shed for the sins of mankind. Simultaneously Jesus was also preaching that the kingdom was at hand and His disciples were baptising the repentant: "After these things came Jesus and His disciples into the land of Judæa; and there He tarried with them and baptised. And John also was baptising in AEnon near to Salim, because there was much water there: and they came and were baptised." (John 3:23). John's baptism, like Christ's, was obviously immersion. We know that John eventually was put in prison and later beheaded because he was bravely outspoken to King Herod regarding Herod's sinful association with Herodias, his brother Philip's wife. Jesus continued the call of "Repent ye for the kingdom of heaven is at hand". People, by and large, accepted him as the One foretold by John, and followed Him as God's Messiah. Many continued to be baptised by Christ's disciples and were baptised, of course, with John's baptism. Christ's message, like John's had been, was that the kingdom of heaven was at hand — it was not a reality, as we know, until Pentecost. The *prospective* baptism of John's continued, therefore, to be administered. It has been suggested that the phrase, "For John was not yet cast into prison" (John 3:24) implies that the administering of John's baptism ceased after he was committed to prison. But I really don't see why it should be thought that God's will could be thwarted by the whim of Herod. I couldn't imagine that Jesus would stop preaching that the kingdom of heaven was at hand, just because John had been imprisoned.

Christ's Baptism

After Christ's death however, and just before His ascension to heaven, He gave to His apostles His parting instructions to preach the gospel to every creature and to administer His (Christ's) baptism. He said, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth, Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptising them in (into, R.V.) the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." Heretofore nothing had been done in the name of Christ, inasmuch as "all power, or authority" had not been delivered into His hands, but from His death onwards everything was to be done in His name (or by His authority). In accordance with these instructions from Christ, Peter on the day of Pentecost, when asked by his hearers what they must do, said, "Repent, and be baptised everyone of you *in the name of Jesus Christ* for the remission of sins....." (Acts 2:38). Thus we have the first recorded instance of baptism being commanded *in the name of Jesus Christ* (or in the name of Father, Son and Holy Spirit). Thenceforth John's baptism would be no longer valid, having

been superseded by Christ's baptism. The kingdom of heaven is now in existence and a reality.

The Differences

It is not quite true to say that this is the last we hear of John's baptism. Communications are rapid in this age, with the mass media; but not so then, in Christ's day — no morning papers or radio and T.V. news bulletins. News travelled very slowly, and although John's baptism had been replaced completely by Christ's, some of the preaching disciples were unaware of it and were continuing to administer John's baptism. Paul encounters this state of affairs at Ephesus (Acts 19:1-7), as do Aquila and Priscilla (Acts 18:24-28). These instances show that John's baptism was still being practised, and illustrates how the apostles dealt with it.

Aquila and Priscilla heard Apollos preach the gospel in the synagogue. We are told that Apollos was a Christian Jew and was not only eloquent but was "mighty in the scriptures": "This man was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, *knowing only the baptism of John*". Aquila and Priscilla took Apollos aside, or took him home, and expounded to him "the way of the Lord more perfectly". They brought him up-to-date and no doubt explained that John's baptism had now been replaced by Christ's baptism (although we are not told that Apollos was rebaptised). In the other case (Acts 19:1-7), we find that Paul, on conversing with twelve disciples in Ephesus, discovers that they too know only the baptism of John. Paul's first question was, "Did ye receive the Holy Spirit when ye believed?" He was not, of course, alluding to the indwelling of the spirit; for this all receive who repent and are baptised (Acts 2:38) and he had therefore no grounds for doubting this. But some disciples, after and apart from baptism, by the imposition of apostolic hands received supernatural gifts of the Spirit and it is to this which Paul refers (as is proved by his bestowing such gifts at the close of the conversation). When he received the answer, "We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Spirit," he suspected that something was amiss regarding their baptism, and therefore asked, 'Unto what then were ye baptised? And they said, 'Unto John's baptism''. Paul no doubt realised that if they had not heard of the Holy Spirit they could not have been baptised into the name of Father, Son *and Holy Spirit*. Paul goes on to explain the *prospective* nature of John's baptism, and that John baptised on the basis that those baptised undertook to believe on One who would come after John — that is, on Jesus Christ. "And when they heard this they were baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spake with tongues and prophesied". Perhaps we may wonder why Apollos, who knew only the baptism of John, *was not rebaptised* but the twelve men at Ephesus who had been baptised unto John's baptism *were rebaptised*. If Apollos was not rebaptised (and we are not told that he was) we can only presume that Apollos had been baptised during the period when John's baptism was valid *i.e.* prior to the time when Christ's baptism superseded it at Pentecost. If this premise be a correct one we can further deduce that none of the disciples who had received John's baptism while it was valid were required to be rebaptised. The twelve disciples on the other hand had received John's baptism after Pentecost (after it had become *invalid*) and therefore had to be rebaptised, or, if you wish, had to be baptised for the first time with valid (Christ's) baptism. The incident shows that Paul was in the habit of inspecting the condition of the disciples he encountered, and that he attached great importance to it, and to baptism.

Summing Up

I can sum up by saying that both baptisms were by immersion in water, were for the remission of sins, and were contingent upon repentance. Candidates confessed

their sins prior to John's baptism (Matt. 3:6). John's baptism was not *in the name of Jesus Christ*, for He had not at that time received all authority. John's baptism was, however, with God's authority: "But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected *the counsel of God against themselves*, being not baptised of him" (Luke 7:30). John's baptism, it is said, did not put one into the church (or kingdom): this must be so, since the church was not in existence until Pentecost, nor was it for "the putting on of Christ", as was Christ's baptism (Gal. 3:27). Yet John's baptism was perfectly valid in its time and those baptised were required, and expected to believe on and obey the Son of God as soon as He was manifested — they were, "to believe on Him who should come after him (John) that is on Christ Jesus" (Acts 19:4).

These remarks may help the questioner and, I hope, stimulate further discussion and study of the question. One is continually confronted with the importance God attaches to baptism, yet it is incredible to hear men who claim to be students of God's word say that it is not very important. If men, by refusing to be baptised with John's baptism, "rejected the counsel of God against themselves" (Luke 7:30) how can men possibly say that by rejecting Christ's baptism they are not also, *and more so*, rejecting God's counsel against *themselves*.

(Questions please to James R. Gardiner, 88 Davidson Terrace, Haddington, East Lothian, Scotland).

SCRIPTURE READINGS

JANUARY 1973

7— I Kings 17:1-16	Mark 5:21-43
14— I Kings 17:17-24	Mark 6:1-13
21— I Kings 18:1-18	Mark 6:14-29
28— II Kings 4:38-44	Mark 6:30-56

THE WONDER-WORKING JESUS

WE well remember a brother who preached from time to time, repeating this description of Jesus so often that memory connects him immediately with it. However, can we find a more fitting description of the figure presented to us by Mark in these graphic passages? Repetition of a phrase can sometimes hide the very truth it states. We get used to it and it ceases to convey its meaning. Thus one of the advantages of different translations is their impact on the mind by a changed word.

We wonder at the exercise of patience and love by Jesus in complete submission to His Father's will. We recognise we have extracted incidents from that life. Contemplating the evening remembered by the hymn "At even, ere the sun was

set", we allow our thoughts to rest with some of the cases Jesus then dealt with (1:32-34). Countless homes and families and individual cases received the priceless blessing of restored health. Have we ever realised the tremendous fund of joy and peace such relief afforded? Others had their mental and spiritual problems completely cured by the expulsion of the evil spirits. What a priceless boon, and so many must have experienced this! Can this be measured? "Oh, with what joy they went away!"

Jairus's Daughter

Perhaps, by the isolated experience of Jairus, we can get a glimpse of the result in human lives of the "wonder-working" Jesus. This man was a ruler of the synagogue (Mark 5:22). We have looked at the attitude of the religious leaders in earlier chapters. Already their hearts were hardened against Jesus. It must have meant humbling himself for this man to approach Jesus with his petition. The love of his daughter proved a stronger motive. So he came with his petition to the amateur preacher, and Jesus came with him without hesitation. How he must have hoped against hope that Jesus would be in time, for the child was at point of death when he left on this

errand. But then came the interruption — the woman who was healed — and then the news—all was over. Or did the “only believe” of Jesus give some assurance?

Anyone who has experienced the agonising grief of losing a beloved child, can have some appreciation of Jairus’s heart. The mourning crowd, always at hand on such occasions, mocked, certain that now nothing could be done. Jesus put them out and took only the parents and Peter, James and John into the death-chamber. What an experience to see Jesus take the beloved child by the hand and say “Talitha cumi” and raise her up! It seems as though an eye-witness must have told Mark the story so that he has given the actual words—not a translation. It is no wonder that he exhausts his vocabulary to express the feelings of that limited public. Here are some efforts to put it into English:—

“They were astonished with great astonishment” (A.V.);

“They were amazed straightway with a great amazement” (R.V.);

“They were beside themselves with amazement” (N.E.B.);

“This sent the others nearly out of their minds with joy” (Phillips);

“Her parents just couldn’t get over it”
(Living Bible);

“They were completely amazed” (T.E.V.)

Astonishment and Excitement

Others who witnessed the works of Jesus are described in much the same way. They were astonished without measure at what He did and at His manner of teaching. It may seem strange that Jesus forbade publicity on several occasions, and in the case we have specially noticed He allowed a very limited audience, only three of His disciples even, and then “He charged them straitly that no man should know it.” That band of loud mourners must have known. His brothers thought this attitude strange (John 7:1-5) but the answer was “My time is not yet come”. The popularity had to be checked. Multitudes from all parts came to see and hear Him, and there

must have been a fever pitch of excitement at times, illustrated by those who shared the feeding of the 5,000 and planned to “take Him by force, to make Him a king” (John 6:15). This was not the “following” which Jesus must have. His teaching rather of repentance was not so acceptable, but only that qualification could, would and will satisfy.

Those closest to Jesus must have felt the charm of His love and character most, and must also have experienced the wonder most of all. Indeed it seems that to them, the greatest astonishment was felt when He manifested His power over the elements in walking on the sea (6:51), and in stilling the storm (4:41). Even at that point we read “their heart was hardened”. It seems the wonder of the multiplying of the loaves had not struck them with the same wonder. We note they had forgotten this when faced with the problem of feeding the multitude again (8:4 & 18). This surely means that the wonders were so many and so frequent that the full implications were not registering. And surely this is so with us in this age. We have become so used to the truths of the gospel that we cease to realise the wonder of it all. May the Lord open our minds to fuller realisation, and so draw us nearer to Himself in “wonder, love and praise”.

R.B. SCOTT.

LOOKING BACK AND LOOKING FORWARD 1935 to 1973

This issue begins the fortieth volume of the *Scripture Standard*. Whether they have “fallen asleep in Jesus” or are still living, no doubt those who saw the commencement of the magazine dare hardly have hoped that it would still be in existence after thirty-eight years of bearing its witness. But in spite (or perhaps partly because of) its years of struggle because of its unpopular witness, the paper is still alive.

We ourselves have often in the pages of the *Scripture Standard* called attention to our difficulties and disappointments,

yet at the same time our determination by the grace of God to maintain our plea for the cause of Christ as set before us in the New Testament. On this occasion, being the beginning of another year and of another volume of the *Scripture Standard*, we thought it would be interesting and even inspiring to call to remembrance some of the words which were written at its inception, both by those who played an active part on the paper in later years, and by those who were from the beginning firm and generous contributors to and supporters of the magazine. We recall in their own words their hopes and faith. Looking back, we cannot help but realise that their hopes have been fulfilled and their confidence justified. We begin with quoting from the first Editorial of the paper's first Editor —

Walter Crosthwaite

In the January 1935 issue:

"Well may we ask 'What hath God wrought

"It is common experience in all movements that succeeding generations either do not know, or else forget, the price at which their freedom has been purchased, and so lose interest in and zeal for the faith of their fathers; and in many cases entirely abandon the ground so dearly bought and defended..."

"Our purpose in erecting the *Scripture Standard* is to endeavour to rally once more the loyal-hearted to 'contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints.'"

"In two senses the Scriptures are a standard; as a fixed rule or model, and as an ensign of war. We shall endeavour to keep these two meanings in view, seeking to test all things by the 'Scriptures of Truth', and making them the God-given banner to be displayed as the rallying ground for those who desire to 'fight the good fight of the faith.'"

"We hope to be the fearless foes of all evil and error; these and not persons will be the object of attack. We shall use the Sword of the Spirit, the Word of God, for defence and attack, believing as David

said of the sword of Goliath, 'There is none like it!'"

"We intend to publish articles by well-known brethren bearing on our position and plea; notes on Bible readings; answers to questions of general interest, and helpful items for preachers. We shall welcome reports from churches, and items relating to coming events..."

"A glorious heritage and opportunity are ours. Pray that the Lord may guide us, so that we may not fail Him."

Arthur Lancelot Frith

was Treasurer and Distributing Agent of the *Scripture Standard* for nineteen years from its commencement, and did a most valuable work in building up its circulation and finances and in corresponding with many of its readers all over the world. In the first issue he wrote:

"For two and a half years I carefully and prayerfully examined the position of the Churches of Christ in the light of Scripture and came to the conclusion that their position was impregnable. During fifteen years my position has not changed; in fact I believe, as a people, we hold the truth and have the finest plea in the world."

"To make this plea more widely known, to encourage each other and build each other up, to call brethren everywhere to rally to the standard...the *Scripture Standard* has been started."

James Wardrop

was a Scotsman, an elder in the church in Motherwell, "a man of the Book", whose name is still revered, a teacher of sound doctrine, who has left the impress of the scriptures upon many brethren still living. In the same first issue of the paper he wrote a message of encouragement under the title

"A Significant Title":

"This magazine has adopted a significant title. Its object is praiseworthy and grand. Churches claiming to be of Christ must of necessity have a standard of authority, and that a Scriptural one. Such can only justify their existence and give a satisfactory reason for assailing everything

opposed to the will of God. The sacred writings, termed Scripture, are the words of the living God. Times have changed, but the Word of God remains the same, to combat apostasy and everything that would dishonour Christ. We need not plead with the lovers of truth to support it. The matter it contains will show whether it is worthy of the confidence of the brotherhood. If the mission it has in view is realised, then it ought to continue; if not, it ought to cease".

"Its task is an all-important one. Believers need to be firmly established in the faith; some require to be stirred up for greater service to the Lord, and what is of man, and not of God, must be rejected, even though associated with the Churches. This is not a pleasing task, but fidelity to God and His word demands it."

After reading these expressions of hope and faith and devotion to God and His word, we humbly pray that we may be worthy to serve in this glorious cause of Christ as set forth in the New Testament:

"O God, to us may grace be given
To follow in their train."

EDITOR

WISE WORDS FOR CHRISTIANS

- 1 When a church member rests he rusts.
- 2 Get the church into the world without getting the world into the church.
- 3 The biggest liar is the Christian who gives excuses for not doing his duty.
- 4 Rip van Winkle is the only man who became famous by sleeping.
- 5 The devil is an artist: he paints sin in very attractive colours.
- 6 Do what you should do and you will have no time to do what you should not.
- 7 The Bible needs no defence: it needs investigation and study.
- 8 If you can't tell whether a person is a Christian, he isn't.
- 9 He who stops being better stops being good.

Sunday School Chronicle

THOUGHTS ON TIME

Time, like an ever rolling stream,
Bears all its sons away;
They fly, forgotten, as a dream
Dies at the opening day.

VIEWED broadly time has three dimensions—Past, Present, Future. "Distance (in time as well as in space) lends enchantment to the view." A distorted vision of the past tends to draw our eyes from the realities of the present and to fill our minds with satisfaction, for it magnifies our achievements and minimizes our failures, eventually lulling us into self-satisfied complacency.

On the other hand, if we realise the error of dwelling upon the past — the time which has gone beyond recall — we draw our minds forward, we find it all too easy to swing into rosy visions of the future. Very quickly we are lost in radiant views of those adventures we propose; of the deeds we intend to perform; of the sacrifices we mean to make. But, the time is not yet ripe for all these things.

We are so like the pendulum of a clock, swinging from one extreme to the opposite. We would like to stop the clock Oh that we might realise that the past has gone for ever and the future never arrives; all we truly have is NOW! Paul writes, "Already it is time to awake out of sleep", Or as J.B. Phillips translates. "wake up to reality!" God says, "NOW, is the accepted time; NOW, is the day of salvation."

If we are to adventure for the Lord, it must be NOW; if we would do a gallant deed, it must be done TO-DAY; if we would sacrifice, be it treasure (sold to give to the poor); be it sinful desire (resigned unto the purifying of the soul 1 John 3:3); be it righteous freedom (not excused to avoid offending a weaker brother) it must have immediate implementation. DO IT NOW!

Our prayer for to-day: "So teach us to number our days that we may get us a heart of Wisdom" (Psalm 90:12).

PAUL JONES

BLESSING THROUGH DISASTER

AS with most of nature's violent manifestations, hurricanes are not without their beneficial effects to mankind. The heavy rains accompanying a hurricane revive crops and replenish supplies of storage water. This benefit is received over a wider area than is damaged by the hurricane's winds. In an examination of the storms which had visited Puerto Rico in thirty years 60% were beneficial, 30% were destructive locally, but beneficial in other areas, and only the 10% were overwhelmingly destructive.

After one hurricane fruit trees flowered and bore fruit a second time. After another storm mulberry trees blossomed and bore a second crop of fruit. After the Charleston hurricane, 1752, trees which were stripped of their leaves blossomed again and bore fruit until late autumn.

(From the *Elements Rage*, by F.W. Lane)

"DIVISIONS in the Restoration Movement have almost invariably arisen over personalities rather than over doctrinal issues. Our sins of division are like the Corinthian sin. Jim Kite

TAKE TIME

Take Time TO THINK ... It is the source of power.

Take Time TO PLAY ... It is the secret of perpetual youth.

Take Time TO READ ... It is the fountain of wisdom.

Take Time TO PRAY ... It is the greatest power on earth.

Take Time TO LOVE and BE LOVED ... It is a God-given privilege.

Take Time TO BE FRIENDLY ... It is the road to happiness.

Take Time TO LAUGH ... It is the music of the soul.

Take Time TO GIVE ... It is too short a day to be selfish.

Take Time TO WORK ... It is the price of success.

Take Time TO ENJOY GOOD FOOD ... It is the source of health.

Take Time TO STUDY ... It will help you all the days of your life.

GODS PLAN OF RECONSTRUCTION

Gen. 11:1to9

Every time I have an opportunity I will speak of God's goodness in preserving to us his written word. This blessed book is God inspired, its messages full of life. The old Testament is full of examples of human love, folly and tragedies and of God's leading and guiding, all preserved to us to bring us nearer to Him. The New Testament is our guidebook for today. We have every problem solved. Jesus Christ is the light of the world. In the midst of the powers of the world are evil and darkness! Our governments plan schemes for destruction and construction which will be utterly useless if God and His almighty power are forgotten.

Psalm 2.

SIS. GERTRUDE HILL (TUNBRIDGE WELLS, aged 87)

A WORD TO THE LIVING

IT isn't enough to say in our hearts

That we like a man for his ways;

It isn't enough that we fill our minds

With thoughts of silent praise;

Nor is it enough that we honour a man

As our confidence upward mounts:

It's going right up to the man himself

And telling him so that counts.

If a man does a work that you really admire,

Don't leave a kind word unsaid,

In fear that to do so might make him vain

And cause him to lose his head;

But reach out your hand and tell him

"Well done"

And see how his gratitude swells.

It isn't the flowers we strew on the grave-

It's the word to the living that tells.

Gospel Advocate

DAILY DUTY - PRAYER

CHRISTIANS ought to pray every day-

"Pray without ceasing." Too many are

in the sad state of the Negro who prayed,

"Please Lord, hear me just this time,

because it's the first time I've troubled you by asking anything for twenty years."

How many can say, "I have called daily upon Thee, I have stretched out my hands unto Thee?" (Psalm 88:9).

NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

Blackburn, New Wellington Street, We rejoice that the power of the Gospel has been seen in our midst. Marie Birtwistle made the good confession before witnesses that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, and was immersed in His Name on Lord's Day December 17th. Our prayer is that she will be kept faithful to the One she has promised to serve, and so gain the crown of righteousness that fadeth not away.

To God be the glory. R.R.

Nelson: The church's 54th anniversary on November 18th and 19th was an edifying and encouraging experience. In addition to the richness of fellowship and ministry we had the great joy of witnessing four baptisms at the close of the evening service. Tony Coulson, Peter Coulson, Stephen Tomlinson and Sheila Cook (all young people) were immersed in the blessed name of our Lord. Other teenagers, quite a number of whom attend our services, are on the verge. We pray that they may be brought to salvation, thereby enriching the new young life — blood in the church. To God be the glory.

Stretford, Manchester: The church is rejoicing over the baptism into Christ of Shaheen Qureshi on Thursday, 30th Nov. Shaheen is 16 years of age and comes from a Muslim background. We ask that you pray that our Father will assist her in her determination to follow Jesus.

ALLAN ASHURST

OBITUARY

Blackburn, Hamilton Street: The church has suffered bereavement in the loss of Sister Violet Webb, who passed away in hospital on December 9th, at the age of seventy. She had been an inmate for about five weeks, gradually deteriorating in health until her Master called her Home.

Sister "Vi" would be better known among the churches in Yorkshire, in and around Leeds, where she spent most of her life. Now her "journey is run". She fought the good fight, and along with all the faithful there awaits her the "crown of righteousness": "Blessed are the dead, which die in the Lord."

Ulverston: We regret the passing of Bro. Harry Cox, in only his twenty-seventh year.

Bro. Harry attended the Sunday School early in life, then went on as a teenager to give his decision for Jesus.

We extend our deepest sympathy to June, his wife and commend her for her patient and careful nursing, often under difficult circumstances, with two young children to care for; also to Sister Mary Cox and her husband and their family.

Bro. John Partington conducted the service in Barrow Crematorium.

COMING EVENTS

Spring Conference and Rally: The church at Dewsbury invites you to the above on Saturday April 21st, 1973.

Business Session 2-30 to 3-30 p.m.

Devotional Session 3-30 to 4-30 p.m.

Tea Interval

Gospel Meeting 6-30 p.m.

Book the Day.

Lower Peel Street, Bradford Road,
DEWSBURY, Yorks.

Tranent: Our annual Social Meeting, will be held, God Willing, on February 3rd, 1973, in the Pond Hall, Portseton, commencing at 4.00p.m.

The Speakers are:

A. Harper, Buckie,

J. Sinclair, Brighton.

A warm welcome is offered to this meeting

CHANGE OF SECRETARY

Easthouses, Mayfield, Dalkieth, Midlothian.

Miss M. Aitken,
21 Kippie Low Park,
Mayfield, Midlothian.

THE SCRIPTURE STANDARD is published monthly by members of the **CHURCHES OF CHRIST**. It is not in any other respect connected with any religious body or organisation, but is completely independent of any such affiliation. It exists to try to forward the cause of the Church of Christ as revealed and recorded in the **NEW TESTAMENT**, in its teaching and practices. This aim is set out under the title of each issue of the paper.

ARTICLES AND OTHER LITERARY CONTRIBUTIONS are welcomed by the Editor.

NEWS ITEMS, REPORTS OF CHURCH ACTIVITIES and notices of **COMING EVENTS** are invited. The Editor is solely responsible for decisions as to the inclusion or exclusion of any such contributions forwarded for publication, whether by churches or individuals.

No payment other than necessary expenses is made to any who work on the magazine, or to contributors of articles etc. of any nature. The paper is supported entirely by subscriptions and gifts from interested readers.

THE SCRIPTURE STANDARD is published monthly.

PRICES PER YEAR

HOME COUNTRIES & COMMONWEALTH					1 Copy	2 Copies	3 Copies
(through Agent) ... ..	...	...	...	...	£0.90		
(posted direct) ... ..	...	...	...	...	£1.00	£1.88	£2.60
CANADA & U.S.A. ... ..	...	...	...	...	\$3.00	\$5.00	\$7.00
(payment in dollar bills)					1, 2 or 3 years pro rata in advance		

AGENT & TREASURER: PAUL JONES, 3 St. Laurence Crescent, Slamannan, B. Falkirk, Stirlingshire. Tel. Slamannan 200.

EDITOR: CARLTON MELLING, 133 Long Lane, Hindley, Via Wigan, Lancs. WN2 4XD. Tel. 0942 (Wigan) 56301

DISTRIBUTING AGENT: CHARLES GRANT, 45 Kirkwood Avenue, Redding, Falkirk, East Stirlingshire, to whom change of address should be sent.

EVANGELISTIC FUND: Contributions to R. McDONALD, "Aldersyde," 10 Mardale Road, Bennett Lane, Dewsbury, Yorkshire.

CONFERENCE SECRETARY: TOM WOODHOUSE, "Jesmond," 8 Shoulder-of-Mutton Hill, Kirkby-in-Ashfield, Notts. NG17 7DX.

Hymn Book Agent and Treasurer: FRED HARDY, 73a Bridge Street, Morley, Leeds, Yorkshire. Tel. Morley 3255.

"The Scripture Standard" is printed for the publishers by Walter Barker (Printers) Ltd., Langley Mill, Nottm. Tel. 07737 (Langley Mill) 2266