

The SCRIPTURE STANDARD

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

VOL. 31. No. 4.

APRIL, 1964

Why Not? (2.)

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

ONE of the first things noticed by strangers who come into our meetings, especially gospel meetings, is the absence of organs or pianos to accompany the singing. Arising from this the question is often asked us, "Why don't you have an organ"? We should be able, courteously and with understanding, to explain why not in a way which will help to satisfy the inquirer that, after all, we have good and true reasons for not using instrumental music in the worship of God.

When such questions are asked we are at a disadvantage in stating reasons why not. We feel somewhat at a loss, and often have failed to convince ourselves that we have done justice to the question. This is largely because we are trying to prove a negative. We would be justified in turning the question back and asking "Why should we"? Those who insist upon or sympathise with the use of musical instruments in God's service can be rightly called upon to state their reasons why. In the opening article of this series it was made clear that the only firm and logical ground upon which we can reason as regards the church of the Lord Jesus Christ is that of the New Testament. So, to justify the use of musical instruments in the church, the evidence and proof brought should be from the New Testament. And there must be positive teaching: the silence of scripture cannot be used as an argument. The argument from silence has been the means of introducing all sorts of error and unauthorised practices into the church, resulting in the heterogeneous collection of religious bodies which we term Christendom.

New Testament Teaching on Singing

Three passages stand out, all written to Christians. These are (1) Eph. 5:19: "... be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with all your heart;" (2) Colossians 3:16: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, as you teach and admonish one another in all wisdom, and as you sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs with thankfulness in your hearts to God"; (3) Hebrews 13:15: "Through him (Christ) then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name."

We notice that in none of these passages is there any mention of instrumental music. We remember many years ago hearing an aged brother exhorting the church and quoting these passages of Scripture. Gently and kindly he said "With all due respects to the organ there, the melody is to be made in the heart."

True, many passages can be pointed to in the Old Covenant Scriptures to show that use of organs, etc., is acceptable in the worship of God. But to adopt that line of reasoning would mean that the laws and ordinances given to the Jews under the Old Covenant are to be practised by Christians under the New. There could then be no possible objection to a worshipper bringing a lamb for sacrifice, offering incense, and submitting to the ritual and ceremony of the priesthood of the Jews. Indeed, this would mean to annul the higher revelation given to us in the New Covenant Scriptures, to set aside the substance for the shadow, even to reject the Christ for Moses, and to bring ourselves under the law which was never intended for Gentiles nor for Christians.

It can never be wrong, nor can it be questioned, to do just what Christ or His apostles teach us, or what God commands. No one can call in question our not using instrumental music. It is the use of them which needs justification.

Historically

It has been clearly demonstrated and is generally agreed that the worship of the first Christians was modelled upon that in the Jewish synagogues. In Scripture we find no mention of the use of musical instruments there. The worship was severely plain, and we can partly deduce from Luke 4:16-20 how that worship was conducted. To this day orthodox Jews do not use musical accompaniment when they assemble in their synagogues. I say "orthodox" Jews, not the "liberal" Jews, who have themselves departed from their Scriptures (the Old Testament) so far as to make it difficult to see how they can claim to be the people through whom Jehovah has chosen to reveal Himself to all nations.

In the early church, as history outside the New Testament tells us, Christians opposed and refused to use instrumental music. Not only in their Scriptures was there no justification for it, but they rejected it also because of its pagan associations. The pageants and displays and sports of the Roman Empire were associated with music of this kind. Throughout history since the greatest teachers in the church have spoken and written against it—Ambrose, Thomas Aquinas, Luther, Wesley and a host of others, ancient and modern.

In the history of the church of Christ, and that of many religious denominations, division and heartache have been caused by the insistence on introducing such innovations as instrumental music in the churches. To be conventional, lovers of the practice have ridden rough-shod over their brethren's deeply-held convictions on this subject, and have failed to observe "the law of Christian love."

The Positive Argument

The argument is often advanced that God must be worshipped only with the very finest we can offer — in music, art, the sciences and craftsmanship. This sounds reasonable, but it is a specious argument. Jesus taught that "those who worship God must worship in spirit and truth" (John 4:24). Thus, we must worship God with that which is from God — the spirit — and according to truth. Where is the truth to be found concerning God and His worship and service other than in the New Testament? "What person knows a man's thoughts except the spirit of the man which is in him"? Paul asks the Corinthians (1 Cor. 1:13): "So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God." To worship God in spirit, then, means according to His revelation, which we find in the Scriptures. Of myself, I cannot know what is pleasing and acceptable to God. Just as He revealed to Cain and Abel how He was to be approached, so as surely does He to us—in the New Testament.

God surely does desire only the finest to be offered to Him. But He decides, not we. What to our ears may sound the most impressive and awe-inspiring worship may to God be totally unacceptable; and what to us may seem crude and disharmonious may to God be the purest devotion — a sacrifice well-pleasing. We cannot use our artistic and aesthetic standards to judge the things of God.

But even so, in singing without musical instruments, we are offering to God the purest devotion — the service of what He Himself has created — the human voice, "the fruit of the lips." The very finest musical instrument is the human voice. The best singing we hear on the wireless is unaccompanied; the best music of famous choirs is simply the harmony and power and beauty of the human voice.

And so we might ask, "Why, then, should there be anything else used in our singing to God's praise beside consecrated hearts and voices?" We are told that instruments are a help to worship. All experience shows them to be a hindrance. Many sincere worshippers of God cannot conceive of their singing a hymn, let alone going through a service, without musical accompaniment of some sort. The stage has been reached when in the absence of an organist or pianist, a service would have to be cancelled, for it would be considered impossible to do without.

Then we often hear people urging the use of instrumental music on the grounds of their preference — "I like the organ." But once my likes, or yours, are the criterion, everyone is on the same ground. One has as much right to introduce what he likes as has any other. Some do not like the organ: they prefer the piano, the orchestra, or individual instruments of an orchestra. So that, adopting what we like, we have today the spectacle of jazz instruments (and worse) taking their part in church services to attract especially the young-spiritual ragtime, "worship" which amuses, entertains, but which is purely sensual, not "in spirit and truth."

We do not use musical instruments not because we are opposed to music as such. We are not iconoclasts, nor anti-everything. Perhaps as a body of people we are lovers of music as much as any. But their use is a question of "the right thing

in the right place at the right time." A thing can be right of itself, but wrong if applied to particular uses. We believe that the church claiming to be Christ's must be guided by its Head, who is Christ. Because we aim to observe Christ's authority in His church, because we are churches of Christ, we try to teach and carry out those things He has ordained, as shown to us in the New Testament. Anything excluded, or of doubtful origin or authority, we refrain from practising.

EDITOR.

The Open Heart

THE heart of man occupies a prominent place in Scripture. It is referred to as the centre of man's living, and is represented as the source and storehouse of all his qualities, and the originator and director of all his actions.

The heart is the seat of affection, attachment and love; mental qualities are attributed to it, such as understanding, reasoning, thinking. The Jews were afraid to use their eyes and ears, lest they should understand with their hearts. The scribes "reasoned in their hearts." We see then that everything is closely connected with the heart. It is, therefore, not to be wondered at that the Lord's action upon the heart comes into view in connection with conversion.

The story of the redeeming love of Jesus is perfectly suited to open the hearts of men and women. To those with a good and honest heart it finds a ready entrance (Luke 8:15); such keep it and bring forth fruit as it described in Hebrews 4:12: "For the word of God is quick (living) and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight; but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do." Our hearts and souls are purified by faith. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17).

The two disciples on the way to Emmaus had a wonderful experience as Jesus expounded from the Scriptures all the things relating to His death, resurrection and entrance into His glory. The wonder of it all, the greatness of His love and the power of His sacrifice, enthralled them. "And they said one to another, 'Did not our heart burn within us by the way, and while He opened to us the Scriptures?'" (See Luke 24:13-32).

A short story which tells us a great deal is found in Acts 16:13-15. The Apostles, Paul and Silas, were directed in the preaching of the gospel to the city of Philippi. They went out by a riverside where there was a prayer meeting and spoke to the women who were there. A certain woman named Lydia, who was a worshipper of God, heard what Paul said. In consequence the Lord opened her heart so that she attended to the things of which Paul spoke. Lydia's heart was opened by the word of the gospel which Paul preached: the word of faith. "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness."

Lydia "received with meekness the engrafted word which is able to save the soul" (James 1:21). She was also "a doer of the word," for she attended to the things spoken by Paul. The record does not say here what things Paul taught; but from his letter to the Philippian church we know what his preaching was. It was Jesus — the Christ, "who, being in the form of God thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth and things under the earth: and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2:6-11).

All this Lydia received into her heart and more. Paul must have spoken of the gospel commands — the gospel obedience, for Lydia attended to these things. One of these things only is mentioned: she was baptised. After being baptised Lydia was sure that she was faithful to the Lord (see John 7:17). She invited the Apostles to reside in her house if they judged her to be faithful. They confirmed her conviction by acceding to her request. The Lord, by His gospel, not only opened Lydia's heart, but also her house.

Dear reader, the Lord Jesus is still, by the word of the Gospel, knocking at the door of your heart. He says, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any

man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me."

The two disciples did not recognise their companion on the road to Emmaus. Yet by His word, He had an entrance into their hearts and also their house. Similarly, Lydia by the same word received the Lord Jesus into her heart, and His Apostle into her house. By receiving the word of the Lord into your heart you will be receiving Jesus into your life which He will enrich with peace and joy.

Now admit the heavenly guest:
 Let Him in.
 He will make for you a feast:
 Let Him in.
 He will speak—your sins forgiven,
 And when earth-ties all are riven,
 He will take you home to heaven:
 Let Him in.

SAM WILSON.

Infant or Adult?

SPEAKING about Church Unity at a Men's Fellowship in Barry, Glamorgan, a week ago, the Dean of Llandaff said "If it were a serious hindrance to unification with the Baptists it would not be a great sacrifice for Anglicans today to give up Infant Baptism." This was a strong statement and immediate reaction came from the Archbishop of Wales who maintained that Infant Baptism, as a "significant part of our faith," could not be given up under any circumstances. It would appear that Baptists and Anglicans alike are equally concerned about safeguarding the true significance of Christian baptism and that the only way to honour such conviction is not by trying to prove that either practice is exclusively right or wrong but rather by recognising both as included within the truly Christian tradition. The overruling fact remains — Baptism is the condition of entry into the Church.

THE above is extracted from the "British Weekly" of February 13th, 1964. We make a few comments concerning what it says.

First, the heading is not correct. The issue is not between Infant and Adult baptism, but between Infant and Believers' baptism. But the distinction is just as clear, for infants can be no more believers than they can be adults. It is as absurd to think that they can be subjects for scriptural baptism as to suppose they can be adults. One therefore rules out the other.

The Dean of Llandaff in his statement acknowledges that infant baptism has no New Testament authority, otherwise he would not be prepared to give it up.

We have many times pointed out that traditional and denominational practices cancel out the commandments and teaching of Christ. Here is another instance. "Under no circumstances" says the Archbishop of Wales, would the Anglican Church give up her practice. Presumably such circumstances would include the clear teaching of Christ and His apostles (in whose succession the Archbishop claims to follow). So the N.T. had better go rather than this "significant part of our faith."

The statement serves again to show how futile is the feverish activity for unity of the Churches, when there is no common ground recognised and, when it comes to the test, all are determined to hold to their unscriptural beliefs and customs.

Without world-wide conferences and elaborate programmes, unity can come now if we all are ready to "let names and sects and parties fall, and Jesus Christ be all in all."

C. MELLING.

WE think when trouble comes on us, that it is time to care for ourselves. Not so our blessed Lord. We think when our kindness is rejected we need not repeat it; but how unlike to us was our blessed, lowly Master! Nothing moved His steadfast heart, or turned Him from doing good. His course of self-surrender was complete.

AS the glorious hope of the Lord's coming burns with increasing brightness in our souls, an inclusive love to all saints will dominate us, and even in our private prayers we shall more and more find ourselves saying "we" rather than "I". We shall instinctively lay to heart the fact that we are members of one family, and love with the love of relationship.

God's Handiwork

IF the question was asked, which two portions of Scripture are thought to be most assuredly of Divine origin, the answer I would offer would be: the early chapters of Genesis and the first few verses of John's Gospel. They each tell of things that were before the beginning of time — as we know time — and of things impossible for the human imagination to have conceived. Imagination needs a basis upon which to build its conceptions and nature of itself provides no clue to its own origin that can be compared with the Genesis story. It is a story that has stood unbroken and unbreakable through countless ages against the tremendous growth of knowledge discovered and devised by man. Of necessity, there have been changes in understanding and in interpretation of what is written, but we believe these to have consolidated rather than destroyed what scripture teaches. As there can be no effect without adequate cause, belief in God as Creator is a necessity to human thinking. This we believe despite the outspoken utterances of some "wise" men of this present age.

Reading the book by William Barclay on "The Coming of the Spirit"—commented on in a recent issue of the S.S. — that writer's attitude to the scriptures was made obvious by remarks he made denying their inspiration and stating his belief that they needed to be re-written to suit present-day thinking. In that book, he casually advises his readers not to get themselves lost in the mysteries of the Trinity. Apparently, from what he writes, he belongs to the same school of thought as John A. T. Robinson, of "Honest to God" fame, who exclaims at the inconsistency of a book that affirms in one place "Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is one Lord," and, in another, has words suggesting that God is a Trinity of Persons, each equally divine.

That these writers are learned men is evident from the skilled way in which they write, but learning is not everything. In the book they seem to despise, it is recorded of One who, in prayer, "rejoicingly" thanked God that truths about Himself and Christ were "not revealed to the wise and the prudent, but to babes"—to the innocent and unlearned (if you please).

As for getting lost in mysteries concerning the Trinity, we believe one thing is sure: that if there is a God—as both these writers appear to believe—then they must surely see that it could never be His intention to mystify anyone about anything. His whole purpose is to reveal. While it is foolish to attempt to define the undefinable — and God is that — it is also foolish to reject what He says, which, if left unsaid, could never have been known. Truth, at times, does appear to be inconsistent with itself, probably because of our lack of understanding. I think it right to believe that God would never be afraid of speaking what seems to be an inconsistency. For instance, there are seven words in Genesis' first chapter in which these two "inconsistent" ideas are introduced and united in one short, simple sentence: "And God said: Let us (plural) make man (singular) in our (plural) image (singular). That sentence must have been God-spoken for man would never have invented so "foolish" a thing. Paul surely understood what he was saying when he wrote "the foolishness of God is wiser than men." There that simple sentence stands, not as something mysterious, to confound us, but to enlighten the mind and put man on his feet, for man was made upright.

One of the most interesting things in life to all kinds of men, women and children is that of watching something being made. Given a good object, the receptive mind will accept such watching as an essential part of education. Well may W. H. Davies write his poetic plea for leisure to "stand and stare" at what, all the time and all around, is getting done!

In those seven words referred to, we are shown a glimpse of God at work, revealing what otherwise could never have been known: that man, at the first, was God-made from the dust of the earth in God's likeness.

What readers are to understand about man being made from the dust of the earth in the likeness of God we may never agree upon, but all will agree that the likeness did not come from the use of dust. One who knew God (if we may so say it) who had Himself been in the form of God, said in the simple finality of absolute truth, "God is spirit," and of the spirit He said: "A spirit hath not flesh and bones as you see me have." What then?

Before attempting any answer to that question, it may be well for us to have some idea as to who these three Personalities are, and what they mean to us. Let it be said that they should not be described, as is sometimes done, as God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. To speak or write of the eternal sonship of Christ, as we have seen it printed, is a contradiction of terms. There was no Son of God, and no Christ, before Bethlehem.

Genesis' first chapter gives us three names which we will use to describe the work they each do: God, the Word (by implication, but abundantly verified in the prologue to John's Gospel) and the Spirit, who is shown to us as "brooding" (Rotherham) over chaos.

It is in the light of Creation that we begin to realise the relationship of these three, by seeing them as a three-fold unit of purpose, revealing the Divine method of action in whatever work there was to be done. Incidentally, as it was in Creation so it was in the work of Redemption, so many thousands of years later.

Here in Genesis, who and what do we see?

There is **God**, whose will is law. It is He who determines what work is to be done, and how and when it shall be carried out. The **Word** it is through whom each day's work is defined and declared; and the **Spirit**-possessing power necessary for so great an undertaking, is shown to be held in abeyance before any action takes place, until the creative words are stipulated and spoken. [Bible students may well bear this in mind when considering John 16:13-15]. Each creative day has its specified task, determined by God, but all that is done is done by all. At the end of each day's work, as the story tells, God, its originator and architect, saw that which had been made, and accepted it with the words, "It is good." At the end of the six days' labour, the record says: "And God saw everything that he had made and, behold, it was very good." Creation is thus presented to us—not as the operation of one mind, but of three minds acting together as one: unity in perfection, the supreme example of what unity can achieve.

There are those who cavil in their unbelief, at there being two stories—as they say—of Creation in Genesis, but we who believe may very well be thankful that the story did not end at chapter one. Man as that portion leaves him (and the woman) was little better than the beasts. As yet he had no name and the dominion that had been promised him would seem to apply more to the glory of his manhood than to his likeness to God. He was not left there, however. A place had been prepared for him: a garden of delight, in which even we, in these far away days—in imagination—may "stand and stare!" It was Paradise!

God, knowing the kind of creature that had been brought into being, and of his inexperience, instructed him as to what he may eat! He sets a table before his eyes: a bounteous feast, all of which could be partaken of, save one forbidden fruit. Here we get the first glimpse of the Divine image in this newly-made man, now named Adam. He is shown to be possessed of the power and the right to choose what he shall or shall not do! This implies that He is like God in the possession of a will of his own; He is also able to speak and understand words, for language is in being—the man has spoken to and with the Creator, on an equality. The spirit which was breathed into him—was the breath of God, who is spirit. Thus Adam, standing in that garden does so in the human image of God who made him.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

This article was begun with references to some who disbelieve that God has spoken to man through a book. We believe the creation story is proof in itself of being God-given, that it cannot be explained in any other way. Reference has been made to the "Trinity" and the mystery that is supposed to surround such an idea. While the word itself is nowhere found in the Bible that to which the word applies is there. It is mentioned twice but twice only, which is strange, in view of the very many times the terms God, Word, and Spirit occur. In Genesis the three-fold name is connected with the creation of man, the second time it is used is in Matt. 28 which—let it be noted—is concerned with the re-creation, the second-birth (which Christ taught must take place). The titles are different because the circumstances are different, but the personalities are the same. The Speaker is the Word. He said to the men He had chosen and called: "All power is given unto me, in heaven and on earth. Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." A question: "Was the introduction of the Trinity into that saying a coincidence of human writing or by design?" By design, most assuredly, and it is positive proof of God's hand in the writing of scripture. Now please note: The sin of Adam in partaking of forbidden fruit was a sin against God's word: "Thou shalt not!" What of those then who would discard what God has written for something man-made, something written to conform with man's way of thinking? Surely what befell Adam should be a warning against any tampering with what God has said.

W. BARKER.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

APRIL, 1964

5—Genesis 40	Mark 8:22 to 9:1
12—Exodus 33	Mark 9:2-29
19—Genesis 41:1-31	Mark 9:30-50
26—Genesis 41:32-57	Mark 10:1-31

TWO NOTABLE MIRACLES

WE intend this month to look very carefully at two unusual miracles of healing performed by the Saviour. The first is recorded in Mark's gospel chapter 7, verses 31-37, and the second in chapter 8, verses 22-26. They are not unusual in result—complete physical recovery—but in method of bringing this about. The first relates to a deaf man with an impediment in his speech, and the second to a blind man. The similarities are quite striking.

In both cases the "patients" are brought to Jesus. This must have been a commonplace in those wonderful days. We have a request with method stated: to lay His hands upon, to touch, and obviously a special approach, possibly when the crowds were at a distance or while there was a lull in the activity. Quite close to this time, almost innumerable cures were being wrought (Matt. 15:30-31). Jesus, however, chose to take these sufferers aside and give them close, personal and individual treatment. Moreover, in both cases a programme of practical treatment was given instead of a touch or a word with instantaneous effect. We can have but a distant realisation of these vivid scenes when "all who touched him were made whole." Healing campaigns must appear almost silly beside this, and the times when Peter and Paul were so used. Yet it was not the cures, but what they meant which was of supreme importance: that God had sent His messengers to declare His truth.

It is natural to enquire why Jesus acted differently in these two particular cases. The nearest in the other gospels is recorded in detail in John 9, where however the simple obedience to an apparently strange command brought sight. Here we may ask "Why should He . . . ? Could He not have . . . ?" —questions raised often enough by sceptics finding fault with divine doings. We are quite certain (1) that the records are divinely inspired; (2) that the cures could not possibly have been better performed; (3) that what happened was the means of the greatest possible blessing to all concerned; (4) that divine wisdom with only self-limited powers wrought the wonders.

Let us examine the records carefully and prayerfully for our own blessing and help.

We are not told anything of those who brought the sufferers in touch with Jesus. They must have known the power of Jesus, having either experienced it themselves, or seen it at work. They had sympathy with their afflicted friends, and wanted to see them cured, and expected it to come at a touch. It may be their motives needed purifying; curiosity and perhaps pride were involved; "they knew." Was it on the other hand too short and easy a way for the sufferers to reap what they most needed, spiritual contact, warm close personal touch? It was not possible with the multitude of sick folk to give each one more than the passing blessing, that was wonderful enough in all conscience.

Both these cures took place on the east side and north east of Galilee whither Jesus had journeyed from the borders of Tyre and Sidon. There He had sought quiet, needing the time with His apostles and closest disciples (Mark 7:24), but He could not be hid and crowds did gather to Him. The districts they journeyed through would be comparatively sparsely populated. It was a special case that both deafness and defect in speech should require treatment. His friends implored a touch, but Jesus took him away from publicity and in six actions wrought the cure. We are quite sure that each had a part in the divine process and served a purpose, but we do not pretend to know just what. This was not a show or a piece of drama. Had another done it we would have thought so. We suggest pressure applied to an ear stoppage, saliva applied to the tongue with healing effect of the touch, prayer and the upward look to indicate heavenly aid to the deaf man—who could see but not hear, a sigh (not heard by the sufferer) showing the deep sympathy and love of the Saviour, and finally the words to consummate the process. If the winds and the waves obeyed that voice, how much more those processes which make a living man? And the words were heard by the deaf.

That the witnesses of this miracle immediately disobeyed the voice of the Master is not surprising—it had happened before. Jesus had previously suffered embarrassment and inconvenience when He needed quiet, but He showed love, not impatience, at this.

We turn now to the case of the blind man. He had apparently had his sight—else how did he know trees and men by his appearance? He took him by the hand and led him right out of the village to treat his eyes. First He applied spittle to them, applying it with His fingers we assume, and then held His hands upon him with the question "Do

you see anything?" There was a partial restoration, and this was completed by applying His hands to the eyes. We will not even suggest—and, please note, our previous analysis was only a suggestion—why this method should have been used.

Thought given to the details of our Saviour's handling can only deepen our reverence and wonder. If we do not understand, we accept, we know, we trust. In these miracles Jesus employed His supremely human and yet divine wisdom and power to draw closer to Himself, to teach, instruct, purify those with whom He came into contact—not simply the afflicted ones He healed, but all con-

cerned; those who brought their friends to His healing, those who witnessed the work; those who saw the results, those who lived close to Him, and were to carry on His greater work. A special thought for the two sufferers these miracles relieved at least for the time of their human life on earth: they had felt the touch of divine love and holiness, and could not thereafter be the same. Have we who by the gospel have been begotten again been changed thereby to manifest holiness and love? We should be the embodiment of these surely, and the process of our healing goes on while we draw closer and closer to our Saviour.

R. B. SCOTT.



(Conducted by
A. E. Winstanley,
43a Church Road,
Tunbridge Wells,
Kent).

TALKING TO YOUNG BELIEVERS

MODELS WANTED!

IF you feel that being a model doesn't interest you—please read on! You might think it unlikely that many young people who want to be models will be readers of the "Scripture Standard," but you could not be more wrong—I hope.

Open your bible at 1 Timothy 4:12, "Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers. . . ." Take a good look at the word "example," Greek *typos*. It was used of an impression made by repeated blows on something; then the mark made by a hard substance on something softer. From this it came to mean a *model*, or pattern.

So you could read the words like this:

Be a model . . .

Now just what is the old apostle telling young Timothy? This: that he should be such a person whom others could imitate with confidence—imitate and know they'd be doing right. It was a message for a young believer. "Let no-one slight you because you are young," said Paul, "but be a model to the believers. . . ." So I pass it on to you, young brother and sister (and of course I'm asking myself at the same time)—do you "set the other believers an example" of Christ-likeness? Well, do you?

Notice some of the items Paul lists:

In word

Certainly this covers our day to day conversation—how we speak, what we say, how we use that big little member, the tongue. Paul gave this advice to his brethren: "Let your speech be always

with grace, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man."

But this has to do with something else too. Timothy was an evangelist, devoting his life to telling others of Jesus and his love. He was to set an example in this too—on every possible occasion telling others about God's dear Son. And that is exactly what we have to do—all of us—we have to tell him all about it.

Put it in two questions: How many people have you talked to today? How many did you tell about Jesus?

In behaviour

Not "conversation" as in the King James Version. Nowadays that word has to do with talking. The word the apostle used has to do with *living*: behaviour or manner of life. Peter uses the same word when he tells Christian women so to live that their unbelieving husbands may be won for the Lord by their "chaste and reverent behaviour."

Paul himself was such a model disciple. He could say to other saints: "I beseech you therefore, be ye imitators of me." Why safe to imitate him? Because he was bent on imitating Jesus Christ. Are you? Am I?

In love

Not—definitely not—"charity." You may give without loving, but you can't love without giving. What kind of love ought we Christians to have for one another? The Lord Jesus said, "Love one another. Just as I have loved you, so you must love one another. This is how all men will know that you are my disciples, because you have such love for one another."

Do we love like *that*? John, who recorded it, never forgot that "new command" of Jesus. Many years later he wrote: "Hereby know we love, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." An old tradition tells of aged John in great infirmity having to be carried to the assembly of the saints in Ephesus. Often, it is said, when asked to exhort he said no more than this: "My little children, love one another." When asked why, the story goes—why only that—he replied: "Because that is the most important thing." That is worth thinking about. What a revolution in the church if we all started loving like Jesus.

Are you a model?

Think about the other words Paul uses: "be a model . . . in spirit, in faith, in purity"—then make your own applications. We are far too ready, all of us, to look at other followers of Jesus and "blame it on them." Let's ask ourselves: "If every other member were just like me—what kind of a church would this church be?" Let's take a good look at *ourselves*. Then let's look at Jesus—hard and often—and model our lives on his. God help you—and me—to be model Christians. A.E.W.

PEN PALS

IF any young folk who read the "Standard" want to correspond with young people in other lands I shall be glad to help. Write me: 43a Church Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. A.E.W.

Why I should attend every meeting of the Church

I GO to every service of the church because Jesus is there. "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matt. 18:20). Jesus has never forsaken an assembly, and I want to be there.

I GO to every service of the church because I am made stronger. Power is given in worship to live a nobler life. There one is fortified against falling away. There is the sweetest fellowship on earth. There souls are made fit for heaven. There strength is given to bear the burdens of life. Why should I want to miss any service?

I GO to every service of the church because God wants the church to grow. The church always grows when members put God first. The church means salvation of the lost. Here is a way all can help in the finest work on earth.

I GO to every service of the church to set a good example. Many are looking my way, and following in my steps. Influence is either good or bad—there is no middle ground. Any hour the church meets, my influence is with or against Christ. If I attend it is for the Lord. When I neglect a service my influence is for Satan.

I GO to every service of the church to prove my love and gratitude. So boundless was the love of Jesus for the church, He gave His life for it. If I would be His disciple, I must also prove my love. Since God has given me a multitude of blessings I do not deserve, it is indeed a small sacrifice to return a few hours in public worship. One who truly loves God does not ask if he must attend all services. His love compels him to! If I show love to God by attendance, I show lack of love by absence.

I GO to every service of the church to obey God. The bible says, "Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together as the manner of some is" (Heb. 10:25). The first Christians met weekly and often daily (Acts 20:7; 2:45; 19:9) any service where the bible is taught, prayer is made, and God is worshipped, is good, and to him "that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not to him it is sin" (James 4:17). If it is good to be present for all services, it is bad to be absent from any.

I GO to every service of the church to put first things first. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness" (Matt. 6:33). Jesus said the church must be first to the Christian, even before seeking food, clothing, and drink. Nothing could be so important as being a faithful member of the Lord's church.

I GO to every service of the church because it is safe to do so. All who forsake an assembly wonder if they sin, but I know I am perfectly safe in attending every service. Dangerous risks are taken in forsaking any assembly of the church: Christ may return in that hour, death may come, a life of neglect may begin, and others may be lost by a bad example.

I GO to every service of the church to abound in the Lord's work. A true Christian wants to do all he can and not as little as he can. Even after doing all possible, I am still an unprofitable servant (Luke 17:10). Since assemblies of the church are vital in the Lord's work, I must abound in attendance. "Finally my brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord" (1 Cor. 15:58).

Selected.

'And upon the first day of the week'

Acts 20 : 7

ALL of us are familiar with the events related in Acts 20:7-11. The passage tells about the church at Troas assembling on the first day of the week in order to break bread or partake of "The Lord's Supper," Paul's long sermon during that night service, the falling of Eutychus and the events that followed, and the social activities after the service. What we want to consider in this short article is the phrase "the first day of the week."

Advocates of Sabbath-keeping and opposers of Sunday as the day of worship would tell us that the disciples met on Saturday night, and that the meal they had was a common meal. This involves the question of when a day began and ended. What does the Bible teach?

First of all, only by the context can one determine whether day-time is meant: that is, the twelve hours between six in the morning and six in the evening; or whether a period of twenty-four hours is meant. The former usage is found in Acts 2:15, where we have "the third hour" nine in the morning. The word "day" also is referred to a twenty-four hour period. It began at even or sunset, and ended the following even or sunset (Exodus 12:18; Leviticus 23:32).

Second. In view of these facts, our passage tells about an evening service on the first day of the week. It was the first day of the week to the disciples, not part Saturday and part Sunday. Actually, our present names of the week came into use centuries later, due to changes in calendars, methods of reckoning time, and so on. Our day begins at midnight, not at sunset. Also, we call the first of the week today Sunday, and the first of the week was not called Sunday during Bible days.

Third. It was still the first day of the week when Paul did his travelling, as told in the following verses. It is comparable to people travelling today on Sunday here and there, such as to worship with another congregation as a visitor. It was around three centuries later and during the rule of the Roman Emperor Constantine that the first day of the week was set aside as a day of rest, and as a recognition of the habit of Christians assembling on the first day of the week, as history tells us.

Fourth. Two meals are mentioned. The one in verse seven, of course, was "the Lord's Supper," called among other things, "the breaking of bread" (Acts 2:42; 1 Corinthians 10:16). The one in verse eleven was simply breakfast.

The author hopes and trust that this article has cleared up some questions and helped the reader, as it did for him.

WILBUR HUNT,
Palmetta, Fla., U.S.

NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

Clevelays.—Rejoice with us, brethren, in that Ruth and Paula, the daughters of Bro. and Sis. Leslie Taylor, have acknowledged their need for Jesus to be their Saviour. On Wednesday, February 19th, upon the confession of their faith, they were buried with Him by baptism into death. Having been raised to walk in newness of life, our earnest prayers are that they may now continue to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus, to whom be the praise and the glory.

Wallacestone.—It is with joy we again report two additions to the church at Wallacestone. On Tuesday, February 25th, Mrs. Gillespie, sister of Bro. David Dougall, and Mrs. Marshall expressed their desire to follow their Lord and were immersed by Bro. Dougall into the Body of Christ. We take fresh courage from these decisions and solicit your prayers, brethren, that by our renewed efforts God may be further glorified.

JAMES GRANT.

KEEP on casting the precious seed around you as you journey. If the sowing is constant the harvest is certain. The tide of blessing will roll back in God's own season and the fruits of victory will then be both glorious and abundant.

MY HEART

My heart knew no Master:
 'Twas wayward and bold—
 Living just for its pleasures,
 Without love and cold.

My heart had a yearning
 To be free from sin,
 But had not the knowledge
 Of where to begin.

My heart went a-seeking
 For Truth that makes free.
 But when I grew weary,
 Love came and found me.

My heart found a Master,
 So kind yet so strong:
 I fell down at His feet
 And confessed my wrong.

My heart had great sorrow,
 And shed bitter tears
 To think of its actions
 Through long wasted years.

My heart had a cleansing,
 No sin could delay
 In the place where Jesus
 Had chosen to stay.

My heart had a purpose.
 'Tis a great joy to me
 To tell out the Message
 That makes others free.

J.J.S.

OBITUARY

From the Local Press

TEACHER'S DEATH.—It was with much regret that the community learned of the sudden death of Mr. John B. Steele, M.A., at his home, 8 Viewfield Street, Harthill, early on Sunday morning. Born in the village, he was in his 46th year, and leaves his wife and one son to mourn their loss.

A graduate of Glasgow School of Art, he joined the R.A.S.C. early in the last war and served as a sergeant in North Africa, France and Germany. On being demobbed he commenced his teaching career at New Stevenston, but after a short time moved to Harthill J.S. School, from where he was transferred to Airdrie Academy in March, 1950. For a number of years he was in charge of Harthill Further Education Centre—a post he gave up three years ago for health reasons.

As secretary of the local Horticultural Association he did a good job of work. He was a qualified chiropodist and as such his services, free of charge were

always available to the old folk. By his passing the village is much the poorer and he will be greatly missed.

Blackridge.—It was with deep sorrow that the church at Motherwell learned of the sudden passing of Bro. John Steele, of the church at Blackridge, and on their behalf we pay this tribute to him.

Bro. John was a faithful, willing servant of God, much loved by all at Motherwell, and one who never spared himself if called upon to help his brethren. The church at Motherwell owed him much for the assistance he gave in preaching the gospel and teaching the young.

His advice and experience were always given when sought, and he upheld fervently the ideals of the church. He will be sadly missed by us all, but we pray that the example of faith he has left for us to remember will help us to keep faithful to the cause of our Master, which Bro. John loved and for which he laboured.

We will remember him and commend his widow, our Sister Chris Steele, their young son Robin, and all who sorrow at this sad event, to our Heavenly Father, the sustainer and giver of all true comfort and consolation.

When torn the ties that bind us
 To earthly friends so dear,
 And lonely thoughts still find us
 A prey to doubt and fear,
 O let us seek communion,
 With Christ, whose life was given
 To win us blest reunion—
 The fellowship of heaven.

HUGH DAVIDSON.

We have received letters from brethren testifying to the faithful service to God of our Brother Steele.

As we knew Brother Steele intimately we would like also to pay tribute to him. Both in his home in Harthill, Lanarkshire, and in the homes of several brethren at Scholes, Wigan, we had close fellowship with him. He was held in deep affection by us all, and, we know in many other assemblies and homes in England and Scotland.

He was a brother whose love, kindness and generosity lay deep. In many unremembered, and indeed unknown acts of kindness and help he showed himself a true disciple of Him who "went about doing good."

He was deeply attached to his mother, laid to rest five years ago, and to his brother Will and sister Agnes. At the age of 18, John was baptised by Will, and since then has been utterly devoted to the cause of Christ at Blackridge. Pray for the few faithful souls there, brethren, who have lost so consecrated a worker.

EDITOR.

COMING EVENTS

Newtongrange intend, D.V., holding a special mission during the months of April, May and June.

Speaker to be Bro. C. A. Norred, Birmingham, Alabama, U.S.A.

Gospel meetings will be held on Sundays at 6 p.m., Thursdays at 7.30 p.m. and Saturdays at 7 p.m. Tuesdays at 7.30 p.m. will be occupied with training young men for the work of the Lord.

We invite all brethren who may be in the district to be with us during this period, but we earnestly desire the prayers of all our brethren everywhere for the success of this mission.

W. M. Allan.

Tunbridge Wells (Kent).—We hope to be able to have the official opening of our new meetinghouse on Saturday, May 16th, 1964, D.V. Afternoon meeting at 3 p.m. Tea: 4.30 p.m. Evening meeting: 6 p.m. Frank Worgan (Ince) will on that day commence a two weeks' mission here. We ask for the prayers of all brethren. Full details will shortly be sent to all churches. We recognise that many who have followed our efforts with prayerful interest will be unable to be with us owing to distance and special efforts elsewhere. But we urge all who can to come and rejoice with us. Pray for the gospel here. A. E. Winstanley.

HINDLEY BIBLE SCHOOL

Saturday, May 16th to Monday, May 18th inclusive. Prayer meetings. Forums. Questions answered. Gospel messages. Book the dates. Write for hospitality to: J. Kemp, 52 Argyle Street, Hindley.

Wigan (Albert Street).—Saturday, May 2nd, 3.30 p.m. (chairman A. E. Winstanley), 15 minutes talk on Does Prayer Change Things? followed by 15 minutes discussion; 4 p.m., 15 minutes talk on Will Planned Giving Help Us? followed by 15 minutes discussion; 4.30 p.m., Forum: subject: Evangelisation; 30 minutes questions by Bro. A. E. Winstanley; 30 minutes questions by the congregation; 5.30, tea. All members and friends invited.

CONFERENCE STUDY

Weekend April 17th-19th, 1965.

In order to increase the effectiveness of these occasions it is considered advisable to do some forward planning. Would any group or individual brother interested in providing facilities for these meetings and/or in the topic which would make a suitable follow-up to the studies based on John 17 (Eastwood, March 28th-30th, 1964), please write A. Hood, 45 Park Road, Hindley, Wigan, Lancs.

AUTUMN RALLY

Saturday, September 12th, 1964.

"PRAYER IS POWER!"

The place of prayer is anywhere—
Beside a bed, or bench or chair;
Or in the city streets at morn;
Washing dishes, or hauling hay,
God will listen, if you pray.

The power of prayer is greater than
The understanding of a man.
It heals and blesses anyone
Who obeys God's only Son;

For prayer will really help you win
All fights with Satan, self, and sin.
The peace of prayer is so complete,
It brings in joy, and routs defeat;
It strengthens patience and renews
That spirit we must never lose.

THE SCRIPTURE STANDARD is published monthly. Prices: Home, one copy for one year, 12/-; two copies 20/6; three copies 28/6 post free. Canada and U.S.A.: one copy, one dollar 80 cents. All orders and payments to the 'S.S.' Agent and Treasurer: **PAUL JONES**, 41 Pendragon Road, Birmingham 22B. Tel. Birchfield 5559.

All correspondence, including articles, news items, coming events, etc., to be sent, before the 10th of the month to the Editor, **C. MELLING**, 133 Long Lane, Hindley, Lancs. Payments to **PAUL JONES**, address as above.

NOTICES. Scale of charges: 3/- for first 3 lines or less; 8d. each subsequent line. Repeats (if notified when sending copy) half original charge. Payments to **PAUL JONES**, address as above.

EVANGELIST FUND: Contributions to **R. McDONALD**, who is also Secretary of Conference Committee, "Aldersyde," 10 Mardale Road, Bennett Lane, Dewsbury, York.

NYASALAND Mission: Contributions to **W. STEELE**, 31 Niddrie Road, Portobello, Edinburgh, Mid Lothian.

Hymn Book Agent and Treasurer: **FRED HARDY**, 73a Bridge Street, Morley, Leeds, Yorkshire. Tel. Morley 255.