

# The SCRIPTURE STANDARD

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

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## Hindley Bible School Lectures, 1956.

### II—The Holy Spirit and Inspiration

OUR purpose in considering this subject is not to investigate or defend the opinions of any man, be he infidel, modernist, or true saint; it is to learn something of the activity of the Holy Spirit in that sphere of his labours called 'inspiration.'

First let us define our terms. The Holy Spirit is that divine person described in Bro. Crosthwaite's lecture.\* Inspiration means simply in-breathing. The word has a secular use in literature and the arts generally, but here it means no more than possessing a flair or gift for some art or craft and is still earthy in its finest application. The nations around Israel, moved by such earthy inspiration, had acquired religions very similar to that of the Jews, yet none of them came near to the plane on which the monotheistic Jewish religion stood. Here we see something of what we shall be meaning here by 'inspiration.'

What sources of information are available to us in this enquiry? Assuredly none but the Bible, for we do not have personal experience of inspiration by the Holy Spirit to-day. We may not find all our questions answered in the Bible, but, if not, it means we are asking some misguided questions.

Since the Jews appear to have been largely unaware of the Holy Spirit, the Old Testament makes no mention of inspiration or its mode of operation in direct terms. We shall therefore look first to the New Testament.

Heb. 1:1 tells us that the Holy Spirit (God) spoke to the fathers 'many times' and 'in many ways'; as we would expect of a *person*—no mechanical uniformity.

2 Tim. 3:16. Let us not *force* this verse. It refers in the first instance to what we call the Old Testament Scriptures (cf. vs. 14-15) as no other sacred writings were then known to Jews or Christians. This verse is telling us not that every scripture (writing) is inspired, but that every scripture which is inspired of God is profitable . . . This does extend to the New Testament (see 2 Pet. 3:16) where Peter describes the 'other scriptures'—the Old Testament—as being in the same category as Paul's letters.

2 Pet. 1:19-21. Here we are told that prophecies have come to us not by man's will, but men spoke *from God* as *moved* by the Holy Spirit.

\* See S.S. July, 1956.

The Old Testament worthies seem to have taken all this, and every special manifestation of God among them, in their stride. They just stated and accepted the bald facts without doing any theorising on them.

### Points from the Prophets

(1) *Prefaces* are often used, such as: 'The Lord spake,' 'I saw,' 'The word came,' 'The hand of the Lord came upon me,' etc. Perhaps these are meant to be taken literally ('many ways' Heb. 1:1), or they may be different literary devices for stating the same thing. Certain it is that they imply a sure knowledge of their being used of God.

(2) *Times* of God's visitation are often precisely stated, showing that the prophecies were not the result of cogitation over a period—*i.e.* not by the will of man (2 Pet. 1:21).

(3) *The Mission* of the prophet was accepted as being from God and therefore not to be questioned or gainsaid, even when unwelcome (cf. Amos. 7:10-13).

(4) *Prophets were called* to their 'profession'—they were not volunteers at all (Amos 7:14 and 15). A very different idea this from the modern sectarian use of this term, as indicated by a person who had a 'call' to go to Scarborough to minister instead of to Dewsbury. (See also Jer. 1:6-8).

(5) *Their consistency* is perhaps the most remarkable facet of the prophets' writings, and certainly a sure indication of their real source—from God who 'is not the author of confusion.' The prophecies concerning Christ are a wonderful example of this. The Jewish expositors had great heart-searchings in trying to understand the promises of a coming King and also a suffering servant and never dreamed, it seems, of the two being one—the Christ. Prophecies must often have been given by men who did not fully grasp their import.

To sum up then the Old Testament prophets were fully aware of being used of God *when prophesying*. This sort of claim is not made by the writers of history in the Old Testament and yet we find their work wonderfully accurate.

### What of New Testament Inspiration?

Apart from the book of Revelation, there is not the same *direct* claim to divine guidance, but it is often tacitly understood, as can be seen in 1 Cor. 7:6 and 10. Some of Paul's instructions here seem to be his own opinions which he delivers by permission †. The change over from delivering his own spiritual thought to delivering revealed instruction is easy and natural; there is no spiritual strait-jacket comparable with the effects of demon possession, yet the boundary between the two sources is quite clear and precise to Paul. This easy, natural, even comfortable, use of men seems to be quite typical of the Spirit's working.

An example of the Holy Spirit's working is to be seen in Acts 10. We need to remember the background against which Peter was reared to see the beauty of the Spirit's handiwork here. Peter was steeped in Judaism, fully conscious that he was of God's special people and feeling no reason to be ashamed of speaking of 'Gentile dogs.' Such a man was to be taught, and was in turn to teach, that in God's eyes all men are of equal spiritual value and all within reach of the saving and cleansing power of the gospel; an impossible task we would say, short of deranging Peter's mind. Let us see

† Objection was taken to this by a number of brethren present who made contrary views known in the Questions Answered period later in the day. It was felt by these brethren that as it was the Holy Spirit's permission by which Paul passed on these teachings, by that token they were inspired and not Paul's opinions,

how the Spirit tackled this truly superhuman task. First Cornelius sees a vision and hears instructions to send for Peter. Then the real task starts with Peter's trance. We shall observe here many of the points noticed earlier. The *time* of the trance is precisely given (v. 9). Both *seeing* and *hearing* were involved (v. 11); Peter *remained his true self*—'Not so, Lord . . . ' (v. 14); his self-will was not destroyed or diminished. The whole experience left him '*much perplexed.*' There was no steam-roller action, his mind was not deranged (v. 17). The Spirit then gave him reassurance to help him to make the first real break from his background—to go with these Gentiles (v. 20). Real understanding only *begins to dawn* as he opens his mouth to speak to Cornelius (v. 28), though verse 29 shows that the full implication of what he had just said had not yet sunk into his mind.

After hearing what Cornelius has to tell of God's working with him (a Gentile), Peter learns very quickly and fully, so that of his own free will he begins to *teach* what seemed impossible to be learned by him—'*I perceive* that God is no respecter of persons . . . ' (vv. 34 and 35). Thus a truth has come amongst us by *revelation*. The baptism in the Spirit given to Cornelius and his believing household is further reassurance to Peter and his friends that they had acted aright in God's sight.

We see how careful the Holy Spirit is of man's freewill, not because he is obliged to be, as human teachers often are. Balaam's curse (Num. 22 : 1 to 24 : 13), which was turned to a blessing, shows what the Spirit can do if He chooses, but this was done with a man who was prepared to rebel against God. Caiaphas's prophecy was an example of the Holy Spirit's using the will-power of an ill-disposed man to utter truth despite himself. (John 11 : 50 and 51).

When we consider these various indications as to *how* the Spirit does his work with men we can have no difficulty in accepting both the divine and human stamp to be seen impressed on any one book of the Bible. Such a statement as Luke 1 : 1-4, does not invalidate the inspiration of the book, but knowing the Spirit's ways, we would rather say that Luke is just the kind of man we would expect to be used by Him.

### Summing Up

- (1) 'How gentle are God's commands'!
- (2) He can impose, but does so only when suitable and necessary to His purpose (*e.g.* the Macedonian call).
- (3) In the inspiration of the Bible, the writers are not merely God's typewriters tapped by the Holy Spirit; inspiration does not appear to be mechanically verbal. Yet on the other hand Paul was prepared to argue on the plural form of a word (seed or seeds—Gal. 3 : 16), and Jesus remarks about the value of a mere jot or tittle (Matt. 5 : 8). However we may *presume* that the Holy Spirit has worked, we come back to this fact that He has vouchsafed to us *words* which are reliable. Let us be content with this and not seek to dissect form and substance. (Heb. 1 : 1). G. LODGE.

## Hindley Bible School, 1956. Gospel Meetings

The evening Gospel meetings were the culmination of much effort in the previous weeks by the Hindley congregation to bring in hearers; but, more than all, the climax of much work and preparation by Brother David Dougall, compacted into those few hours of preaching. We pray that the work so faithfully executed will be blessed by God in the purpose for which it was sent.

Some idea of the attendance can be derived from the following numbers. Those present on the successive nights numbered 150, 200, 176, 194,

176. On one evening, at least 26 non-members were present, a similar percentage being at the other meetings.

Bro. David Dougall on Sunday evening guided his hearers in a survey of the cross, and from a sensitive word picture our imagination recaptured the atmosphere of those last epic moments leading to Calvary and the Lord's murder. Much as the scene depicted aroused our sympathy and pity, it was the re-enacting of a victory, not for God, nor for his Son, but for men. The cross was to hold for us wider and deeper significance :

As a pointer to the past, it was a fulfilling of prophecy, the last of several preceding types ; to the present, the cross was a symbol of reunion, overcoming barriers, bringing together all men and all nations ; as a means to life, reunion with God, enabling man to receive again the life which he had forfeited by sin.

The cross as a pointer to the future : revealing to us God, loving, but just ; a God of wrath, who administered to His own Son the penalty for sin, while He stood as our sin bearer.

The cross meant pain and separation for the Lord, and for us warns of similar consequences when we stand before God as our own 'sin bearers,' if we refuse the life obtained by way of the cross.

An informative message was given by Bro. Dougall on Monday evening on 'Finding the way home,' introduced by an illustration of a little girl, lost in the maze of a town, telling her finders, 'If I can find the Church I can find the way home'; the position of countless millions in the world to-day.

Bible facts were given as directions to that one Church in which through the blood of the Lord Jesus, the way home is found. There is One Church—the Lord's Body (Ephesians 4 : 4) in contrast to many in the world.

One reconciliation : Only in that one body, therefore no salvation outside that body. The Church incidentally, not a building made by men. (Matt. 18 : 17). Church—capable of hearing, 'tell it to the church' (Acts 5 : 11) ; able to fear, 'Great fear came upon all the church'; composed of people (Acts 8 : 3), 'Saul made havoc of the church . . . haling men and women—committed them to prison.'

The Church : a people called out. The scriptural name. (Acts 20 : 28). 'The church of the Lord [God]' (Romans 16 : 16), 'The churches of Christ.' The Lord Jesus Christ called it 'My church.' (Matt. 16 : 17).

The origin : not before Christ—but He is the only foundation (Acts 4 : 11 and 12 ; 1 Cor. 3 : 11). The Lord added to His Church.

The worship of the true church is evident even to-day amongst 'Christians' (Acts 2 : 42).

On Tuesday evening a message of contemporary interest was given : 'No room.'

To-day, we have many without houses, much overcrowding, many seeking after homes, some to be trusted, others not. One is seeking rooms to-night—the Lord Jesus Christ.

Having introduced his theme, the speaker pointed out that there had been no room for the Lord in the Roman Empire—the action against young children—no room amongst his kinsfolk ; no room for creature nor Creator—the Jews rejected Him. His close follower, Judas, had no room for Him ; no room in hearts of men and women of His day.

Still to-day, 'No room,' because no room for the knowledge of His word ; His word rejected ; no room in the business world ; no room in the seats of learning—outright denial ; no room in the home ; the Bible seldom read ;

family worship almost extinct ; no room in the religious world, outside their places and their hearts ; as the Laodicean Church, they have everything except Christ. Finally, the challenge : ' No room in the hearts of many present.' ' Behold, I stand at the door and knock.'

Our attention was drawn on Wednesday evening to the Love of God. For such a theme, John 3 : 15-16 was indispensable, giving the whole Bible theme, or the gospel, in miniature. ' God is a Spirit,' ' God is light,' and, too, ' God is love,' such statements reach beyond the limits of our imagination.

' God is love'—the fountain of all love, and from such a source only could come the plan of mercy, the plan to save man whom God knew from the first would fall. Such love : is it fondness ? Affection for that which we like ?—natural love ? patriotic love ? Such are the various forms of love. God's love is unconfined, absolute. God loved and, the test of all love, God gave ; gave Himself in His Son.

Knowing from the beginning the sufferings which Christ would endure, God could enter into the feelings of Abraham when he prepared to offer his son in the light of Christ's sacrifice on Calvary.

In spite of this prospect, he remained steadfast in His love *for* us, but not for everything *about* us. Sin is displeasing in any one, and was punished and ever will be by God. But God is ever willing to receive a returning prodigal who, believing, will turn to Him and change his life in gratitude for that great divine Love.

In his final message our brother abiy utilised the Amos 4 : 12 : ' Prepare to meet thy God O Israel,' a timely warning to-day to prepare to meet that same unchanging God.

That meeting is inevitable, there are constant reminders around us. And that meeting is with God, ' to whom all things are naked,' with God who loves and hates. Reference was made to those who have seen Him : Saul of Tarsus, the apostle John on Patmos.

The preparation itself can follow one of two courses—governed by destination—Heaven or Hell. In Christ : no condemnation to these ; In sin : their destiny the lake of fire.

To prepare, come to the Saviour ; believe ; repent ; confess ; be immersed (into relationship with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit), and endure to the end (develop character).

The time to prepare : ' To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your heart.' Uncertainty of the time of meeting God ; so therefore be ready at all times. Results of our meeting God : Either rejoicing, or wailing and gnashing of teeth.

JOHN PARTINGTON.

## The Churches in America

(Substance of address given on opening day of  
Hindley Bible School, 1956.

BY ' churches in America ' I mean those of Mexico, Canada and the United States, working together and across one another's borders as if there were no national frontiers. Let us discard the denominational terms of ' British churches ' and ' American churches.' We truly are one world. (Mt. 16 : 18, Rom. 16 : 16, Isa. 2 : 2-5, Mt. 18 : 20, Mt. 25 : 32, Mk. 11 : 17, Acts 10 : 34-5, Acts 17 : 26, Rom. 1 : 5, Rom. 16 : 26, Rev. 5 : 9, Rev. 15 : 4, Rev. 22 : 2). Let us avoid nationalism among churches of Christ.

### I—Attitude towards Denominationalism (1 Pet. 2:7)

(1) One element of strength over there is absolute separation and aloofness from denominationalism (Eph. 5:11). We have no fellowship with Billy Graham or the Disciples of Christ and their inter-denominational fraternisation. But we must guard against unfriendliness and unfairness. We must regard denominationalists as sincere and as intelligent as we hope we are.

#### (2) Word Study :

(a) Friendship with whom? Jesus was accused of misplaced friendship (Mt. 11:19), and He even referred to His betrayer as 'friend' (Mt. 26:50). He was not a friend of worldliness (Jas. 4:4) yet, like He was, we are to be friends of mankind, honouring all men. (1 Pet. 2:7).

(b) Fellowship with whom? Not with darkness. (Eph. 5:11; 2 Cor. 8:14; 1 Jn. 1:7; 1 Cor. 5:13). But with those who have been delivered out of darkness (Col. 1:13).

(c) Fraternisation with whom? We are to withdraw from the brother walking disorderly (2 Thes. 3:8), nevertheless remembering that he is a brother (2 Thes. 3:15). Fraternisation but not fellowship with an erring brother. Fraternisation means brotherly concern, not approval of the disorderly brother.

### II—Attitude toward progress (Jer. 6:16).

(1) Jeremiah does not direct us to 'stand in the old paths' but to *walk* therein. Another element of strength over there is the desire to carry the gospel into all the world. We should realise that we are centuries behind with carrying out our Lord's Great Commission. From the birth of Christ in 1,600 years the population of the world doubled. It has doubled again during the last century. We must guard against trying to Americanise or Anglicise the world for Christ. Our faith had its original setting, not in the Western World but in the Orient. Jesus is the Light of the World, the whole world, not national or racial but international.

#### (2) Word study :

(a) Union is not enough. Union may be in prayer (Acts 4:24), or it may be in evasion (Lk. 14:18), or in murder (Acts 7:27).

(b) Unity is the need of the religious world. (Ps. 133:1; Jn. 17:20-21; Eph. 4:4-6). Many years ago I heard 'the world's foremost Protestant,' Adolph Keller, tell how his message: 'The nearer we get together, the nearer we get to Christ' had been corrected by his editor to read, 'The nearer we get to Christ, the nearer we get together.' Unity is to be found only in Christ.

(c) Uniformity, is not another name for unity. Roman Catholicism and the state churches have uniformity in externals such as ceremonies, rituals, organisation, etc. But although among the people of God in various countries you will find diversity, nevertheless there is unity that comes from the Bible. (Rom. 10:17).

### III—Attitude towards digression (2 Jn. 2)

(1) A third element of strength over there is a complete rejection of instrumental music and missionary societies. The line is sharply drawn. This makes for strength. We must, however, guard against making laws where God has not made them. We must not make a law out of our

particular preferences, in matters where God has not spoken. We must not set at naught those who do not walk according to the traditions handed down *only by our fathers*. Too many times matters of preference or human traditions have divided congregations, setting up splinter groups which have made our plea, in some communities, the laughing stock of the sectarian world.

(2) Word study :

(a) Acts to be observed are those commanded by the New Testament.

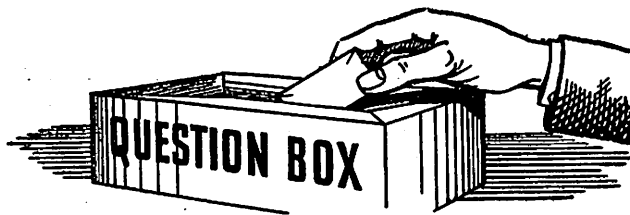
(b) Aids may be used in carrying out those acts.

(c) Alterations of the divine pattern are forbidden. For instance, presuming to use instrumental accompaniment with sacred songs where the apostles gave no such commandment. (Acts 15 : 24).

### Conclusion

'East is East and West is West, and never the twain shall meet,' said Kipling. But in Christ there is no East, no West ; and best of all, 'As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.' (Ps. 103 : 12).

C. P. FINDLAY.



CONDUCTED BY  
L. CHANNING

Send your questions  
direct to L. Channing,  
9 Ripon Street,  
Aylesbury, Bucks.

THE first three questions dealt with this month have been submitted by correspondents as supplementary questions to answers given in previous issues. We are happy to receive such questions, not only because it indicates the interest aroused, but also because, this column not being infallible, mutual discussion of spiritual things in the spirit of goodwill is beneficial to us all. Correspondents are always at liberty to send in such questions, providing they are concise, and are questions, not mere statements.

The first two questions being concerned with the same subject, are grouped together. They relate to the answer given in the May issue, concerning the use of the phrase, 'The Second Coming.'

**Q. 1:** Can we not use the term 'the second coming,' in view of the fact that Heb. 9:28 refers to the Lord's final coming as His 'second' coming (appearance) ?

**Q. 2:** The scriptures speak of Christ having come 'once' (1 Pet. 3:18; Heb. 10:10), referring to His first coming. After He ascended His disciples were told, 'This same Jesus . . . shall so come in like manner.' This FINAL coming is referred to as the 'second' in Heb. 9:28. Could there be any 'coming' between these two? Cannot we therefore use the term 'second coming' of the Lord's final coming?

A. It should be noted that the Scripture passages given by the two correspondents in support of the use of the phrase 'the second coming' do not use this term at all. Heb. 9 : 28 speaks of the Lord's second *appearance* ' . . . and unto them that look for him shall he appear a second time without sin unto salvation.' Couple this verse with verse 26, ' . . . but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself,' and we have the truth, that as the Lord's first coming was a personal visible appearance, so shall His final coming be a second *appearance* (not a 'second coming.'). Again, Acts 1 : 11 must not be quoted as though there were a punctuation mark after the words ' . . . shall so come in like manner,' but the whole phrase should be taken : ' . . . this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.' That is, that the Lord's final return will be personal and visible, as distinct from any other 'coming' mentioned in the New Testament.

Again, both correspondents admit in their letters (unfortunately too long to quote), that the phrase 'the second coming' does not appear in the Scriptures. This is the point, for whilst it is not necessarily wrong to use terms that are not found in the Bible, it must always be done with great care. Far better, where possible, to call 'Bible things by Bible names,' for often unscriptural and anti-scriptural ideas are bound up in non-scriptural phrases. Such is the case with the term 'the second coming,' for it implies that the Lord's final return is His second coming; that is, that there has been no 'coming' between His first and final coming. This is the view of the second questioner. But as has already been shown in the previous answer (see May issue) this is false, for the New Testament clearly speaks of several 'comings' of the Lord. Hence, this writer claims that the term is wrong, and should not be used.

The third question has reference to answers given concerning the 'one cup' at the Lord's Supper (see March issue).

**Q. I am sure that at the passover supper each man had his own cup, but Jesus took a cup and blessed it, and gave it to them and said, Take this and divide it among yourselves. How did they divide it? Did they hold out their own cups for a portion of the blessed cup? They all drank from the one cup. That is how they divided it.**

A. This correspondent makes an admission which, though evidently not realised, destroys the whole case for insistence on the one container at the Lord's Supper. Note that the Lord said, 'take this and divide it among yourselves.' Divide what? According to the questioner's own words, 'the blessed cup,' not the container obviously, but the contents. Again, 'that is how they divided it' admits the same thing. Thus the questioner admits that the 'cup' is not the container, but the contents. But this same truth is made quite clear by the Lord Himself. He said *not one word about the container*, but did show that when He used the word 'cup' He referred to the contents. 'Take this, and divide it among yourselves: For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come' (Luke 22 : 17-18. See also answer concerning this question in March issue).

Again, the questioner's view that the disciples obeyed the request of the Lord to 'divide' the cup (the fruit of the vine) among themselves, by all drinking from the one container, is an assumption. The Scriptures do not say so. The questioner admits the possibility of each one present having his own cup. On this question, this writer has consulted a number of authori-



the fact that the drinking of wine was not part of the original Passover feast, but was a later addition. Modern Jewish practice is for each person present to have his own glass or cup. We quote from 'Service for the First Two Nights of Passover, as used in all Jewish Families,' a book of instructions concerning the Passover, written in Hebrew and English, and published by Ann Abrahams and Son, London, 1885: 'The table thus being formed, every one has a glass or cup of wine placed before him; for on these nights, every person is obliged to drink four glasses, or cups of wine, called *The four cups*.' This is not put forward as an assertion that this was necessarily the practice at the time of Christ, for many Jewish customs have changed. But since uncertainty exists, the possibility must be admitted that the 'dividing' of the fruit of the vine meant for each disciple present with the Lord, simply filling the container beside him for the fifth time (it having been already filled four times in the Passover celebration), from that which the Lord now offered him, in instituting the Lord's Supper.

We are not advocating the use of individual containers, nor of one container, at the Lord's Table. However, in view of the foregoing, plus the fact that as was demonstrated in the answer to the question in the March issue, from which this one arose, that the container is not part of the ordinance itself, but simply an expedient to the carrying out of the ordinance, we *are* pleading for liberty as to how many containers are used at the Lord's Supper. We must not, and we dare not, in relation to this or any other matter, bind on our fellow Christians laws and imperatives that the Word of God has not given.

**Q. What authority have we for accepting first and second Esdras, and yet rejecting the rest of the Apocrypha?**

A. The questioner seems under a mistaken impression, for the books of Esdras are rejected as uninspired, along with the rest of the Apocrypha. Perhaps he is confusing them with the first and second books of Esdras of the Roman Catholic Douay Bible, which are not the Apocryphal books, but our Ezra and Nehemiah. Esdras is the Greek form of the Hebrew Ezra. Not even the Roman Catholics accept the Apocryphal books of Esdras. The Council of Trent, meeting in 1546, consisting of men who did not understand Hebrew, few who understood Greek, and some who hardly understood even Latin, accepted most of the Apocrypha as inspired, pronouncing an anathema on those who did not accept their ruling. Surprisingly, however, they left out the books of Esdras.

The internal evidence clearly shows that neither book is inspired. 1 Esdras, is a compilation of the last two chapters of 1 Chronicles, Ezra, a small part of Nehemiah, and legendary history of Zerubbabel. 2 Esdras appears to have had at least two authors, one a Jew, and the other a Christian Jew, both living in the Christian era.

### Please Note

Lest there be confusion at any time, please note that the views expressed through Question Box in answering any question at any time, are the writer's alone. They do not represent the official policy of this magazine, nor is the editor necessarily in agreement with all that is said. They are merely an honest endeavour to deal with questions as they are sent in, leaving the correspondents the choice of accepting or rejecting the answers. If Question Box merely succeeds in provoking further study and meditation upon God's Word it has achieved its aim.—L.C.

## CORRESPONDENCE

### CONFERENCES AND COMMITTEES.

Dear Brother Editor,—I was pleased to see Bro. S. Wilson's letter in July S.S. Will those brethren who contend that evangelistic work must be done through a local assembly, and that conferences and committees are wrong, please answer the following queries?

- (1) Where in the New Testament can this phrase 'local assembly' be found?
- (2) Who is to decide which local assembly shall direct labours of evangelists?
- (3) Would such a local assembly represent the Churches?
- (4) To whom would it be responsible?
- (5) Which local assembly is supporting and directing labours of some evangelists now working in Britain?
- (6) Where does the New Testament say how evangelistic work is to be done?
- (7) Where in the New Testament can we read of building meeting houses, having Sunday schools, Bible schools and publishing hymn-books, magazines, etc.?

Well did Solomon say, 'Be not righteous over much; neither make thyself over wise; why shouldst thou destroy thyself?' (Eccles. 7:16).

WALTER CROTHWAITE.

Dear Editor,

In his defence of the conference and committee in July issue, Bro. S. Wilson writes, 'Bren. Winstanley and Channing assert that it is unscriptural. Granted! Does that make it unlawful or *anti*-scriptural?'

It should be noted that our brother admits that the Old Paths Committee is unscriptural—i.e. that no such organisation can be found in the New Testament scriptures. Anyone familiar with the history of the so-called 'restoration movement' knows that the first such committee came into being in 1834 at Wellsburgh, Virginia, U.S.A. It was similar to the Old Paths Committee now in existence. In 1842 churches in Britain followed suit, calling their first 'Annual Meeting' and creating a committee similar to the American body. Without doubt then, the committee system among churches of Christ is eighteen centuries too late to be scriptural.

Two factors emerge from this. The first concerns the unity of the saints—dear to all disciples of good and honest heart. It is this: those who defend the committee admit that it is *unscriptural*. How then can they with justice demand that others accept it is a permanent body? If this body, admitted to be unknown to the Word, is a threat to the unity of the

saints, ought not those who defend it to give it up? On their own admission they are seeking to perpetuate that which is unscriptural. Should brethren continue to insist on an admitted non-essential rather than abandon it when it violates the principles of other believers? If disciples are asked to give up principles, or Scriptural institutions, they do well to refuse. But what argument can justify the maintaining of a body admitted to be unknown to the Word, when its very existence is a cause of division?

Again, it is clear that the present Committee is, in principle, the same as that organised in 1842, which started the 'Co-operation of Churches.' Will Bro. Wilson tell us if this body (apart from its modernistic teaching and worldly practices) is right? Would it be right to organise committees for evangelism, and more for women's work, temperance, overseas work, etc? If one committee is permissible for one aspect of the work of the Lord, why not others for other aspects?

Bro. Wilson pleads for the committee on the basis of expediency. He says, 'The churches practice many things that are unscriptural; they are not anti-scriptural, but lawful expedients for extending the Master's Kingdom.'

Thus—he suggests—the unscriptural organisation is right because it is 'a lawful expedient.' But is it? A lawful expedient is that which is necessary to the carrying out of the will of the Lord. Is the committee a *necessity* to evangelisation? To ask the question is to answer it. With one exception, all the full-time workers in Britain are serving without recourse to such a body. Further, the Old Paths Committee is not employing a single evangelist. That being the case, how can it be said that the committee is a necessity to the Lord's work?

No one questions the statement that 'any organisation, human or divine, is liable to open the flood gates of error,' and that individuals and churches have done so. But our brother here overlooks vital differences. The church is a *divine institution*, governed by divine laws laid down by its divine head. Clear instructions are given in the Word on how to regulate its life and work—and what action to take in case of digression. The committee is a human institution, completely unprovided for by God. Where does our brother find guidance on providing officers for such, and on action to take when such goes astray? The plain fact is that the Lord has not provided for any organisation other than that of the local congregation, and the divine organisation needs no human 'props' to make it work.

It is begging the question to claim that 'the Committee represents the Conference and the Conference represents the Churches . . .' etc. How can seventy or a hundred disciples, from churches

both inside and outside 'the Co-operation' represent about fifty churches? Even if each person who attended was a representative, appointed say as a 'delegate' of a church, would that make it the more scriptural? Where do we have any New Testament guidance for an indeterminate number of Christians meeting to pass resolutions affecting the Body of Christ?—and that by a majority vote?

It seems evident to the writer that what we need is a realisation of the fact that we are under solemn obligation to restore the ancient order of things; to see the danger of perpetuating another 'little Co-operation' before it is too late; to forget 'Old Paths Movements,' 'our churches' and the like, and to reproduce the faith, pattern, practice and zeal of the first century church.

A. E. WINSTANLEY.

Dear Bro. Editor,—Since I was one of those mentioned by name in Bro. Slater Wilson's recent letter regarding committees, may I submit a reply? In doing so may I make it clear that what I have to say is in no way meant as a reflection upon the individual members of the 'Old Paths Committee.' I love and respect every one of them, and admire the good work they have accomplished. I am dealing with principles, not personalities.

Bro. Wilson rightly says that I assert that the 'Old Paths Committee' is unscriptural. But I notice that in so doing he admits the same thing himself. I am happy to see such an admission, although he ought to realise that he is in advance of some of his brethren, who are still trying to defend the Committee's existence from scripture—an impossible task.

Undoubtedly the 'Old Paths Committee' is unscriptural. In spite of much ingenuity and irrelevance on the part of its advocates, all attempts to prove the existence in New Testament times of a permanent body larger than the local assembly, yet less than the whole body of Christ, has proved futile. It cannot be otherwise.

But I go further and assert that such a committee is not only unscriptural, it is anti-scriptural. One of the clearest principles taught in the New Testament in regard to the Church is that the local congregation is completely autonomous. Any central body, therefore, arising from among the Churches, that usurps or even tends to weaken that autonomy, by direct legal action, indirect moral power, or by the taking to itself of responsibilities which should be the local congregation's alone, violates that principle, and is therefore anti-scriptural.

History shows the result of this principle being set aside. Catholicism came into being as a direct result of Church government being centralised. The 'Co-operation,' with its many committees,

Central Council and membership of an interdenominational body, as a denomination among denominations, is a direct result of the work of evangelism being centralised. The United Christian Missionary Society among the Disciples in the United States, with its district secretaries virtually having the power of metropolitan bishops, is a product of a similar error.

Bro. Wilson's observation that 'any organisation, human or divine, is liable to open the flood gates to error' only serves to strengthen the case against committeeism. The Lord also knows of man's proneness to go astray, and has therefore placed certain safeguards in the Church to minimise the effects of this tendency. One safeguard is this principle of congregational autonomy. If a congregation goes astray, the effect can be localised, but if a central controlling body becomes corrupt, it is in danger of corrupting everything it controls. If such is the folly of man, that even in spite of these safeguards part of the Divine institution itself sometimes goes astray, how much more danger is there with such organisations as a central committee, a body of purely human expediency, and therefore without the protection of such Divine safeguards.

Brethren, I earnestly plead that we might heed the principles of scripture, and the warnings of history, in this matter.

L. CHANNING.

Dear Brethren in Christ,

During the last few weeks a number of churches have been approached with the view to advertising the booklet 'The Churches of Christ Salute You' in local newspapers.

The church at Hindley took the responsibility and oversight of this work. They desired that I send the booklets out for them. I would like to give you the results of this plan.

I received 26 letters from England. Of these, three wrote again asking for the Bible correspondence course, 'Truth in Love' and more information concerning the Church. One other person asked for the last two mentioned. A request came from one asking for the nearest Church. I estimate that eleven congregations in England took part.

In Scotland eight congregations put the advertisement in the papers. I received 37 letters.

I believe that the results are very good, considering the number of churches taking part. At least 63 people know about the Churches of Christ who otherwise might not have done.

May I on behalf of the elders at Hindley and myself thank all who have helped in 'his work. May many souls be saved through your efforts.

C. LEYLAND.

# SCRIPTURE READINGS

5—Psalm 72.	Acts 25:1-22.
12—2 Sam. 6:1-15.	"   25:23-26:32.
19—Jonah 1.	"   27:1-26.
26—   "   2.	"   27:27-44.

## The Shipwreck.

'They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; these see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep' (Psalm 107).

It was no new experience to Paul to be on the sea. It may be he was facing the longest voyage of his life, but it was in fulfilment of the longing of his soul, his noble ambition to 'testify the grace of God' in Rome (Rom. 1:13-15). Had he not prayed often that God would bring him there? (Rom. 1:8-12). It is a wonderful thought that there was nothing miraculous in all the circumstances. So God presides over every part of our lives also. We make our decisions and our petitions. If they are right we may leave the rest in 'higher hands'; indeed, we must! 'God holds the key of all unknown' is a stupendous truth, not a pious sentiment.

The tumult and peril in the Temple, the threat of scourging of the centurion, the duplicity of Felix, the plots of the Jews, the weakness or ignorance of Festus, King Agrippa's unbelief and contempt, and Paul's own appeal to Cæsar, form the steps by which he is brought nearer to his great object—preaching the gospel in which he delighted, at the very centre of the world of his day. Now we shall see how the winds and waves shared in the strange fulfilment of a divine as well as a human purpose. Was not the apostle so much in harmony with his Father's will that it was one and the same? Oh, that we might also reach this height of unity with God! Yet we might well wonder that a fourth shipwreck was necessary in a life so filled with suffering. It was in fulfilment of another prayer—'that I may know . . . the fellowship of his sufferings, becoming conformed unto his death' (Phil. 3:10).

How terrible the earlier experiences of Paul had been only one who has had such could realise. A seafaring man needs to write on this theme. To be shipwrecked once is a terrifying experience but this had been Paul's three times already, and for twenty-four hours he had floated on the deep (2 Cor. 11:25). From the very beginning this voyage was difficult. We may gather from 27:3 that Paul was not in good health, and we remember he was two years in prison at Cæsarea. His travelling companions were Luke, 'the beloved physician,' and Aristarchus, at least later on a fellow-prisoner (Col. 4:10).

The winds were contrary, and at Myra the centurion transferred his prisoners to a big Alexandrian wheat ship bound for Italy. It seems likely that this vessel had been driven out of her normal course by that same contrary wind, and sailing continued difficult. The reading of verse 7 should most likely be 'not suffering us to get there' for Cnidus was a good port suitable to winter in, and that might well have been the object of the master and owner as is evidenced by the later intention to winter at Phoenix.

Paul's character had made its impression on the centurion, and this means much because he was a prisoner under accusation as an unruly person, and his fellow prisoners were doubtless persons of low morals. At the time when danger was felt by all responsible persons in the ship, he is able to give advice. However, it was natural that other advice should be taken even though Paul had qualified by experience of the seas. Should not the expert sailor know better than he? The discomfort of 'Fair Havens' would have been preferable to shipwreck, but the soft south wind lured on the victims of desire for comfort. 'Father, hear the prayer we offer, not for ease that prayer shall be. . . .' The judgment of the servant of Christ proved to be correct, and the tempestuous Euraquil dashed all hope even of being saved alive at all.

It was no longer possible to tow the boat, which was the habit of the ships of that time, and so reaching slightly calmer conditions behind (south of) the island of Cauda, they took the boat on board—with a struggle—thinking some at least might be saved in case the ship herself foundered. Wooden ships under strain of storm spring leaks and loosen timbers, so the sailors fastened ropes round the hull—a process known later as 'frapping.' This was a wise and necessary precaution, and indeed it seems the master knew his business by the steps taken successively to save the ship.

Verse 17 indicates that a minimum of sail was used to slow down the drift before the wind—in nautical phrase 'she lay to'—so that while it was impossible to sail against the wind some control would be possible to avoid being simply driven south on to the dreaded quicksands. Leaks would make the lightening of the ship necessary, so that the cargo in part at least, and the heaviest part of the spars and rigging were cast overboard. In this helpless and forlorn condition they drifted they knew not whither, and gave up hope. Sun and stars were their only compass. Any food they took would be snatched at odd moments.

Three men on that ship at least were Christians, and they were praying, not just for themselves either. Whether they lived or died they were the Lord's, but not so with the rest, and therefore it would be their earnest concern that lives

should be spared. The answer came through Paul and he was able to give an assurance of salvation for all, and to encourage them in their adversity. Imagine, if we can, fourteen days in this position of extreme peril and discomfort. There would be no adequate shelter on deck or below and all would be worn out with sleeplessness, anxiety and exposure. It must have seemed 'wishful thinking' to believe the message in such conditions.

But there was no doubt in the mind of Paul. The word of God gave him complete confidence, and it almost seems that from this point he took charge of the vessel. It needed the skill and knowledge of the sailors to fulfil that word, and their being kept in the ship could not but make for the final result. So the anchors were dropped and held; the crew's design, which would have resulted in their own deaths, and the loss of all the rest, was frustrated by command of Paul, and he was able to witness again to his faith before the whole company, gathered around him to receive encouragement and to take his good advice. Encouraged and fed, they were prepared for the morning when all would have to cast themselves in the raging sea, assured by their companion in danger that not a hair of their heads would perish. The effect of true faith on mind, soul and body is immeasurable. Without this also what would have been the outcome? We see how sound advice given at the right time contributed to the outcome of this disastrous voyage, and that advice was obviously taken.

One last wise precaution was taken before the effort to ground the ship was made. Having eaten all they wanted of the provisions left after the fortnight of tossing and drifting, they threw out the rest of the cargo to give maximum buoyancy to the hulk. Then all the skill of the seamen was used to drive as near the shore as possible at the right spot, and by divine mercy it was successful. Even at the last Paul was but narrowly saved from death by the intervention of the centurion with his men, accustomed to disregard all decent feelings for others, especially prisoners. Note the change from 'willing' to 'desiring' in the R.V. How could men be so brutal as to destroy their saviour, for so Paul was to them?

This is the strange but true story of how Paul's prayers were being answered by the heavenly Father. He was being brought to his desired haven as says the psalmist (Ps. 107:30). Paul was learning both how to be in want and how to abound. 'Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us' (Rom. 8:37). **R. B. SCOTT.**

## NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

**Aylesbury.** We have recently completed a two weeks' mission, from June 16th to July 1st, with Bro. Clyde Findlay, from Edinburgh. Meetings were held every Lord's Day, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday, of each week of the period. The mission had been extensively advertised. Ten thousand handbills were distributed in the town, and the surrounding villages. Many postal invitations were sent out. Over a hundred posters were displayed in the town and adjacent villages. This was supported by large advertisements in both papers, for a period of three weeks. During each market day, we toured the town, giving invitations over a mobile public address system. As a result the mission attracted a great deal of interest, and the meetings were well attended. Many visited us who had never come before.

On Saturday, June 23rd, a rally was held, with a special afternoon session in the form of an open forum. A good number of interesting questions were discussed. Visiting brethren during this week-end included some from Suffolk, Brighton, and Tunbridge Wells. We are grateful to all those who helped to support this effort.

We are pleased to report one baptism during the mission, that of Timothy Parker, the son of an American brother and sister who were in residence at Aylesbury but, in spite of moving to Norfolk, still visit us from time to time. Besides this, a number of new and very useful contacts was made, who are still maintaining interest.

We are grateful to Brother Findlay for his fine diligent work amongst us, in spite of his being in ill-health for most of the time. May the Lord so bless us that further fruit from this labour may be seen in the days to come. **L. CHANNING.**

**Edinburgh.**—From September 2nd we are to begin worship and Sunday School at Hyvot Bank School, the Lord willing. This is a splendid new building in a community of at least 3,000 new housing units and with no church at all thus far. We meet at present at 17 George IV Bridge, 2 p.m. Lord's Day. We had a fine experience at Aylesbury. One was baptised and many were contacted. This is a livewire church. We plan to begin our third evangelistic meeting series July 16th at 5 St. Andrew Square, Edinburgh. Pray for us. **CLYDE P. FINDLAY.**

**Hindley.**—Once again we are pleased to report further additions to the church here. On June 10th James Butler and Dorothy Elizabeth Markland were bap-

tised into Christ. We pray that they may be faithful to the Master's word and work.

T. KEMP.

**Kentish Town.**—From May 27th to June 17th the church here had the privilege of the services of Bren. David Dougall and Andrew Gardiner. We are very grateful to the brethren for their help, and to the Scottish brethren who allowed us to have them with us. We have enjoyed their fellowship in the worship, their encouragement to be loyal to the truth and consistent in Christian obedience and behaviour. Their addresses to the church, their preaching of the gospel, and their whole association with us has been most helpful. We held meetings on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays as well as the Lord's Day, at all of which they have shared the ministry of the Word. They have also distributed leaflets giving details of the meetings and including messages from their pens. These have been given with personal invitation to all the houses in the neighbourhood of the chapel, and elsewhere, and members at a distance have been visited. It is sad to record that there have been no visible or immediate results. The meetings have been small, although well supported by our own members as far as that is possible with so many living at a distance. Our neighbours appear to be too busy or too indifferent to heed the invitations. Our scattered membership makes it difficult always to maintain weeknight meetings, but we had hoped that calling at every house would have at least meant a few contacts. A special meeting was held on Saturday, June 9th, when forums discussed in the afternoon questions on Christian living, and in the evening the message of the gospel. About 50 were present when tea was served in the chapel by the sisters. We much appreciated support of this gathering by brethren from Aylesbury, Brighton and Tunbridge Wells.

On June 16th, a party of 56, including most of the Sunday School scholars, some parents, the teachers and our visiting brethren, enjoyed an outing by double-decker London Transport bus to Burnham Beeches, a noted beauty spot. The weather proved unfavourable, but adequate shelter enabled all to enjoy the day.

Bro. and Sis. Foy Short and Bro. and Sis. Bankston and their families were with us on Wednesday evening July 4th, on their journey from the States to their work in Rhodesia. Bro. Short spoke about the work there, and told us the story of two of our native brethren, whose work puts many of us to shame.

R. B. SCOTT.

**Motherwell.**—We are happy to report the baptism on Sunday, June 24th, of William Purcell, the eldest son of Bro. L. Purcell, our secretary. Our young brother has been attending our meetings

for some time and we thank God and greatly rejoice that he has made the decision to give his life to Jesus.

We take courage and continue in the work of 'Him who loved us and gave Himself for us.' We pray that God's blessing may ever be with us and that we may be steadfast and worthy of him.

H. S. DAVIDSON.

**Peterhead.**—With joy we report that on June 18th Fred Brown made the good confession and was baptised into the name of Jesus. On the 19th a brother and sister were restored to the church. Again, on the 23rd, Alex Summers was baptised. Bro. Strachan preached the Gospel. May the Lord give our young brothers and sister abundant grace to be true and noble workers for their Master.

A. STRACHAN.

**Wallacestone.**—We rejoice in the addition of another to our number. On Lord's Day, July 1st, we witnessed Lewis Clark, a young married man, being buried with his Lord in baptism. We thank God for this further proof of the gospel, and commend our brother to the grace of God. May he be kept faithful, and be used as an instrument of righteousness to the honour and glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

A. BROWN.

**Wigan, Albert Street.**—With joy and gratitude we record another addition. On Saturday, June 23rd, William Prior, who has attended some of our Lord's Day meetings, morning and evening, was immersed into Christ, and received into fellowship the following Lord's Day. May God richly bless him through life.

W. SMITH.

## OBITUARY

### 'ALMOST SUNDOWN'

(The following, written in his own hand, was found in the Bible of our esteemed Bro. Walter Jepson, after he had fallen asleep in Jesus).

'I am looking over my labours by the light of the setting sun:

For I see by the lengthening shadows that my day is nearly done.

My work for the blessed Master is drawing towards its close.

Far less have I done in His vineyard than I hoped when the morning rose.

And yet while the daylight lingers, I will work as well as I may;

Nor waste the remaining moments, regretting a misspent day.

And, oh, if now in the vineyard any be led by my hand,

I give you this word at our parting, as near to the gateway I stand:

Do all you can for the Master, do better than I have done;

And then when the day is ended you may welcome the setting sun.'

**Doncaster.**—It is with very deep sorrow that we report the death of our esteemed Bro. John Street, who fell asleep in Jesus on Lord's Day, July 1st.

Bro. Street, who had passed his 80th birthday, had been ill for several months. His membership with the Doncaster Church goes back over thirty years, when he and Sister Street came to us from the former Church at Bentley. Bro. Street's earlier life was spent with the Church at Selston in the Nottingham district, where he was baptised in 1905.

Through the years he has been a very loyal and consistent member of the Church, a man of strong convictions, and fearless in defence of what he believed to be the truth.

Brother Street was faithful and regular in his attendance at the services. He willingly took his part in the work of the Church, doing his duties efficiently and with ability.

His presence and influence in our meetings were helpful to many brethren who can testify of the guidance they received from him.

We regretfully break this association with him, which has meant so much to us, but look forward with faith and hope, to the re-union beyond the veil.

Our sincere Christian sympathy is extended to Sister Street, and to the members of the family in the great sorrow through which they have been called upon to pass.

[We wish to add our tribute to the late Bro. Street. From a close fellowship with him over the past five years we can speak personally of a character as true as steel. Bro. Street stood wholeheartedly for the truths which we regard as more to be valued than earthly or even church relationships. He 'proved all things' by the word of God, and when his convictions had been formed he adhered firmly to them. Men of such unswerving loyalty yet childlike faith are all too rare. His death is severely felt by the church at Doncaster.

His staunchness and faithfulness had in them nothing of harshness or self-righteousness. Always he endeavoured to 'speak the truth in love.' His whole attitude towards his brethren and his family was one of love. His physical and mental sufferings were tempered by a cheerful sense of humour, so that in the darkest hours his face would be lit up with a smile.

One of our clearest memories of him was his reading of the Scriptures in the public assembly. It was an education to hear his firm clear voice reading the word of God in a manner which showed his understanding of what he read. Although never a preacher, Bro. Street through his intelligent reading of the Scriptures did much to help his hearers to understand their meaning.

We have, too, the happiest recollections of hours spent in his home, enjoying the

companionship and hospitality of his wife and himself. Truly such souls are the 'salt of the earth.' Poor and humble, yet of that substance of which the Lord makes up His jewels. May we learn from the examples of such simple, devoted, Christlike lives.—EDITOR.]

**Hindley.**—We report the falling asleep in Jesus of Sister Elizabeth Kemp on June 7th, 1956. Our sister remained faithful to the truths she embraced many years ago, during a period of service to the Hindley church by Bro. Walter Crosthwaite. The decision was a hard one, for she had served the Methodist cause for many years. But there was no question of turning back. We pay tribute to her love for her Lord. Being faithful, she trusted fully, and so we are assured that she will receive her reward.

Those who sorrow and mourn her loss we commend to a loving Heavenly Father, the source of all comfort. May they receive the strength they need to uphold and sustain.

Bro. Winstanley, and the writer, conducted the service in the meeting house, and Bro. Winstanley at the cemetery.

L. MORGAN.

Resting in Jesus:  
Oh! wonderful Promise  
To those who in Him  
From this life pass away,  
Soon to awaken,  
Clothed in His likeness,  
With Him to live  
Through Eternity's Day.

Why should we sorrow  
When loved ones are taken?  
Tears may be falling,  
Yet hearts may rejoice.  
'Not dead,' said the Master,  
'But peacefully sleeping,'  
Ready to waken  
When they hear His voice.

TOM KEMP

**Wigan, Scholes.**—We deeply regret to record the death of our sister in Christ, Mrs. Jane Dunlop, on June 2nd, at the age of 68 years. Sister Dunlop had suffered for a considerable time, with the patience and fortitude of one who believed with all her heart in her Saviour.

She was the oldest member at Scholes, being immersed at the age of 14 years in 1902. She attended the breaking of bread, gospel and mid-week meetings with regularity, until the illness of her husband, who predeceased her only a few weeks.

We mourn her not as those without hope, because we know and believe, that at that day she will rise to see her Saviour as He is, and be like Him.

Bro. J. Melling, senr., conducted the service in the meeting house and at the graveside.

R. RATCLIFFE,

## COMING EVENTS

**Brighton, Oxford Street.**—The Church of Christ meeting here is proposing (D.V.) a week's Special Mission from 11th to 19th August, commencing on the Saturday with a tea meeting at 5 p.m., to which we specially invite visiting brethren from Churches sympathetic to our plea for 'a return to primitive Christianity.' Our first public meeting will commence at 6.30 p.m. and on Lord's Day we shall meet for breaking of bread at 11 a.m. and for Gospel Proclamation at 6.30 p.m. Brother A. E. Winstanley will be the speaker at these and all meetings to be held during the week at 7.30 p.m. Come and help us—please!

**Hindley.** Gospel Mission, Saturday, September 15th, to Lord's Day, September 23rd, inclusive. Speaker, Bro. A. E. Winstanley (Tunbridge Wells). Help us with your prayers.

Further information if required from L. Morgan, 'Briarcroft,' 396 Atherton Road, Hindley Green, Wigan.

**Slamannan District.**

The half-yearly Conference of Sunday School teachers in the Slamannan District will be held (D.V.) in the meeting place at Slamannan, on Saturday, 29th September, at 4 p.m.

The chairman on this occasion will be Bro. Jack Nisbet (Haddington) and Bro. Clyde Findlay (U.S.A.) will be the speaker.

A very warm welcome is given to all who are interested in Sunday school work.

**ADJOURNED CONFERENCE ON  
EVANGELISM**

The adjourned conference on evangelism will be held in the Morley Baptist Tabernacle School hall at 2 p.m. on Saturday, October 6th, 1956.

## CHANGE OF ADDRESS

George Hudson, 35 Beryl Avenue, Anchorsholme, Blackpool.

**Cleveleys.**—May we continue to remind brethren of their opportunity to have fellowship in Cleveleys. For details please refer to June issue.

**'METHODISM'S SUPREME TASK'**

The Rev. Dr. W. Edwin Sangster, general secretary of the Home Mission Department and former president of the Methodist Conference, told a recent conference in Leeds:

'At this time, when we are revising our church policy and talking about church reunion, we must be on our guard against getting so completely absorbed in those discussions that we forget that, after worship, our supreme task is evangelism.'

He wondered what hindered a revival coming more swiftly and maintained that some of the fault was inside the church.

'With the most sincere and deep thanksgiving to God for all the genuine piety in the church the fact is that there is not enough difference between the people inside the church and those outside to be impressive.

'People who watch us from outside the church are not immediately struck with our possession of a quality of life they do not possess.'

Nobody was really equipped as an evangelist who did not live with a sense of unpayable debt. God was completely ignored in many areas of national life and was given only a cursory nod in some others.

'Where religion is ignored, morals are cheap. People are using their children's allowances to pay for their cigarettes and their pools, and if anyone says this is wrong he is immediately called a miserable puritan, and his actions are called intolerable interference.'

—*W. Lancs. Evg. Gazette*, July 4th, 1956.

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Secretary of Conference Committee: A. HOOD, 45 Park Road, Hindley, Nr. Wigan.

**NYASALAND MISSION.** Contributions to W. STEELE, Atholl Dene, Longniddry, East Lothian.

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