

The SCRIPTURE STANDARD

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

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The World's Sickness and its Remedy

THE world is sick. Of that there can be no doubt, whether it be looked at from the religious, political, scientific, educational, national or international standpoint. Various remedies are advanced for its cure—world government, United Nations, improved and wider education, still further progress in science, national pride are the secular remedies. So far as regards the world's spiritual ills one of the cures suggested is interdenominational co-operation, wider fellowship, greater toleration of other "religious traditions," which the World Council of Churches exists to bring about. But all these remedies are like applying a plaster to a fever. Surface treatment is of no use, for the world's disease is deep-seated; it is within.

It is a truism, but nonetheless true, that what is needed is not mass treatment but change of the individual heart. Although much social and moral good may follow from the application of the remedies mentioned above, it is simply not in their power to bring about the most needed reform—a change of heart. Man's way is to reach the masses, to convert them to a system or party. God's way is to change the one, to convert him to a *person*—Jesus Christ—and to use him as the means of changing others.

It is, too, a truism, but nonetheless true, that the gospel is the only power to change a man's heart, to make him a new creation in Christ Jesus. "It is the power of God unto salvation." These other methods simply do not have it within themselves to accomplish change of heart and life. The gospel alone has that inherent power.

The Gospel, The Cure

No doubt we who read this will agree that the gospel alone has the answer to the problems of this troubled world. But we see the Godlessness, wickedness, crime, injustice and materialism and we read of these evils multiplied a million-fold throughout the world. When we thus contemplate the mass of the world's sin we have a sense of frustration: there is nothing we can do about it, we fear. We feel as Andrew must have done when bringing the lad with his few loaves and fishes to Jesus—"What are these among so many?"

It was a very similar question which Paul asked in 2 Cor. 2:16: "Who is sufficient for these things?" He was faced with as wicked and threatening a situation as we are today—godlessness, superstition, open wickedness, materialism. His answer was triumphant: "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves." Not in man lies the solution to the world's sin and ills, but in God—"our sufficiency is from God." (2 Cor. 3:5-6). The power is from God and is in His gospel.

"This treasure we have in earthen vessels." We are to carry the gospel to others. We sing in Heber's missionary hymn,

“Waft, waft, ye winds, His story,
 And you, ye waters, roll,
 Till, like a sea of glory,
 It spreads from pole to pole.”

But neither winds nor waves can carry the story of Jesus and His love, but *we*. It can only be carried, whether across the seas or in our own neighbourhood, by Christians, who have themselves tasted the joys of Christ's salvation. Yet how can we accomplish this purpose of God? Where are our abilities or means? This is the prospect that daunts us, for we feel our insufficiency for the vast task.

Our Responsibilities

Yet God does not expect us to convert the world. The Canadian immigrant who is granted land by the Government is not expected to cultivate the whole country, but only that portion allotted to him. So with us as churches or as individuals. Meeting-houses are usually situated where population is thickest, and for the reason that that local church is responsible for evangelising those people in its vicinity. To pray and hope for the turning of the world to Christ is vain if we are not working to that end in our immediate locality. We must do that which lies to our hand.

The same applies in our personal relationships. Each of us moves in our own little world, our own small circle of relatives, friends and workmates. Do they know, by what we do and say, we are Christians? Do we show Christ in our lives in such a light as to help them to see His beauty, to become Christians themselves, or at least to observe that we have a love, joy and peace that they do not have? We are our brother's keeper, responsible so far as in us lies for his salvation. Do we point out to even our religious friends the way of the Lord more carefully? Do we take the opportunities we have to show the necessity of those things ordained by Jesus Christ, so often ignored or neglected by religious and sincere people—baptism, the Lord's Supper, the New Testament pattern of church order, worship and life? We should not be silent or ashamed concerning these divine precepts. It may be that only through our witness will those around us come to know what the Lord requires of them.

It is told of our late Bro. James Anderson that he was accused of speaking of baptism too much in his preaching. He admitted the charge, but explained that he did so because others preached baptism not at all. He had to preach their share of the doctrine as well as his own. If they gave it its right place he would not need to insist upon it nearly as much as he did.

It Depends upon me

A young lady had the desire and, she felt, a call to become a missionary in another land. At her interview with a Missionary Society she was asked what she had done to influence her family, friends, neighbours and those with whom she worked to become Christians, and shamefacedly had to confess “Nothing.” C. H. Spurgeon was once approached by a Sunday school teacher who was disappointed that her class of girls was so few in number. “How many do you have in your class?” asked Spurgeon. “Only seven,” answered the teacher. “Only seven,” said Spurgeon, “Enough for you to be responsible for in the day of judgment.”

In face, therefore, of the world's situation we can do nothing finer or more effective than to throw our whole weight and influence upon the side of those things which make for peace, righteousness, justice and love. God does not expect of us more than we are able to do, but He *does* expect from us that we “brighten the corner where we are,” and that, “you in your small corner and I in mine,” we “let our lights shine before men that they, seeing our good works, may glorify our Father who is in heaven.”

“Whatsoever things are true . . . honourable . . . just . . . pure . . . lovely . . . of good report . . . think on these things. The things which ye both learned and received and heard and saw . . . these things do.” (Phil. 4:8-9).

The Unity of the Church

THAT unity is a very necessary state of the Church of Christ on earth no one will deny. Yet people throughout the world acknowledging faith toward one God and one Saviour have somehow contrived to become the most disunited people on earth. Some will undoubtedly assert that this is due to accidents of history but, if one is sincere and faithful toward oneself, one is inevitably led to the conclusion that this tragic, disunited state of affairs is due entirely to man's restless wanderings from the truth as it has been revealed by God.

What is Unity ?

In the mathematical sense unity is indivisible; by that is meant that we cannot divide unity by anything else and still be left with unity, Using this reasoning in our study of the unity of the church, and basing our thoughts on the emphatic pronouncements made by the apostle Paul in Eph. 4:1-6, we can readily understand that the revealed intention of a unified Godhead is that any who would approach God in belief and obedience must find the realisation of their great hope, which, being made accessible through the one faith, should find its true fulfilment in the united body which is the Church. We know of course that when the Church is referred to in the scriptures it means a body of people; and when the Church is referred to as the Body of Christ it means, metaphorically, such people who, in true faith and obedience to Jesus the Christ, have been reconciled to God; these severally constitute "the members of the body." (1 Cor. 12:12).

From the foregoing, we must come to the realisation that the unity of the Church at any time must spring from complete and unflinching adherence to the faith, doctrine, and practice which have emanated in revelation from the eternal unity; such revelation has been given from heaven and has been preserved in the Holy Scriptures, the Word of God. Men, in seeking God, have followed their own devious ways, and have ultimately found themselves in conflict with each other, and with God. Because of this, countless thousands have deduced that there is no God and apathy and atheism are rife in the world. This is a tragic contemplation, but the true believer can take heart from the fact that the unity of God, made manifest through His word, is always indivisible, no matter what man may do, and that the united Church of Christ on earth will always consist of those people who are obedient to the Lord according to His revealed will and purpose, and are continually enjoying fellowship and communion with Him and with one another. Such is the Church, the Body of Christ.

Why is Unity Important

There are many people who will tell us that church unity is not so terribly important; that there are many ways to heaven and that no one way is necessarily right. This argument merely tries to justify a position which is really untenable, but the plausibility of the argument tends to draw many people from obeying the truth. The question must inevitably be put: Are there many ways to God, or are there many people sincerely wrong who are led to believe this? The scriptures are explicit on this point, and one marvels at the confusion which exists. We have learned from the scriptures previously referred to that there is *ONE BODY*, and that in that one body can be found those who have been obedient to the call of the gospel, who, in faith, repentance and baptism, have been cleansed from sin and, faithful to their calling, have continued to grow in the beneficial atmosphere of the new creation.

Furthermore, in John 10:16, after the Lord has previously referred to Himself as the door and the good shepherd, He says, "And there shall be one fold and one shepherd." The Greek word used here for "fold" is the word *poimene*, meaning literally, "a flock." So, in effect, what the Lord is saying is "And there shall be *one flock* and *one shepherd*." This flock is severally constituted of those "who hear His voice" and in faithful obedience follow Him. In view of the Divine care to ensure the complete unity of all believers in the one body, why is it thought that a dismembered body will suffice? This disunity has gone so far that even now we see at the head of one major denomination a blasphemous example of egotheism.

The Church is the Body of Christ, and it is important, nay essential, that the "oneness" which the Lord prayed for be maintained, if the body is to be organically sound. It is high time that the text book idea of Christianity was dropped and that we understood that when we come to Christ in faith and obedience we are made a structural part of a living unity, an organism in the greatest sense, which is alive and vitally so, a church permeated with the Spirit, with Christ as the Head, operating effectively through it: "From whom the whole body, fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." (Eph. 4:16).

It is vitally important that we who preach, teach and jealously guard the purity and unity of the Body of Christ, the Church, should not, either calculatingly or unwittingly, further disrupt that unity; but that keeping our ranks closed we should show to the world what the Lord can do through a truly united body. It will undoubtedly demand sacrifice, but if we continually look to the Head, our sacrifices will pale into insignificance in the light of His.

What can we do ?

Religious leaders today realise the supreme importance of a united church, but how to achieve this is proving to be a sore problem. The roads from Jerusalem have led to Rome, Canterbury, Germany, Scotland, etc., and the multiplicity of teachings pouring forth from diametrically opposed sectarian bodies constitute a modern babel of confusion. Even though there is a realisation of what unity entails it is apparent that the submersion of the individual identity of different groups is not yet a foreseeable prospect. In a sermon preached before the University of Cambridge in 1946, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Fisher, said, "The time may come when in the service of the unity of the Church, the Anglican Churches can cease to exist as a distinct group, but that time is not yet in sight for us, and the Free Churches might well say the same for their own groups." In view of this statement of twelve years ago, we might add that the time does not yet seem to be in sight. Bearing in mind the extreme diversity of doctrine and dogma between Rome and Canterbury, can we reasonably say that in the foreseeable future these two separate communions could have even a basis for union let alone an unimpaired unity?

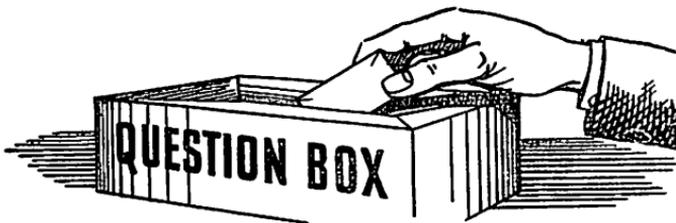
Recently I questioned a "Minister" of the Methodist Church on the impact of recent moves toward a union with the Anglican communion, and he inferred, by his answers, that episcopacy was likely to present a well-nigh insurmountable obstacle. Amid all this debate and counter-debate, the true way seems so remarkably simple that when it is presented to them some people will not believe it. They argue that if so many eminent theologians are so confused on this issue, how can we, unfrocked, untrained and according to their reasoning, unenlightened, possibly see the way clearly.

The answer is, of course, that many theologians are seeking to justify systems that have become their masters, while we look for our justification in the immutable counsel of God, revealed unto men by Jesus the Christ, and confirmed ambassadorially by His apostles, under the divine inspiration of the Spirit, in their preaching of the gospel. We as members of the Lord's Body must be quick to point out that the Bible is our final authority and that we do not accept any other, and that our cohesion is due entirely to our adherence to its plain teaching; that we do not seek any separate communion except the communion with Christ as the Head of the Church and fellowship with those who in faith and obedience have responded to the gospel and consequently have been added to the Lord's Body. We must be ready to show that, in the divine economy, God has expressly catered for the government of assemblies of believers in different localities; that these assemblies must not, by the very nature of things, be held together by any system of unified control, such as convocation, council, synod or conference, but by the fellowship of the Holy Spirit as He operates through the Word and through each believer; by the fellowship of the saints in the breaking of bread and in the common life of the Body; and in the overall loving companionship of Christ Jesus as our Head.

Brethren, we have a duty to perform: we must be the executors of the unity which springs from above. In our conduct with others we must be uncompromising

but not unkind, immovable from our standing but not unapproachable, explicit in our teaching and not vague, constant in our profession of faith and not moved by every wind of doctrine, ever realising that we are not the purveyors of some new sect, but that we are seeking to show others the unity that existed before the foundation of the world and which is now made evident by the Church of the Lord here upon earth. It may be that certain disturbing trends among ourselves will have to be re-examined to achieve this, and that a more effective means of contact for the exchange of ideas and for our mutual encouragement will have to be sought. But one cardinal fact is plain: we must move forward in unity and concord to achieve what the Lord has intended for His Church upon earth. By this we shall be truly known as the Lord's people.

A. MARSDEN.



CONDUCTED BY
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Q. Is it right, according to the Christian system, to hang anyone for murder, or have we the right to make laws unto ourselves?

A. In Genesis 9:6 the law is given, "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man." This law was given long before the institution of the Old Covenant, and was therefore permanent. Further, it was not given to one nation, but to all mankind, for Noah, to whom it was given, was a representative of all mankind. As such it has never been abrogated. Indeed, it has been confirmed to each succeeding age, both to those under the Old Covenant (Ex. 21:12; Lev. 24:17) and those under the New (Rom. 13:4). The basis of the law is that man, unlike the animals, is made in the image of God.

However, the law is not a part of the "Christian system" as the questioner implies, but relates solely to civil government. It is part of the system of laws that God has given for the good order of society in general (see Rom. 13:1-4), a necessary safeguard of human life.

The fact that the law has often been abused by those in authority, and human life has been taken for lesser crimes than that of murder, does not alter the principle of the law. Those involved have to answer to God for such abuses of His laws.

It should also be made clear, that although the law allows for a just retribution, life for life, it is something in which a Christian can have no part. He is under a higher law, the law of Christ. Under this law, retribution is left to God, and is not meted out by the hand of man (see Rom. 12:17-21).

Q. Why would God not allow anyone to kill Cain, for slaying his brother Abel?

A. The law in the case of murder, that of providing retribution by the hand of man, had not yet been given. It would seem that society had not yet been sufficiently established for such a law to be in operation. Anyone killing Cain, therefore, would be taking the law into his own hands and overriding the Almighty, who had Himself chosen to punish Cain (see Rom. 12:19).

As to why God did not chose to take the life of Cain in retribution for his brother's life we are not told. However, we can see that in some ways his punishment was worse than death. Certainly Cain thought it severe. He was cut off from the presence of the Lord. He was to be a fugitive in the earth, and faced an accusing conscience for the rest of his days. It would seem that, to those who might seek to repeat his crime, Cain was a greater warning *alive* than he would have been if the Lord had slain him.

Q. Is it wrong for a church of Christ to bank money with a view to receiving interest on it?

A. The answer rather depends on what the questioner has in mind. If he is asking whether a church can accumulate a considerable sum of money with a view to using it as a financial investment, then certainly this is wrong. In the first place it is wrong for any church to have a considerable sum of money lying idle, except it be where the object is to build up a fund for a specific purpose, such as a building fund. The finest way to invest the Lord's money is to use it in the Lord's work. It will pay dividends a hundredfold. To do otherwise is but the burying of talents and is sinful.

However, the questioner may be referring to whether a church should receive interest on money it may bank in its normal course of business. Some strongly object to any interest being received, often quoting such passages as 3 John 5-7 in support of their view. But this scripture hardly seems to bear on this matter. Whichever way money is banked, it is on the understanding that the bank reserves the right to use the money in its own interests and in any way it sees fit. Whether the bank should be required to pay for this privilege by granting the usual rate of interest on a deposit account, is a matter for each church to decide according to its circumstances. This writer views the matter as one of those borderline cases, comparable to a church receiving income from a local authority in the form of relief from local taxes, providing public notices are allowed to be displayed on a board affixed to the church building.

If a church has any doubts about the matter, then the issue can be settled by depositing money in a current account at the bank. Money so deposited does not bear interest. Indeed, bank charges are paid according to the use made of the account. In any case, if the church is using its money as it should, its account at the bank will involve quite a continuous number of entries. Under such circumstances most banks will not allow deposit accounts bearing interest, but will insist on the holding of current accounts.

From a Christian's Diary

By Berean

"FATHER ABRAHAM." This phrase which our Lord said was used by the rich man in torments (Luke 16:24) was recently used by a "high churchman" in favour of the use of religious titles. First he quoted Matt. 23:9, "Call no man your father upon the earth" which makes it clear that the followers of Jesus must not venerate dignitaries because we are all equal as brethren, with one Father in heaven. The Romish argument then proceeded to suggest that this text should not be taken too literally because Jesus not only used the name "Father Abraham" by putting it into the mouth of the rich man in Luke 16 but at another time it is recorded (Jn. 7:22) that he spoke of certain people as "fathers." What could be more simple?

Well, we should be "simple" indeed to swallow such nonsense. Of course Jesus called Abraham and the patriarchs "the fathers" for the very reason that they were literally fathers. They were to the ancestors of the Jewish race and therefore it was no contradiction of Matt. 23:9 to call them "fathers"; they were no longer *on earth* anyway. We might reasonably make a spiritual parallel by referring to the Apostles of the Lord as our fathers in the faith or our spiritual ancestors. It is through their word that Christians today have been led to the obedience of faith and the new birth. But even that cannot justify the title of "Father" today nor does anything in Scripture support the elevation of "reverends, monseigneurs, holy fathers" and such like in the Body of Christ.

* * *

High-minded Men. — Whether we are justified in extending the phrase "fathers in the faith" outside the apostolic age always seems very dubious to me, and I can understand objections being raised to H. M. Gunn's hymn (no. 365 in the

new book) as seeming to give praise to men instead of to God. Doubtless the same hymn is sung by most denominations in praise of the leaders of their respective sects whom they consider to have been true to freedom and conscience, heroes of their age, lovers of truth, struggling for sacred rights, and so on. Our big danger is in reverencing our so-called "fathers" more than the Bible and in thinking more of "the pioneers" than of the Apostles, or even of the Lord himself. In this light "Our fathers were high-minded men" may be positively sectarian. Let us be sure to reserve our praise for God and our Saviour.



"Fathers in God."—A digressive theologian once addressed his "annual conference" in this phrase, which may not have been intended to include the "laity" anyway. It brings to mind the point that there may be a personal sense in which each one of us may speak of the one most closely associated with our conversion to Christ as our spiritual father. Paul addressed both Timothy and Titus as his sons in the faith and to the Corinthians he wrote "I have begotten you through the gospel" (1 Cor. 4:15). This seems to indicate the personal relationship between preacher or teacher and his convert. It neither justifies clerical titles on the one hand nor a general mode of address to all Christians on the other.



Free Bibles. — It was a pleasant surprise to notice that the London County Council proposed to provide every secondary school pupil with a free copy of the Bible. At 8/- per copy this costs £20,400, and yet one wonders how many pupils will really appreciate the gift of the greatest treasure that is available to man. Let us be thankful that at least such an educational plan is still possible. This is probably the only country in Europe where public money could be used for this purpose.

There is also an organisation which is hoping to place a copy of the Bible in every hotel bedroom, every prison cell, beside every hospital bed, in doctors', dentists' and opticians' waiting rooms, providing New Testaments for soldiers, sailors and airmen and a Testament in every aircraft. If the Gideons can thus bring the Bible to the attention of people who would never otherwise read it should we not attempt to place sound scriptural tracts in waiting rooms where they can be read at leisure? Even in our own homes we may overlook the fact that the guest room is not properly furnished without a copy of the Bible.

Our Bible II.—Tyndale Version

BETWEEN the appearance of Wycliffe's version and Tyndale's version three events had occurred of great importance to the history of the English Bible. The fall of Constantinople to the Moslem Turks in 1453 scattered Greek scholars over western Europe, and with them were brought the Greek Scriptures and Greek learning. In 1492 Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain expelled the entire Jewish community of about 300,000 from their dominions, and these Jews were scattered over Western Europe, bringing with them the knowledge of Hebrew and the Hebrew Scriptures and acting as instructors of the scholars of the period. The beginning of Hebrew scholarship can be traced to this very time. Five years later Portugal followed Spain in expelling the Jews, thus adding to the number flooding the other countries of Europe. The invention of printing in 1452 enabled the cheap reproduction of numerous copies of the Scriptures. This period of the Renaissance of learning and interest in ancient literature and culture also brought a revived interest in science, human freedom, and the enlarging world, and the time was ripe for breaking the constricting boundaries of Medieval Europe.

About 100 years after the death of Wycliffe William Tyndale was born in Gloucestershire (1482). He received his education at Oxford where he studied

probably under three great scholars of classical learning: Linacre, Latimer and Crocin, and possibly under the great John Colet.

In 1516, Erasmus's Greek Testament was published and took Europe by storm. Erasmus had taught at Cambridge from 1511 to 1514, during which time Tyndale was a student in the University and studied under this master of the "new learning." Being a good Greek scholar, Tyndale desired to translate the Greek Testament into the English language of the common people. Erasmus had desired that men should know the Scriptures in their own native speech and had so expressed this desire. While teaching in the home of Sir John Walsh, Tyndale prepared himself for his great work of translating through constant study. In a dispute, a priest said to Tyndale, "We were better without God's law than without the Pope's," to which Tyndale replied, "I defy the Pope and all his laws. If God spare my life, in not many years I will cause a boy that driveth the plough shall know more of the Scripture than thou doest."

Lacking any help from the Bishop of London, and seeing that no printer in England would print his translation, Tyndale left England in 1524, never to see his native land again. He seems to have resided at Hamburg long enough to have completed his translation of the New Testament begun in England, although there is evidence that he also visited Wittenburg, associated with Martin Luther and possibly attended some classes of Melancthon at the university. In April 1525 Tyndale went to Cologne to have his version printed and succeeded in getting a number of sheets for an edition of 3,000 completed, when a chance remark of some printer was picked up by Cochlaeus, a bitter foe of the Reformation, and Tyndale was forced to flee with the printed portion of his book to Worms. Meanwhile, Cochlaeus had warned the English king and bishops to guard against Tyndale's version being shipped into that country. At Worms the printing was completed and, concealed in all kinds of merchandise, the copies were smuggled into England, where they were readily sold. Between 1525 and 1528, as many as 18,000 copies may have been sold in England. The Roman Catholic bishops of England bitterly assailed the version and the book was publicly burned and thousands of copies destroyed, but it continued to be printed and read by the English people. Tyndale's New Testament marks a distinct break from those that had preceded it, because it was translated not from the Latin Vulgate, but from the original Greek Text.

Tyndale began work on the Old Testament and published the Pentateuch in 1530. This was a remarkable work itself, being translated from the original Hebrew, and the marginal notes of this volume aroused the bitter enmity of the clergy, because the notes so pointedly set forth the vices and errors of the church. He followed this in 1531 with a translation of Jonah. In 1534 he issued a revised edition of the New Testament with introductions to each book, as well as marginal notes. A beautiful copy of this new edition was presented to Queen Anne Boleyn, and is now preserved in the British Museum in London. In 1535 Tyndale's second revision of the New Testament, entitled "The New Testament yet once again corrected by W. Tyndale," was issued, which became the basis for all later English versions. While residing in Antwerp, Tyndale was betrayed, arrested by Charles V. Emperor of Germany, and held in prison at Vilvorde. During this time he was still at work, translating the books of Joshua to 2 Chronicles before he was strangled and burned to death as a heretic, October 6, 1536. His last words were, "Lord, open the King of England's eyes."

J. NADEAU.

(To be continued)

Play your part

If a man be a soldier he'd expect, of course, to fight;
 And he couldn't be an author if he didn't try to write.
 So it isn't common logic, doesn't have a right true ring
 That a man to be a Christian doesn't have to do a thing.

If a man would be a hunter he must go among the trees,
 And he couldn't be a sailor if he didn't sail the seas.
 How strange for any member of a church to think that he
 Can stay away from worship and a worthy member be!

SCRIPTURE READINGS

OCTOBER 1958.

- Oct. 5 Isaiah 53. Acts 8:26-40.
 „ 12 1, Samuel 10:17-27. Acts 9:1-22.
 „ 19 Proverbs 31:10-31. Acts 9:23-43.
 „ 26 Deuteronomy 14:3-20. Acts 10:1-16

CONVERSIONS

OUR readings this month present us with two outstanding cases of conversion, and another not quite of the same nature. The eunuch heard the gospel for the first time, obeyed its requirements and went on his way rejoicing. Saul of Tarsus was stopped in his murderous course of persecution, spoken to by the Christ He regarded as a fraud, admitted his guilt and obeyed the message he must have heard many times since he held the clothes of those who stoned Stephen. Peter, held by his traditional obedience to Moses in spite of his allegiance to the gospel and earnest preaching of it, received divine instructions quite contrary to his own understanding, and obeyed them.

Comparing our two standard versions—"Authorised" and "Revised"—we find the word "conversion" (and the verb) altered to "turning" (and the verb), except in three cases. These are Acts 15:3, James 5:19 and 20, and in these cases the simpler word would be equally if not more suitable.

The more correct translation reminds us by contrast that man is not a passive agent. It is true that he is worked upon by divine influence, but he "turns." There is a thought of mere passiveness in "be converted," but in "turn yourselves," "turn ye," "turn again," the responsibility is put upon man, where it in fact must rest. "God has given man the power to turn, and has provided all the means; but He calls upon man to use what is thus made available—to exercise his power and turn into the proper path" (*Conversion to God* by Alexander Brown). In its spiritual sense our word "conversion" does mean this.

Looking first at the Eunuch we find a man already worshipping the true God, having travelled many, many miles to obey His law at Jerusalem. He does not need to "turn to God from idols to serve the living and true God (1 Thess.

1:9 and 10). Faith and repentance have already been experienced in his life, and when he is presented with the truth about Jesus of Nazareth, his response is glad and immediate: "Here is water; what doth hinder me?" Not all who heard the same message, and apparently had the same attitude to God, made the same response, as our next case so clearly and sadly shows. We might well consider the reasons for failure to do so, with the intention to discover why perhaps our own reaction was so slow, and to consider the general situation with men and women. To all persons of normal intelligence the gospel must have an appeal, yet how few accept it.

To the Eunuch conversion meant not a turning to God from idols but a turning from the old covenant to the new. One might think this to be a much easier thing, and so it was in his case, but we do not know how hard he fought it to give up his thrice-a-year pilgrimage to the glorious Temple, and entrust his sacrifices to the priests, and to give himself to lowly service to his fellows, prayer, self-denial, and endeavour to cast out from his life every wrong thought. There would be also, how developed we do not know, the apostles' teaching, the fellowship, the breaking of the bread and the prayers for those he was able to bring to the same knowledge of the truth. Doubtless there were Jews in Ethiopia who would be at least approachable, and with such he would already be in some kind of fellowship—possibly they had a synagogue, where he had learnt the truth himself in earlier days.

In Saul's case, we think although the main facts concerning Christ must have been known, his mind had never really considered them. Yet the words of the Lord Jesus, "It is hard for thee to kick against the goads," would indicate that something was working in his conscience that he was resisting. It could be that he was so "wrapped up" in the study of the Law and the traditions, and surrounded by those of his own "clique" and age, who regarded the actions of the hierarchy as unquestionable, that he never applied himself to the gospel. But those "goads" were at work—the demeanour, the defence and the death of Stephen had made their impression, and could not be effaced altogether, even by his absorption in the fierce persecu-

tion; undertaken with that determination which was so completely reversed, "turned," "converted," by his meeting with the Lord Jesus on the road to Damascus. (See Acts 22:20; 23:1; 26:9; 1 Cor. 15:9).

God's concern for the Gentiles made Him call Saul, for his special work was to reveal Christ among them. The Pharisee of Pharisees could not be used in Jerusalem (22:18 and 21). Perhaps this was because it was so strong a testimony against their unbelief that an eminent member of their nation had so completely "turned," changed. The work of Christ in his life was an irresistible argument for the truth of the gospel. From being the persecutor he became the persecuted; from breathing out threatening and slaughter he turned to breathing and preaching the spirit of love and goodwill. He was indeed the epistle of Christ known and read—and still equally known and read—of all men.

The change in Peter's outlook brought about by God's leading in regard to Cornelius we may regard simply as a development of a change which had already taken place in his life through contact with the Saviour. Nevertheless it was a conversion, and a revolutionary one in him. The prejudices of a lifetime were removed by the submission of his will to God's direction, and instruction. It was no easy change.

Although the Saviour's parting words and instructions made it quite clear that the gospel was for "every creature," this had not occurred to Peter, nor, probably to the other apostles at that time. Their work had to be begun among their own nation, but it could not stay there. In a time of weakness the old prejudices were allowed to sway him (Gal. 2:12), but not to change his faith in the truth of the matter. This continuing "loyalty to Moses," as they supposed, did much harm, and caused much grief in the early days of the church. Like other wrong attitudes of mind and heart, it hindered progress and destroyed unity so often.

Shall we ask one another, and humbly seek God's help too, to what extent have we turned each one into the Way, changed into the character—been converted into the divine likeness? How much of the Old Man remains with us? Upon this depends the real progress of the church—but so much a matter of numbers as of character.

R. B. SCOTT.

NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

Blackburn.—William Jones, a young man who has attended our meetings for some time, was obedient to the Word and was baptised on Tuesday, August 12th. H.W.

Kirkcaldy (Rose Street).—We rejoiced to hear the good confession and witness the immersion of John Roberts, on Lord's Day, 20th July. We trust that he with us will continue to grow in grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. J. MOYES.

Fort Jameson, Northern Rhodesia.—Three souls have been added to the church during the last two months. We had two visitors from the Lilongwe district of Nyasaland—one evangelist from America, D. Gilliam, and one an African brother. Bro. Gilliam preached on Lord's Day, August 4th, and I gave the interpretation in Nyanja.

Brethren, pray for us. We here are also praying for you, for the great ministrations you do for the needy of African brethren. May the richest blessing of our heavenly Father rest upon you continuously. CLAYTON NYANJAGHA.

Woodstock, Cape Town.—During July two people were baptised at Riversdale, making the membership of the new work there 17. It might require a permanent worker there. At the moment Bro. Lotters and his family go there every fortnight. They are responsible for the work at Simonstown as well. At Simonstown a man and his wife were baptised on August 5th.

As a result of a cottage meeting convened at the home of this man and wife a man was immersed into Christ on August 14th.

On August 23rd our Children's Bible School Anniversary was convened, and a programme presenting the gospel in recitation, choruses, etc., was given. With parents and children and brethren of various churches in the Peninsula, over 100 attended. Words of encouragement to the children and all concerned in this noble work of teaching the young were given by Bro. Conrad D. Steyn, Evangelist, of the congregation, at Pine-lands, Cape Town. Words of apprecia-

tion and thanks were expressed by the writer, superintendent of the Bible School.

On August 24th, before the breaking of bread, we witnessed a man immersed into Christ. We rejoice for the power of the gospel. My recent visits to churches in the Peninsula reveal them as healthy and growing. Our Bible School at Woodstock is also growing, with a present roll of 57. The many personal contacts I am making keep me busy, and some seem willing to obey the gospel. So pray for us, as we do for you that these seasons of refreshing might provoke us to do more and give more to foster the growth of God's Kingdom "while it is . . . called today."

Later Report.—We rejoice to sound out the glad tidings that on September 7th we heard the good confession and witnessed three young women, two young men and the wife of one of our young brethren immersed into Christ.

Bro. Gray, one of the elders at Woodstock, emphasised the importance of New Testament baptism, and showed that it was the only possible means of entrance into the Body of Christ.

We contemplate starting a church of the Lord in the home of one of our brethren at Bridgetown, Athlone soon. Having been unable to obtain ground to build there we shall start in a small way. We thank God for the open door granted us, because, since convening cottage meetings there regularly, the people have been asking us to start a work there. Thus the opportunity has come for which we rejoice and are thankful.

T. W. HARTLE.

My Daily Creed

Let me be a little kinder,
Let me be a little blinder
To the faults of those about me,
Let me praise a little more;

Let me be when I am weary
Just a little bit more cheery,
Let me serve a little better
Those that I am striving for.

Let me be a little braver
When temptation bids me waver;
Let me strive a little harder
To be all that I should be;

Let me be a little meeker
With the brother who is weaker,
Let me think more of my neighbour
And a little less of me.

Don't say it

A preacher had on his desk a notebook labelled 'Complaints of members against other members'. When one called to tell him the faults of another he would say, 'Here's my complaint book. I'll write down what you say and you can sign it. Then when I take the matter up I shall expect you to testify to that.'

The sight of the open book and ready pen had its effect. 'Oh no, I couldn't sign anything like that,' was the almost invariable answer. And no entry was made. The preacher kept the book for forty years, opened it a thousand times, but no entry was ever made.

Let your Light shine

One night a man was run down at a level crossing, and the signalman in charge had to appear in court. After severe cross-examination he was still unshaken. He insisted that he had waved his lantern frantically, but to no avail. The following day the superintendent called him into his office. 'You did wonderfully well yesterday,' he said. 'I was afraid you might waver.' 'Oh no, sir,' replied Tom, 'but I was afraid that lawyer was going to ask me whether my lantern was lit!'

OBITUARY

Bedminster, Bristol.—We record the passing to higher service of John Daniell, senior, at the age of 85 years. Baptised some 62 years ago he is survived by seven sons, all of whom were instructed well in the way of truth, and six of whom have put on the Lord Jesus, as a result of his teaching and example. He was persuaded in the truth by the late Bro. Robert Crawford, who regularly visited the home in his capacity as an insurance agent.

As the family met at the home just prior to the interment, Bro. F. W. Wills led in prayer, and Bro. S. W. Collins conducted the service at Canford cemetery.

Steady, faithful and true were the tributes paid to him, and not only were they tributes to his sterling character, but also to the affection in which his brethren held him. We mourn his passing, but not as those without hope for we shall meet again "when the day dawns and the shadows flee away."

A.L.D.

COMING EVENTS

Kentish Town—Special meetings: Saturday, October 11th: afternoon, 3 o'clock; tea, 5.15; public meeting, 6.30. To praise God, seek His blessing and encourage one another. Hope Chapel has now been used for 87 years—opened October 5th, 1871. Visitors warmly welcome.

Newtongrange.—Social meeting, October 18th. All in the district invited. Speakers: Bren. A. E. Winstanley (Tunbridge Wells) and Andrew Glass (Kirkcaldy).

East Ardsley (Main Street), Yorkshire.—Anniversary, Saturday and Sunday, November 1st and 2nd. Saturday: tea 4.15, evening meeting 6 p.m., presided over by Bro. J. Robottom, of Wortley. Speakers: Bro. J. Thomasson (Morley), Bro. G. Ellis (Wakefield). Bro. J. Thomasson will serve the Church on Lord's Day. Come and join us.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Newtongrange.—Secretary, W. H. Allan, 18 Abbeygrange, Newtongrange, Midlothian.

BOOKS WANTED

Does any reader have a set, or copies of *The Fundamentals* which he is willing to sell? These books were published by the Testimony Publishing Co., and distributed by "Two Christian Laymen" about 1912 or 1913. I am very anxious to obtain a set, and would be glad to hear from any brother or sister who can help in any way.—Albert G. Klapp, 19 Wodehouse Road, Old Hunstanton, Norfolk.

AN APPEAL FOR OLD HYMN BOOKS

The Woodstock, South Africa, assembly very much need about two or three dozen copies of the former hymn book (1908 or later printings). However many or few, whether single, or double column, they will be welcome. Postage will be paid by the church. Please write, or forward books to T. W. Hartle, 13 Portland Road, Salt River, Cape Town, South Africa.

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

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

NYASALAND MISSION. Contributions to W. STEELE, 31 Niddrie Road, Portobello, Edinburgh, Mid Lothian.

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