

# The SCRIPTURE STANDARD

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

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## *Holidays*

MOST of us look forward to and enjoy a holiday. True, there are the rare people who do not take a holiday when they can; who abhor the trouble of it all—the packing, the journey, the dragooning, the lack of freedom to please oneself, when he should eat and where he should go; the doing of the conventional things and visiting the conventional places. These rare souls prefer to stay at home and avoid the trouble, perhaps with “a book and a little shady nook.”

But on the whole we feel, when the time comes, that we deserve a holiday, and we give ourselves the best one possible. We feel it does us good to get away from work and home and daily troubles; to rest from the tyranny of daily troubles (although on holiday we submit to routine equally as tyrannous, and often exhaust ourselves more than at any time in the rest of the year). We want to “forget things,” although that is impossible. Did you ever hear of the businessman who, on doctor’s orders, went on holiday to forget, and who spent the fortnight trying to remember what it was he had come away to forget?

However, with all our enjoyment and forgetting of things, we Christians must not forget “whom we are and whom we serve.” So many of us seem to think that we have a holiday also from our Christian’s calling; that we are not called upon to observe the same manner of life as at home; that we are released from restraint, that we can go to places and do things which we would not in everyday life; and that we can treat the Lord’s Days of our holidays for our own enjoyment, without any sense of responsibility to God. It is so easy to ignore standards just for that time. All too many of us, though we would recoil from the conscious thought, say by our actions that God is not having any of our holiday time. We go to resorts where we cannot meet with the brethren. It is not rare, even if we do not go away to stay, to find brethren off on pleasure jaunts on the Lord’s Day, “forsaking the assembling of themselves together” and neglecting their service to God.

Brethren, ours is a full-time calling: it has no close season. There is no time when we are allowed, or should even have the desire, to please ourselves. We must not let up in our devotion. If we do, we shall lose ground and our work for Christ suffer. We cannot go where God is not, in the sense of our being able, having the urge, to serve Him in whatever surroundings, “in season and out.” We must be continually in training and in action, for on holiday, as at home, we shall have constant opportunities of speaking a word for Christ, and so letting “our lips and lives express the holy gospel we profess.”

Indeed, consecrated service to God is best seen in what we are willing for that service to cost us, not only in money but, what is sometimes more difficult, in time. Released from daily work, which takes up so much of our lives, we have all the more time to devote to Him who gave His all for us. Instead of our getting away from the Lord’s work during our holiday, we have all the greater opportunities of plunging ourselves even more into it.

And let not such service be counted in terms of sacrifice. For God, who is no man’s debtor, sees to it that any such service is rewarded even in this life a hundred-fold, and in the world to come with everlasting life.

“Then gladly will we give to Thee,  
Who givest all.”

EDITOR.

## *The Unanswered Prayer of Christ*

IT is not the purpose of this article to discuss who is right or who is wrong in those matters which have caused division within the Restoration Movement. Our purpose is to try to suggest a way whereby we can be more like the church for which Christ suffered and died—the one so plainly described in Ephesians 5:27—“A glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing: but that it should be holy and without blemish.”

### **Unity through purity**

A major point of emphasis among the people of the Restoration Movement is unity of all believers in Christ. And truly, a plea for Christian unity is much needed in our present religious world, so shamefully divided. Jesus himself prayed that all His followers might be one (John 17:20-21). Also, we have learned by experience that division is a great hindrance to the cause of Christ. The Restoration Movement has been a great and mighty effort for the cause of scriptural unity and for a restoration of simple New Testament Christianity, free from all the humanly devised ecclesiastical systems. These efforts should by all means continue. However, there is another point in that prayer of Christ which He prayed shortly before He was crucified that has not been given nearly enough emphasis. He also prayed that His followers be “sanctified in truth” (to live holy) and “to be kept from the evil of the world.” This part of His prayer is equally as important as the portion concerning unity.

Let us notice some other New Testament passages related to the subject of Christian purity, moral sanctity, and holiness. Romans 12:1-2 teaches that a Christian must present his body “a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God.” 1 Corinthians 3:17 and 6:19 tell us that the body is the temple of God (the place wherein God’s Spirit dwells), and we are commanded not to defile that temple. In 1 Thessalonians 5:22 we hear Paul warning the Lord’s people to “abstain from all appearance of evil.” Christ tells us in Matthew 5:48, “Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect.” Again Christ says “He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day” (John 12:48). That word is nothing other than the will of Christ as laid down for us in the New Testament.

### **Impurity of Smoking**

Now we shall get to the real point of this article. [Here the writer of the article gives impressive figures and quotations proving the ever-growing practice of smoking in the U.S. military services and civilian population, and the consequently increasing injurious and fatal effects. We have proved the same evil results of the habit in this country.—Ed.]

Doctors tells us that cigarette smoke robs the air of oxygen which is the most vital element used by the brain, and that it contains many fearful poisons, one of which is furfural, which acts upon the brain and nerve tissues. Dr. D. H. Kress says that furfural is a brain-wrecking and destroying poison. Dr. W. C. McCormack has proved that tobacco smoke destroys Vitamin C in the human body. This is the vitamin necessary to ward off diseases from the human body. It is said that since so many mothers have fallen victims to the cigarette-smoking habit and homes are seldom free from poisonous tobacco smoke, the two most dreaded diseases of children—leukemia cancer and polio—have increased proportionately with the great increase of cigarette-smoking these last few years. The article also states that children are breathing tobacco smoke, which also enters the body through the pores of the skin. Another danger to children which doctors point out is that if they breathe tobacco smoke with its poisons they naturally acquire a craving or lust for cigarettes, just as all smokers have. So be fair to the children and to the Scriptures and to your vow to follow Christ in your example of life!

Here are some more passages of Scripture which every Christian should seriously and prayerfully consider: Romans 6:4-5: “We are buried with Him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.” In verse 12 Paul continues, “Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.” In 2 Corinthians 6:17-18 we are commanded to “Come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you, and be unto you a Father, and ye shall be my sons and daughters.” Peter lovingly warns, “Dearly beloved, abstain from fleshly lusts that war against the soul” (2 Peter 2:11). In speaking to the church at Ephesus, Paul said, “Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the church over which the

Holy Spirit hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God which He hath purchased with His own blood" (Acts 20:28). Men possessed of the tobacco habit cannot possibly set a holy example for others to follow. Positions of leadership in the church deserve the purest and holiest examples of life. Men who are addicted to the tobacco habit are themselves misled by those members of the church who elect them to positions of leadership in the congregation. Such men are saying to the world, by their example, that the Restoration Movement condones the use of such unholy, degrading, and injurious practices. The kind of example which a cigarette addict sets is inconsistent with the type of influence that a leader of God's people should be trying to exert on the world in general and our youth in particular. If elders, deacons, preachers, and other leaders in the church do not feel it important to set an example of purity in Christian living, then how can we ever hope to restore the beauty of the church described in Ephesians 5:27, "A glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish"?

#### "Be ye clean"

It seems that some leaders of the Restoration Movement have woven into their plea for Christian unity a personal liberty clause without realizing that when Christ's word speaks their personal liberty has to stop. If you are a member of the Restoration Movement and if your life presents a stumbling-block to some weak member or to a child, then you should rid yourself of all offensive habits (such as smoking) and read what Jesus says to you in Matthew 18:6. Although you may have been baptised for the remission of sins as commanded in Acts 2:38, and you may be following the example of the New Testament church (Acts 20:7) as they came together upon the first day of the week around the Lord's Table, in memory of our Lord's suffering and death; yet, if you have not repented of your sins and turned away from them, in an effort to follow the example of Christ in your daily life, you may be one who falls under the condemnation of 1 Corinthians 11:27-30 "He that eateth and drinketh unworthily eateth and drinketh damnation to himself." Furthermore, you may obey the command to "lay by in store upon the first day of the week as God has prospered you," yet if you have not repented with an abhorrence for sin and a turning away from it, your life is a reproach to the righteous cause of Christ. Worldly lusts will destroy one's spiritual relationship with Christ. "If any man love the world, the love of God is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1 John 2:15-16). In principle, that Scripture condemns smoking, card-playing, drinking, dancing, and all other worldly lusts and practices.

#### Women's Dress

Another glaring violation of the principles of Christian purity is the appearance of mothers and daughters on the streets as nearly nude as the laws will allow. Let us notice one passage which is especially plain on this matter: 1 Timothy 2:8-10 "I will therefore that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands without wrath and doubting. In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel . . ."

The first part of this passage doesn't sound as though Paul included cigarette poison-stained hands. His introduction associates Christian purity as a matter of spiritual importance, and we do well not to trifle with it or take it lightly. Then his statement on the proper kind of adornment, "modest apparel," forbids women doing those things which attract undesirable attention. The very appearance of Christian women should suggest that they are "women professing godliness with good works." In Deuteronomy 22:5 we find that it is sinful for women to wear clothing which pertaineth unto a man, "for all that do so are abomination unto the Lord." Overalls, slacks, slim jims, shorts and such like would fall under this condemnation. All these things: prayer, holy hands, meekness, faith, adornment in modest apparel are every one important. If one can be dispensed with, then so can all the others.

Paul wrote these things before our present-day debauchee of immodesty in dress, of which the modern bathing suit would have scandalised the theatre business, and knee-length dresses at religious meetings would have been shocking with its utter disrespect for the command to "adorn in modest apparel as women professing godliness." There is little reason to doubt that the lack of respect for 1 Tim. 2:8-10 by women may have produced more immorality to more people than any of the other vicious customs of today, because when people are robbed of their modesty they do not have much left upon which to create spiritual adornment; and such women show no more respect for 1 Tim. 2:8-10 than a churchyard full of cigarette ends shows for 1 Cor. 3:17 and 1 Cor. 6:19 and 2 Peter 2:11, and all the other Scriptures on holy living. God's word tells us to "study to show ourselves approved unto God" (2 Tim. 2:15). We can now choose to obey it or reject

it, but at the last day in judgment we will have no choice and we will be judged by God's word—not by what we think or what someone else may think. Jesus tells us that His word shall judge us all in the last day (John 12:48).

### Not Outward Conformity but Inward Holiness

In speaking through His servant Ezekiel, God sets forth a divine principle which will hold good for us today: "Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me. When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul" (Ezekiel 33:7-9). Paul gives a similar warning in 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9 (Read).

Dare we think that God will be any better pleased with the Restoration Movement as it condones sin in the leading places of too many of its churches than He was when He said these things to Ezekiel? In our movement we have emphasised a system of first principles by which we will stand condemned unless we live and teach the many other equally important truths of God's word. In other words, there is a whole lot which must follow faith, repentance, confession, and baptism in the gospel system of truth as revealed in the New Testament. These first principles are only the beginning point.

For many years we have boasted "We speak where the Bible speaks and are silent where the Bible is silent," but can that statement be proven by the word of God? Christ suffered and died to bring Christian purity and Christian unity into this world with its consequent love, joy and peace.

Even yet, if every professed follower of Christ will turn and live as God's word teaches, Christ's prayer in John 17 can be answered and His church of Ephesians 5:27 can be restored. We know that the fault does not lie in God's plans, but in man's failure to comply with His holy and divine standard of truth and right. Let us each try harder to live as God has commanded so that His prayer may be answered and the world may be won for Christ.

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## "Prove All Things"

THE caption of this article, along with other practical admonitions to Christians, is found in the fifth chapter of 1 Thessalonians. "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." We are therefore made to believe that it is of practical value to all who would live as the Lord directs.

The word "prove" is explained by its use in other passages. In telling of the excuses offered by those who were invited to the feast Jesus tells us that one said, "I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them" (Luke 14:19). To the Corinthians, in teaching them the duty of giving, Paul wrote, "I speak not by commandment, but by occasion of the forwardness of others, and to prove the sincerity of your love (2 Corin. 8:8). And, concerning the qualifications of deacons, he wrote, "And let these also first be proved" (1 Tim. 3:10). This may also be done in regard to the value of a right life. To the Romans Paul wrote, "And be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God" (Rom. 12:2).

To prove, therefore, is to test, to try, to examine the merits of. And this we need to do with our religious practice. No practices should be continued without such examination, regardless of how long it has been done and how universally it has been accepted. "Prove all things."

We want the food we eat to be subjected to proper tests; and we require that the water we drink be tested for impurities that might destroy our physical health. In all areas of living we require these tests. Why not also in the realm of religion? Those things have only to do with our physical well-being. They are temporal. The things we believe and practise in religion are spiritual. They have eternal consequences. Surely we should be anxious to prove them.

### The Standard to Use

Men use many and varied standards by which they determine the value of their religious practices. "The teaching of the church" of which one is a member is often the one determining factor in religious practice. This seems to be a growing

tendency among those who are members of the church of Christ. If the church does it, it must be all right. This is the attitude with which we are frequently confronted. It has been done for fifty years, and no one has objected to it. Such statements are often seen. But the church is not a criterion of right. Actually, such is pure Romanism. Are we, after all these years, to fall into such a trap of Satan as this?

**Others practise the religion of their parents.** They have never stopped to consider whether or not the practice is right in God's sight. We honour our parents. Their memory is dear to us. As a result, sentiment is strong in connection with their religious faith. But parents are not a criterion of right. They could be honestly wrong.

**A third group listens to the preacher.** Whatever he says, they believe and do. It is a busy world in which we live. Few take any time for study. So they simply accept what is told them. Churches of Christ have not escaped. Time was when we were known as a Bible-reading people. We were recognised widely for our knowledge of the Bible. Sadly enough, little of this remains. The preacher is not a criterion of right. He is human and often errs.

**God's standard of right is the Bible.** Every test of religious practice must be made by what it says. A few passages from many will fully establish this truth. "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" (Isaiah 8:20). "The righteousness of thy testimonies is everlasting" (Ps. 119:144). "Thy word is true from the beginning" (Ps. 119:160). "All thy commandments are righteousness" (Ps. 119:172). "Thy word is truth" (Jn. 17:17). "The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day" (Jn. 12:48). Paul admonished Timothy: "Preach the word." The Bereans of old were counted more noble because they "searched the scriptures daily to see whether these things were so."

Our only safety in religious practice is a return to this standard of right. Search it, believe it, and practise it alone. Nothing else is either safe or right. No other course will please God and bring his blessings upon us. The Bible is the only standard of right in religion.

#### How the Bible Teaches Us

The word of God teaches us what is right in three ways, namely: direct statement or command, approved example, and necessary inference. These methods of setting forth the will of God present to us what God would have us accept and practise.

##### 1. Direct statement or command.

This is the most common method of Bible teaching. Jesus said to the disciples: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mk. 16:16). Peter said to those on Pentecost: "Repent, and be baptised every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38). A direct statement is made and command given.

##### 2. Approved example.

This method of teaching is also frequently used. When a thing is done with the approval of inspired men it is an approved example. It must be attended by those circumstances that show it is approved. It must not be merely an incidental or local arrangement for carrying out God's will. An example is found in Acts 20:7 "And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight." They met to observe the Lord's Supper on the first day of the week. Paul, an inspired man, was there and participated with them in the observance.

##### 3. Necessary inference.

An example of necessary inference is found in the latter part of Acts 8. When Philip baptised the eunuch we are simply told that "as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water." We do not know if it was a stream or pond, or just how much water was there. But we do know there was enough to perform the act of baptism. That is necessary in order to the performance of what the writer says was done. Hence, a necessary inference. But, be sure it is not just an inference. It may well be an inference without being a necessary one. We might infer that these men came to a fresh water stream. However, nothing in the story makes this necessary. Baptism is a burial or immersion. Therefore, there must be sufficient water to perform that act. Nothing else is necessary.

Time after time God tells us to do those things that are told us in his word. "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you" (Deut. 4:2). "Whosoever

transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son" (2 Jn. 9). We are exhorted to contend earnestly for "the faith" which was once delivered to the saints. We are not only to do what God says; we are to do only what God says. His plans and arrangements are complete and will accomplish all he wants done.

#### Why Prove All Things?

Paul immediately gives us the answer. "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." We test our religious practice by God's rule, the Bible. Our aim is to be right. Hold fast what is good. Discard all else. "Abstain from all appearance of evil." It does not matter who else is doing it. It matters not what the seeming results are. Put your trust in the Lord and follow only his direction.

—"Gospel Tidings."

## SCRIPTURE READINGS

### FOR AUGUST, 1963

4—Isaiah 11:1-10	Acts 13:44 to 14:18
11—Exodus 19:1-14	Acts 14:19 to 15:5
18—Amos 9	Acts 15:6-29
25—Deut. 31:7-23	Acts 15:30 to 16:10

### "BREAKING NEW GROUND"

If we give careful thought to the adventurous nature of the first journey undertaken by Paul and Barnabas for the purpose of spreading the gospel, we shall not be so surprised that Mark turned back at Perga (13:13). They must have faced many "perils from the Gentiles," as well as those other perils enumerated in 2 Cor. 11:26 and 27. Well might a thoughtful young man, reared among his own people in Jerusalem, and quite comfortably placed (his mother probably owned the house, 12:12) hesitate to face the hardships and dangers of unknown and comparatively uncivilized country. We are glad, however, that Barnabas, being a "son of encouragement," gave him another opportunity (4:36), and that subsequently Mark made himself very useful to Paul and earned his esteem (2 Tim. 4:11). We may well consider the development of Mark's faith as the work increased and new ground was broken all over the known world.

We are not informed of the financial side of this work. We may well suppose that the church at Antioch provided for immediate needs, but doubtless Paul and Barnabas followed largely the course of the disciples whom Jesus sent out two by two. They relied upon kindly hospitality and had few wants. Paul does tell us by letter, written long after this, that he had "learned, in whatsoever state I am, therein to be content" (Phil. 4:11). But they must have had much danger to face on the roads, the tracks, the hills, the rivers, and in the towns too, of

course, from the unscrupulous and the violent. They had a fixed policy of preaching first to the Jews in each community, and this would open up homes through national solidarity in heathen surroundings.

We have considered motives and characters of opponents of Christianity and given some thought to Cornelius. We purpose giving close attention to the general body of disciples—those of whom no outstanding reports are given. Suppose we think first of those Jews at Antioch in Pisidia who heard the gospel for the first time (as far as we know). Some rejected and some accepted the message. It seems that they formed quite an influential body in the town. The Jews as a race, in their dispersion, have always had brains for money, and this gives them influence on the upper strata of society. This would be good for any community, for, whatever their faults might be, their religion was the one true religion in the world, acknowledging the one God, and involving them in a far higher standard of morals and integrity than the heathen. They had in many cases attracted "devout women of high standing and the leading men of the city" (13:50). Their worship in their synagogues was quite unique in character. Luke doubtless records Paul's address here more fully because it would be repeated in essence on so many similar occasions to follow. The effect too is almost a pattern for future experiences.

The Jews all over the world were living in expectation of the Messiah. Everyone in the meeting would have some knowledge of the promises and the passages of scripture to which Paul refers. His manner and his matter would alike testify to the truth of what he was saying. There were open-minded and devout listeners and they accepted the message and were instructed to repent and be baptised, and urged to continue when they thus made their choice. A great sensation was thus produced in the town and the universality of the gospel brought the Gentiles to hear it in con-

siderable numbers. We suppose it was natural that some among the Jews, perhaps those most concerned in the synagogue worship and Mosaic institutions should reject the new and almost revolutionary thoughts embodied in the gospel. They had always attached great importance to the Law, and were certainly right in attributing divine authority to it. Only an equivalent divine authority manifested to them could be accepted, and this they had in the persons, message and miraculous powers of the preachers, though we have no mention of miracles in this town. Those whose prejudices and hostility to the Gentiles were not removed by the influence of the messengers were filled with envy—the same motive which brought about the crucifixion, and which wrecks all good schemes and causes. They used their influence so effectively against the gospel that Paul and Barnabas were turned out of the town. The record does not say how long they were able to continue the work before they had to leave but “the word of the Lord spread throughout all the region” (13:49), so they were very busy. They had gathered an assembly of believers and when they left these “were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.” This evidence of the power of the gospel to fill lives with joy and to purify them from sin was left in the town in spite of the persecution to which the leaders were treated.

We must recognise that an entirely new kind of life had been started—practically a new religion. Instead of synagogue worship the “breaking of bread” was practised in a meeting composed of all sorts and conditions of men (and women of course). A spirit of unselfish love held them together and they manifested Christ in their relations with others, bearing shame and scoffing without resentment, for His sake. Among them would be some men of mature age and experience who would exercise spiritual gifts, and be appointed at a later date as “elders” (14:23).

The same message and work had the same results in the other towns visited on this journey—Iconium, Lystra and Derbe—and a sidelight is thrown upon their later condition in 15:41 to 16:5. Meantime, however, we must not overlook work in the wider districts—“surrounding country” (14:6 and 7). It was no easy matter to live this new life, which was such a marked contrast to both Judaism and heathenism—the former by the removal of age-old barriers the latter by purity of life and motive. The disciples needed (and so do we) “strengthening,” “exhorting to continue” and warning that “through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God” (14:22). “Signs and wonders” had been done by God through His messengers among the Gentiles, proving His acceptance of them through faith, the world-wide qualification (15:12).

R. B. SCOTT.

## *How to Study the Bible*

IF you would spend a month feeding on the precious promises of God, you wouldn't be going about complaining how poor you are. You would lift up your head and proclaim the riches of His grace, because you could not help doing it.

Take up Hope, and Faith and Grace, and feed on them. The Bible will become a new treasury to you.

Study one Book at a time. For instance, Genesis is the seed-plot of the whole Bible. It tells us of life, death and resurrection; it involves all the rest of the Bible.

Or study a single word that runs through a Book. I was wonderfully blessed by studying the seven “blessings” of Revelation. If you take up the “overcomes” of Revelation, you will find them a fruitful subject . . . you climb by them to the throne of God.

Then there is the word “know,” for example. Some people tell us that what we believe doesn't make any difference. John says, “Hereby we know that we are of the truth”; then, “We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren.” There's assurance for you! Fruits of the Christian faith are not jealousy, envy, hatred and malice; the true Christian is full of “love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.” These are the fruits I shall bear if I have Christ in me. That fifth chapter of Galatians will soon tell us if we have the right kind of fruit. Make the tree right, and you will soon have the right fruit!

I have also been greatly blessed by studying the “believings” of John. He wrote his Gospel that we might believe; all through it is “believe, believe, believe.” If you want to persuade a man that Christ is the Son of God, John is the Gospel for him.

Another plan, and a good one, too, is to take the Biblical text which the preacher announces, and then put the key word in the margin which brings the sermon back to you. Everyone ought to jot down a preacher's texts and share them with others by reading aloud. We ought to have four ears—two for ourselves and two for other people. Folks will always be glad to hear you, if you give them heavenly food. The world is perishing for lack of it.

I have carried my Bible with me a good many years. It is worth more to me than any other Bible, because I have marked so many passages in it. If I am called upon to speak at any time, I am ready. I have those little words in the margin, and they are sermons to me. Whether I speak about faith, hope, charity, assurance, or any subject whatever, it all comes back to me. Every child of God ought to be like a soldier and hold himself always in readiness; but we can't be ready without the Bible, the sword of the Spirit. So whenever you hear a good thing there, put it down. If it's good for you, it will be good for somebody else, and we should pass the coin of heaven around just as we do other coins.

Study the Bible carefully and prayerfully; by becoming well acquainted with the great truths God's word contains you will have much less to fear from the world.

—Dwight L. Moody, in "Bible Society Record."

## Church Government

### 1: The Organisation of the Church

#### 1. Two uses of word "church" in the New Testament:

(A) **Universal;** Comprehensive sense including all the saved of the earth (Mt. 16:18; 1 Tim 3:16; Eph. 1:22-23). In this sense the family of God, Body of Christ, kingdom of God, etc. are the same. The Church has no organisation in this universal sense knowing no authority but Christ and his word. Whoever does the will of God and obeys the gospel belongs to it. (Acts 2:41, 47).

(B) **Local;** Limited sense, including all God's people in one community (1 Cor. 1:2; Rom. 16:16; Acts 14:23; Acts 5:11). "In Jerusalem" (Acts 8:1), "in Antioch" (Acts 13:1).

#### 2. The organisation of the local church:

(A) **An established order;** "In every church" (Acts 14:23) . . . "set in order the things that are lacking" (Tit. 1:5).

(B) **An Independent, self-governing Unit:** Always spoken of as separate units. "churches of Galatia" (Gal 1:2). "churches in Judea" (Gal 1:22). Here we notice several independent churches in one district, but no district organisation. In the comprehensive injunction given to the church at Corinth there is implied control of its own affairs by the church. (1 Cor. 14:33, 40).

(C) **A plurality of elders in every church:** "Ordained elders in every church" (Acts 14:23). Elders of the Ephesian church (Acts 20:17).

(D) **Deacons:** Bishops and deacons of the Philipian church (Phil: 1:1).

(E) **Members:** (Rom. 12:4; 1 Cor. 12:27). Identification with a local church was a practice of New Testament days. (Rom. 16:1-2).

#### 3. Local organisation only medium through which early christians worked. New Testament mentions no other.

1. **Missions:** Sent out by the local church (Acts 13:1-3); reported to the local church. (14:25-28).

2. **Charity;** Funds for the poor saints in Judea were placed in the hands of the elders of the Judean churches to be administered by them.

3. Various Scriptural methods may be used in carrying on the work of the local church, but other organisations either within or without were unknown then and therefore are unscriptural now.

4. **Co-operation of local churches:** Local churches co-operated in doing their work, but such work was always under the supervision of a local church and its eldership. (Rom. 15:25-26; 2 Cor. 8:1-5; Acts 11:28-30).

## My Neighbour

Hungry and cold with ill-shod feet  
I see him walk the road and street,  
With haggard face and hopeless eyes,  
Drooping shoulders, despairing sighs,  
Seeking employment none will give;  
Begging for bread that he may live.

Where he is going I do not know,  
But this is the road to Jericho.  
Here he has fallen the thieves among,  
Wounded and by life's wayside flung;  
The priest and Levite have passed him  
by;  
But what of myself? Will I? Will I?

A voice from Sinai's mountain shelf—  
"Thou shalt love thy neighbour as  
thyself."

Truly, myself I love; how well?  
Let me ponder it, as I tell—  
Enough to give me plenty of food?  
Enough of clothing, coal and wood?  
Enough of a house to shelter me—?

Do I love my neighbour as I love me?



## An Appeal

TOWARDS the end of 1961, nineteen Christians met as a church in rented rooms at 52 Park Road, Blackburn. Since then increase has been made in the membership as a result of faithful preaching of the Word. This along with the prayerful interest of brethren in other places, has been a source of great encouragement to us.

Unfortunately, the premises we occupy are situated in a part of the town scheduled for demolition, due to re-planning and other developments. The actual time of this project is not known with any certainty—although early 1964 has been mentioned by the Planning Authorities.

The purpose of this letter is to appeal for financial help from either churches as a whole or individual members to enable us to secure suitable premises that may become available in Blackburn in the near future. Our own resources are somewhat limited because of the rental charge and other necessary "overheads."

We are confident of your continued interest in our work for the Master and so would appeal to you that you make known to the undermentioned any gifts (however small) that could be made available in the near future.

Bro. J. Pritt, 31 Goldney Street, Blackburn, Lancs. (treasurer) will be pleased to acknowledge any contributions you can make. Any other correspondence should be addressed to R. Renshaw, 125 Pilmuir Road, Blackburn, Lancs.

## A Thank You!

Brother and Sister Leonard Morgan desire to express their sincere thanks to all brethren for kindness shown to Sister Morgan during the past months of sickness.

The prayers, cards, flowers, etc. have been a source of inspiration and blessing, and for these we have been most grateful.

We thank our loving heavenly Father for His goodness, and we are pleased to report Sister Morgan is making satisfactory progress.

## MISCELLANY

The richest deposits in the world are buried talents.

The Bible, whose every word is testified to by stones in this land (Palestine) has one ever-recurring refrain from the mouths of its poets and prophets, and records one ever-recurring fact: that great civilisations perish when men turn from God and fail to walk in the paths of righteousness, justice and mercy. (Dorothy Thompson).

## Offices in the Church

### THE PRECENTOR

One is aware that the office of church precentor is not found in the New Testament: we shall look in vain for any reference to singing leadership. But that there was singing leadership of some description is as obvious as that there were lights to see by, or seats to sit on.

The word "precentor" is from the Latin *prae* before and *cantor* singer, and refers to a leader of a choir or congregation.

One of the objects of Christian worship is expressed in Eph. 5:19, "Speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord." We would emphasise the last phrase, "In your heart to the Lord." The words psalms, hymns and spiritual songs basically all have the same meaning, in that they are sacred words of poetry set to music, and as such merely refer to the different types of words set to music. Psalms are invariably chanted, hymns are in four-part harmony, songs in unison or as solos. Whatever mode of singing is employed, to be accepted of God it must be sung "in your heart to the Lord."

We see in this passage the all-embracing wisdom of Scripture: it covers the chants of the East (the most common form of singing in our Lord's time), the harmonies of the West, and the negro spirituals of our coloured brethren; each of them in their respective spheres, acceptable to God, so we believe.

However, in this article we confine ourselves to the singing of hymns as practised in most congregations in our land. The four parts are treble, alto, tenor and bass. At times we also sing in unison as the melody demands. It is not that we think it wrong to sing psalms and chants but that four-part harmony is the form of singing in which we can best express ourselves.

Has it ever occurred to our readers that singing is the only part of our worship that is heard outside our buildings? And it often brings forth far from complimentary remarks! It has been the writer's misfortune to hear the singing of some of our people described as "like a lot of bleating sheep," or by similar expressions. Our congregational singing can often be judged better outside than in, and we, the people giving expression to it, are judged accordingly. We must, however, present the other side of the picture. People have also been known to stand outside our buildings and listen enchanted by what they have heard, surprised that such singing is possible without an organ.

That brings us to our next point. In congregational singing without musical accompaniment a precentor becomes

necessary. He will need a knowledge of music and of hymns and their tunes. He should be a singer himself, though not necessarily a musician. He needs also to know his congregation, its limits as well as its capabilities. It is folly, for instance, to use tunes with complicated parts if there are no singers present capable of singing them. Pitch of tune is important. A skilled precentor can lower the pitch a tone or semitone to bring the tune within the capabilities of a mixed congregation when the normal pitch would be beyond them.

There are two kinds of music at the precentor's disposal: tonic sol-fa, and old notation. The latter is most favoured by musicians: to the uninitiated it presents a bewildering array of crotchets, quavers and semi-quavers, semibreves and minims.

To the aspirant to this important office our advice is, learn music, learn singing, take lessons in one or both if possible, then give the benefits of your training to the Lord and his church. Where a church's singing is well and skilfully led by a precentor who knows his job there is little chance of instrumental music creeping in, for the congregation will be well instructed in the art of unaccompanied singing and be able to give a good account of itself without any mechanical aids to its worship.

We strongly recommend the use of a tuning fork, and without wishing to be arbitrary, the writer makes the following suggestions: a tuning fork may be pitched in either A or C. Our preference is for an A of philharmonic pitch which is half a tone below concert pitch and is better for congregational singing.

A final thought. In the Royal Household is an office known as "Master of the King's Music." This dignitary is responsible for the arranging and presenting of music on Royal festive and ceremonial occasions. Our Church precentors are also masters of the King's music, upon whom rests the responsibility of leading and presenting the music and worship on the royal occasions when we meet to do homage to Him who is the King of kings and Lord of lords, and to present His message to a sin-stricken world. May each precentor discharge his duties so as to give honour to Him whom he serves.

H. BAINES.

### *Planned Neglect*

A noted young concert artist was asked the secret of her success with her violin. "Planned neglect," she replied and then explained. "There were many things which demanded my time. When I went to my room after breakfast, I

made my bed, straightened my room, dusted the floor, and did whatever came to my attention. When I finished my work, I turned my attention to violin practice. That system failed to accomplish the result desired, so I reversed things. I deliberately planned to neglect everything else until my practice was completed. This programme of planned neglect accounts for my success." Planned neglect may not sound good at first reading, but it is essential to give priority in the use of our time if we are to become efficient in the service of God and man. First priority is daily Bible study and prayer. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God . . . and these shall be added unto you."

## NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

**Hindley.**—A Gospel Mission and Bible School weekend was held here from May 27th to June 3rd.

Bro. A. E. Winstanley conducted the Gospel meetings each evening at 7.30 p.m. These were very well attended, one occasion being 15 non-members present. The messages were well received and appreciated, and although no additions resulted, we feel much good was done.

The weekend Bible School meetings were very helpful and instructive. All sessions were very well attended. To all who came and helped from near and far we tender our sincere thanks and pray the Lord may bless these efforts to His praise and glory.

Tom Kemp.

**Ilkeston.**—The Church here celebrated the 83rd anniversary services during the weekend May 25th and 26th. The proceedings opened with a tea of which a good number partook. At the evening meeting about one hundred gathered to hear fine addresses by Bro. R. McDonald (Dewsbury) and Bro. A. E. Winstanley (Tunbridge Wells). We were supported by brethren and sisters from Churches in various parts of the country. Bro. J. E. Breakell presided.

The services on Lord's Day were well supported, 53 members meeting to break bread in the morning, when Bro. Win-

stanley exhorted the Church to faith and good works.

In the afternoon a children's service was held, when many parents of the scholars attended. The children gave of their best in recitation and song. Bro. Winstanley addressed those present.

In the evening, the meeting was again well attended 40 or 50 non-members being present to hear the gospel preached by Bro. A. E. Winstanley. The collections afternoon and evening were given to "Oxford Famine Relief" and realised the sum of fourteen pounds six shillings.

The children were trained in singing by Sis. Gwen Smith and Sis. M. Brown. Sis. E. Wells trained the children for recitations. We pray that the seed sown may bring forth fruit to the extension of God's kingdom.

**Ilkeston.**—With joy we record three more added to the Church here. Gladys Hartley who was a member of the Lord's Day school years ago, but seemed apparently lost to us. However, she has been attending the gospel meetings for a long time now, and made her desire known to be immersed into the ever blessed Name. Also a young married couple Geoffrey and Jean Oakes.

Jean has been brought up with us in the Lord's Day school, and when she was married she brought her husband along with her to the gospel meetings. All three were immersed on Wednesday, July 3rd.

We pray that they may be kept faithful to the end. F.G.

### OPPORTUNITIES FOR DOING GOOD

Mail a card to the sick .

Visit those who are ill or shut in.

Visit those who are new members of the church or have moved into the community. Invite them to the services and make them feel at home.

Help make the church a friendly church. Speak to visitors before speaking to a friend.

If you drive a car, bring one who might have a long way to come to worship.

Tell your neighbours of the church; invite them to come to worship with you. Perhaps you could arrange a private Bible study with them.

Read and study your Bible.

Read to some one who is unable to do so himself.

Avoid making unjust criticism, but give words of encouragement to all.

Attend Bible study and worship meetings, and take some one else with you.

—Selected.

## OBITUARY

**Beulah Road, Kirkby-in-Ashfield.**—The church here has suffered further loss in the passing of our Sister Eliza Jepson, wife of our late Bro. Walter B. Jepson. Our sister passed away on June 19th at the age of 76 and was laid to rest on Friday, June 21st. Sister Jepson had been a faithful follower of her Lord and an example, in many ways, to the church which she, along with her late husband, had sought to help.

We mourn her passing but we know she held the one hope steadfastly to the end. Bro. Allan Murray officiated at the meeting-room, and at the interment. T. Woodhouse.

**Blackburn (Hamilton Street).** — We deeply regret to report the passing of our esteemed Sister Rushton (Jane), who fell asleep in Jesus on Lord's Day, July 7th, having reached the 86th anniversary of her birthday. She was a strong member of the Church of England from childhood until her 56th year when after something like three years of disputation with the late John Wilson, she finally bowed her will to that of the Master, and asked for baptism. She never regretted that action and was always faithful in attendance at the Lord's Table, although she had to travel four miles to meet with the church here.

This she did until the last few years of her life, when sickness prevented attendance. She would save her weekly offering and give it to brethren, as she met them, for the work and word of the Saviour. She was a thorough hard-going disciple for her Master.

Sister Jane's remains were laid to rest in Darwin cemetery, "Resting where no shadows fall." Brother Slater Wilson officiated at the Chapel of Rest and at the graveside.

**Buckie.**—With deep sorrow we report the passing of our esteemed Brother Alfred Geddes, who fell asleep in Jesus on Lord's Day, June 16th. Bro. Geddes, who had reached 70 years, gave himself to Jesus and was baptised over fifty years ago. Through all these years he was a faithful God-fearing Christian. He was loyal to the witness and plea of the Churches of Christ; loved his bible and loved to converse about his Lord, living daily in readiness for His coming. He has now gone to his eternal rest and we are left with the empty seat and happy memories of a brother beloved.

We extend our sympathy to his dear family and pray God may comfort and bless them.

John Geddes.

**SEPTEMBER RALLY**

This will take place on Saturday, September 14, at Beulah Road, Kirkby-in-Ashfield. For convenience, we are making use of the Labour Hall.

Afternoon Session commences at 2.30 p.m. Subject for consideration, "Repentance." Three brethren, J. Dodsley, Graham Gorton and another will address the assembly. Time for comments and discussion after the addresses.

Tea 4.30 approx.

Evening meeting at 6.15 p.m. addressed by Brethren Alex Allen, of Blackburn, and Bro. Albert Winstanley.

We hope to see a large gathering of brethren who earnestly seek to stand for the "old paths."

Will brethren write to T. Woodhouse, 8 Shoulder of Mutton Hill, Kirkby-in-Ashfield, Nottm., for hospitality, if this is required.

**A RALLY**

THE church in Tunbridge Wells intends to have a meeting (D.V.) on Saturday, August 24th, in the Y.M.C.A. Building at 5 Mount Ephraim Road. Four brothers will be serving the church for the week-end: Eric Limb (Eastwood); John Dodsley, Geoffrey Ellis and David Woodhouse (Kirkby-in-Ashfield). Two of these brothers will speak at the Saturday evening meeting, the other two will serve on the following day.

Saturday: tea at 5 p.m.; meeting at 6 p.m. Lord's Day: Breaking of Bread: 11 a.m. Bible School: 3 p.m. Gospel meeting: 6.30 p.m.

A warm welcome to all visiting brethren.

**COMING EVENTS**

**Kentish Town.**—God permitting, Anniversary meetings, afternoon and evening on Saturday, October 5th. Tea 5 p.m. Speaker: Bro. Tom McDonald.

**Spring Conference.**—Will any Church wishing to entertain please write to R. McDonald, "Aldersyde," 10 Mardale Road, Bennett Lane, Dewsbury, Yorks.

**WHO WILL HELP?**

WE are glad to acknowledge gifts of five pounds and twenty-five pounds from churches anxious to assist in bringing the two African brethren to Britain. These, with gifts from local brethren, bring the total to date to £74 7s. 6d. We thank God and take courage.

As previously announced, it will cost about £90 to bring one brother from Nyasaland to this country. We are convinced that there are enough brethren concerned about this need to meet it. Let us hear from you. A. E. Winstanley, 43a Church Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent.

**BOOKS WANTED**

Two brothers in Africa are anxious to obtain copies of "Catechetical Commentary on the New Testament" by the late William Hurte. Do any readers have copies which they are willing to sell? Information to: A. E. Winstanley, 43a Church Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent.

**GOSSIPERS AND GOSSIPING**

The Church needs more burden-bearers and fewer tale-bearers.

"Withal they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also, and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not." (1 Tim. 5:13; 1 Peter 4:15).

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Articles, letters, appeals etc. for insertion must be sent before the 10th of the month to the Editor, C. MELLING, 133 Long Lane, Hindley, Lancs. News items, obituaries, coming events, personal notices, change of address, etc., to W. BARKER, Station Road, Langley Mill, Nottm. Payments to PAUL JONES, as above.

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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