

# *The* **SCRIPTURE STANDARD**

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

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## **THE APOSTLES DOCTRINE**

We read in Acts (Chap. 2) that the early church continued steadfastly in the breaking of bread; in the prayers; in the fellowship; and in the apostles' doctrine (or teaching). In Eph. 2:20 we note that the church was built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone. The religious world of today, however, languishes in a slough of despondency and disbelief. It would be hard to claim that all believers in Christ *today* continue steadfastly in the breaking of bread, the prayers, the fellowship, and in the apostles' doctrine.

Jesus personally prayed for the unity of all His disciples, that they would be as one, "that the world might believe that God hath sent Christ into the world." John 17:21. Some believe that disunity is virtually inevitable but we know that Jesus would not have prayed for an impossibility. Disunity amongst believers is therefore largely responsible for the unbelieving world of today. Disunity amongst believers has been produced mainly by a departure from the authority of God's word and from not continuing steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine. Man is an egotistical creature and really believes that he can improve upon God. Man manipulates God's word and tailors it to suit his own requirements and can usually produce some 'scriptural' justification for doing so. In effect man is actually challenging the authority of God.

God in heaven has absolute authority. He is our Maker, Preserver, and complete Benefactor. He has absolute right to command, and our absolute duty is to obey. He is the potter, we are but the clay. This is our true relationship with God but if we make amendments to God's will we are, in effect, endeavouring to make ourselves equal with God.

In keeping with the principle of delegated authority, God delegated all authority to His only Son, Jesus, because Jesus was faithful. Indeed Paul used this fact as the basis for an exhortation to the Philippians, when he said, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus; who being in the form of God thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation and took upon him the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above

every name. That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father." (Phil. 2:5). Jesus himself could say, "... all authority is given unto Me both in heaven and in earth." (Matt. 28:18). We also read that in Christ "dwelleth all the fulness of the God-head bodily" (Col. 2:19) and that Jesus was "the effulgence of His (God's) glory and the very image of His (God's) substance" (Heb. 1:3). At the baptism of Jesus by John, God interposed Himself to say "This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased, Hear Ye Him." While Jesus walked upon the earth He exercised His authority in person, and personally healed the sick and personally taught the world, and personally forgave sins. His earthly ministry was, however, of a temporary nature and Jesus knowing this began to teach and train His apostles.

When Jesus delegated a substantial portion of His authority to His apostles we might have felt that He was courting disaster. The apostles at best were but human and the human element falls very far short of Divine perfection. The religious world of today bears eloquent testimony to what happens when the 'human element' is allowed to have its way in religious matters. Jesus however assured the world that He would send the Holy Spirit upon the apostles to guide them into all truth. "These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." (John 14: 25-27). In the following chapter Jesus confirmed that the Comforter would *testify of Jesus and guide the apostles into all truth*. Thus the human-element was entirely erased from all subsequent teaching of the Lord's apostles and their words were to be given the complete sanction of heaven so that whatsoever they bound on earth was bound in heaven and whatsoever they loosed on earth was to be loosed in heaven (Matt. 16:19). The teachings of the apostles, like the teachings of Jesus, was firstly oral and later embodied in written permanent form. With the completion of the writings of the New Testament all things pertaining to life and Godliness had been supplied to the world and were now in mans' possession. There is nothing essential to Christianity upon which Christ and His apostles have not written and so nothing can now be rightfully added or taken away. The apostles being dead yet speak and still exercise the authority given to them by Jesus through their writings, teachings, instructions, exhortations and admonitions. Why then should men imagine that Christ will come down in these days with some special message, or that He will send some angel with some new doctrine. Indeed, even if the same apostles were to return today they could not change one word of what they taught 2,000 years ago. Paul, in expressing his amazement to the Christians at Galatia that they had soon been enticed away from the Gospel said, "But though we (the apostles) or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." (Gal. 1:8).

In spite of the apostle's words the world has heard, and still hears, a multitude of gospels which would have been exceedingly strange to the ears of Christ's apostles. Men continue to teach for doctrine the commandments of men — they were doing it in Christ's day and will, I suppose, go on doing it until the end of time. In Matthew 15:9 Jesus comments on the practice and states that all such worship God in vain. It requires the constant vigilance of us all that we might avoid ever being guilty of teaching as doctrine the utterances of even eminent men.

Christ's final instructions to His apostles involved them in the awesome responsibility of teaching all the nations to observe all things whatsoever Jesus had commanded. "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptising them in the name of

the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and lo I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Thus the *apostles' doctrine* is the outworking of these instructions — to teach the world to observe all things whatsoever Jesus had commanded the apostles. We note that the very first stipulation of the apostles was in reference to the terms of entry into the Kingdom of God — the world required (and still requires) to repent and be baptised. The apostles were to teach and baptise — and thereafter teach those who had been baptised to observe all of the Lord's commandments. This was the apostles doctrine in which the early church continued. Jesus said on one occasion (Luke 10:16) with reference to the sending out of his servants to preach, "He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me: and he that despiseth me despiseth Him that sent me." If we hear the apostles we are in fact hearing the Christ. If we reject the apostles we are rejecting Jesus and if we reject Jesus we, are in effect, rejecting God Almighty. Jesus, who has all authority and who delegated part of that authority to none but His apostles brings that same authority to bear upon the world today. Do we recognise that authority, or doubt it: do we concede His authority or contest it: do we receive His Authority or reject it?

False teachings and strange doctrines abound in the world at this present time and by all appearances men prefer error to truth. May it be that we shall not be numbered amongst those who teach for doctrines the commandments of men and that we shall keep before us the fuction Jesus intended for His apostles — that they might teach us to observe all things whatsoever He had commanded them. This grand aim can be achieved only if we, like the early disciples continue steadfastly (that is unwaveringly, resolutely, consistently and constantly) in the apostles' doctrine.

Editor.

## STUDY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT AS HISTORY

### 4. POWER PERIOD

This period of Old Testament history extended from Saul's coronation until Solomon's death.

The events of this period which call for special mention are:

- (a) Saul's Coronation (1 Sam. 9).
- (b) Saul's Defeat.
  - (i) Defeated by Philistines.
  - (ii) Dies at Gilboa.
- (c) Ark of the Covenant Removed.
  - (i) David captures Jerusalem from Jebusites.
  - (ii) David removes the Ark.
  - (iii) Uzzah dies.
- (d) Temple built.
  - (i) During Solomon's reign.
  - (ii) On Mount Moriah.

The Personalities of this period were:

- (a) Saul — first King of United Kingdom of Israel.
- (b) David — second King of United Kingdom of Israel.
- (c) Solomon — third and last King of United Kingdom of Israel.

The first King of Israel was the son of Kish, of the tribe of Benjamin. He was a man of outstanding appearance. Saul and his father's servant while searching for some of Kish's asses came to the place where Samuel the prophet was. During their stay in the house of Samuel, on the second day, Samuel announced privately to Saul that he was to rule over Israel.

Samuel anointed Saul with oil.

Samuel told Saul that certain things would happen to him on the way home. Samuel could not have known of these things had they not been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit (1 Sam. 10:2-6).

A few days later Samuel went to Mizpeh and summoned the people of Israel to meet him there. At this meeting he announced to them Saul's appointment to be King.

The history of David, the second King of Israel, commences in 1 Samuel 16, is continued through the whole of 2 Samuel, and closes in 1 Kings 2. A condensed account is also found in the first book of Chronicles from Chapter 11 through Chapter 29.

David was the son of Jesse, who was of the tribe of Judah. The family residence was in Bethlehem. This small place, in the region of Ephrathah, and to the south of Jerusalem, was called the 'City of David.'

While he was a shepherd of his father's sheep, David was anointed by Samuel as God then indicated that at a future date he would call him 'from following his father's ewes to shepherd 'Jacob his people, and Israel his inheritance.'

He was divinely prepared from that day of his anointing, to undertake his sacred duty — 'the Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward.'

David, whose life is one of varied experiences of deep religious sentiment; sometimes in the highest plane of devotion, at others lying in the dust before the Lord, against whom he had sinned.

He was honoured in that he was the instrument by whom part of the covenant made with Abraham was fulfilled. He established the Kingdom of Israel, extending the dominion until it stretched from Egypt to Lebanon and from the Euphrates to the Mediterranean.

When David became old, his oldest surviving son, Adonijah, made an attempt to get the throne for himself. In this, he got assistance from Joab and Abiathar. Nathan, the prophet, became aware of the plot and, realising the dangers of it, persuaded Bathsheba to remind David of his oath that her son Solomon would be king. David commissioned Benaiah, a distinguished captain, Zadok, the priest, and Nathan, the prophet, to bring Solomon down to the pool Gihon and anoint him with oil. Solomon was thus anointed and proclaimed as Israel's future monarch, and 'all the people said, God save King Solomon.' When this national rejoicing reached the ears of Adonijah and his friends they dispersed in panic. At a later period, Adonijah confessed that the kingdom was his 'brother's from the Lord.'

After David's death, Solomon entered upon his career as the ruler of the tribes of Israel.

For the history of his reign we may read 1 Kings 3 to 11 and 2 Chronicles 1 to 9.

During the earlier parts of his reign, Solomon ruled well, in the fear of the Lord. He recognised the real King of Israel was greater than he was, and so humbled himself before Jehovah.

But before the close of his reign, Solomon forgot the King of Kings and became a ruthless tyrant. The people groaned under his heavy yoke, and he answered their groans by lashing them grievously. Their minds were alienated from the house of David and the seeds of rebellion afterwards led to the dividing of the Kingdom.

For David's sake, Solomon was permitted to keep the whole Kingdom till his death. The Lord made known to him his great displeasure in a stern denunciation: "I will surely rend the Kingdom from thee, and give it to thy servant."

*From: 'The Young Christian.'*

## GLEANINGS

"Let her glean among the Sheaves." Ruth 2:15

### HELP ONE ANOTHER

"A thimble, a needle, and a piece of thread were all lying on a lady's work-table together. Now the needle had rather a hasty temper, and could give sharp pricks when it pleased, and this morning it was out of sorts; so it tried to pick a quarrel with the thimble and said spitefully, "You gave me some hard knocks yesterday, and I wish that you would be more gentle in future." "It is true, I do push you hard sometimes," answered the thimble, "but you know that is only when you do not do your work properly, and our mistress makes me keep you up to it." "Pray don't you two quarrel," said the thread, wishing to be peace-maker. "You mind your own business," retorted the needle. "My business is your business," said the thread. "for you are no use without me, and I am none without you." "That's just it, said the thimble. "A great deal of nonsense is talked in the world about being independent, but my own opinion is that people should try to help one another, for from the highest to the lowest we are all very dependent on the good services of our neighbours for something or other every day of our lives." — "Little Folks."

### CHARACTER

"When you speak of the character of this or that boy or girl, just what do you mean? When the old Greeks spoke of character, they meant the "impression made on any soft substance by a die or mould." No matter what the pattern of the mould or die, as soon as it came in contact with any soft substance it left its likeness there, where anyone might see. And the definition is not a bad one. Our words and acts correspond to the die or mould; whether good or bad, they leave their impression; they put a mark upon us which those who see estimate as our character. So the old Greeks were not far wrong. The best anyone can do is to judge by our appearance."

### HIS MOTHER'S VERSION

"A Bible-class teacher was telling of the various translations of the Bible and their different excellences. The class was much interested, and one of the young men that evening was talking to a friend about it. "I think I prefer King James' version for my part," he said; "though, of course, the Revised is more scholarly." "I prefer my mother's translation of the Bible myself to any other version," his friend replied. "Your mother's? What do you mean?" "I mean that my mother has translated the Bible into the language of daily life for me ever since I was old enough to understand it. She translates it straight, too, and gives its full meaning. There has never been any obscurity about her version. Whatever printed version of the Bible I may study, my mother's is always the one that clears up my difficulties."

### THE EFFECT OF A KIND WORD

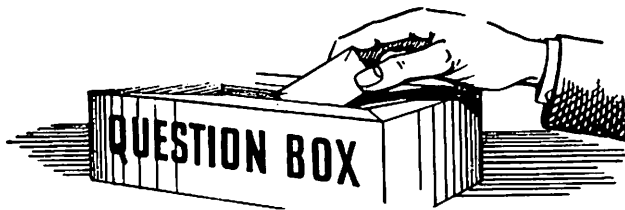
"A civil word is the cheapest thing in the world, and yet it is a thing which the young and happy rarely give to their inferiors. See the effect of civility on a rough little street boy. The other evening a young lady abruptly turned the corner, and

very rudely ran against a boy who was small, ragged and freckled. Stopping as soon as she could, she turned to him and said, "I beg your pardon; indeed, I'm very sorry." The small, ragged and freckled boy looked up in blank amazement for an instant; than, taking off about three-fourths of a cap, he bowed very low, smiled, until his face became lost in the smile, and answered, "You can have my parding, and welcome, miss, and yer may run agin' me and knock me clean down, an' I won't say a word." After the young lady passed on, he turned to a comrade and said, half apologetically, "I never had anyone ask my parding afore, and it kind o' took me off my feet."

### PRAISE

"A gentleman was visiting a friend who was an ardent admirer of Mr. Spurgeon, and was continually praising him as a preacher. "I have never heard him," said the visitor, "but next Sunday I will go and see whether he deserves the praise you bestow upon him." So he went to the Tabernacle, and on his return from the morning service his host met him with the eager question, "Well, what did you think of him?" "Nothing," was the reply. Then, seeing the look of utter astonishment and sorrow on his friend's face, he said again, "No, nothing." But his eyes filled with tears of joy as he added, "All I can think of is the Saviour he held up to us." No finer praise than this could be passed upon any man's preaching.

Selected by Leonard Morgan. From *BETHESDA* 1906.




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Conducted by  
 Alf Marsden

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**"One of the very young members of our congregation (still at school) has been raising again at our Bible study the question of dinosauria and where they fit into history.**

**"In the State of Utah in America they dig up regularly the bones of huge dinosaurs. Where do such creatures fit in historically to the Genesis record of creation?"**

The subject of dinosauria seems to be a compelling one to both young and old; the above questions are just a sample of similar questions which are posed quite regularly. I suppose recent television programmes have generated some of the interest. The implications of this subject are so vast, involving as they do the major subject of Biology, Geology, and also some aspects of Zoology and Archaeology, that unless one is an expert then one is likely to get into serious difficulty. However, it can be argued that the Christian religion has more than a passing interest in a study of creation and the history of man and animals, and it is on this basis that perhaps we can offer some thoughts relative to the subject.

In order to satisfy all concerned, it seems to me that we shall have to examine the traditional view of life on earth (such as may be taught in schools); the Christian view (such as may be taught by the church); and more up-to-date views on creation,

which cause many claims and counter-claims in the scientific world. In order to do this the question may have to run over into the next issue.

### The traditional view

The evolutionist finds it more profitable to explore the history of the animal kingdom rather than the vegetable kingdom. There seem to be no geological traces of the earliest forms of life, but it may be assumed that life started as some microscopic or ultra-microscopic speck of protoplasm (living matter; a homogeneous, structureless substance). The next step must have constituted an enormous evolutionary leap because protoplasm has no unit cell possessing a single nucleus with chromosomes and genes, which would have been necessary to produce a basic and simple one-celled animal. This leap would have to be assumed by the evolutionist because, as I understand it, no direct record of this is available. According to the theory, the first animals would have been small, soft-bodied worms. This era is known as the Primeval or Eozoic era.

The next era is the Palaeozoic era, which was made up of such periods as the Permian, Carboniferous, Devonian, Silurian, Ordovician Cambrian, and Proterozoic. The student will no doubt know that the Carboniferous period is said to have occupied many millions of years during which climatic conditions were benign, because forests are said to have grown, been inundated, then grown again, and so on, until coal seams many hundreds of feet thick were formed. At the end of this period a large part of the southern hemisphere became covered with ice (the Ice Cap), and the climate of the northern world became drier. During this time the sea life would include Trilobites (Try-lo-bites), jellyfish, starfish, and sponges.

By the end of the Devonian period some vertebrates (animals having internal skeleton with backbones) had begun to crawl out of the water, or were forced by drought to live an amphibious life (amphibians lay their eggs in water). These early amphibians possessed legs which were fully developed for land life. Slowly some amphibians changed into reptiles. The reptile was superior to the amphibian, and in the dry conditions which are said to have followed the Carboniferous period, reptiles flourished while many amphibians perished.

The advent of the Mesozoic era saw the evolution of bulk in the form of the dinosaurs. These were land reptiles and are said to have persisted throughout the 100 million years of the Mesozoic era. Fossils of *Gigantosaurus* found in Africa are those of an animal weighing thirty or forty tons. *Brontosaurus* was 65 feet long. The largest and most dreaded of the flesh-eating dinosaurs *Tyrannosaurus*; its jaw was four feet long and its terrible teeth were said to be six inches long. *Stegosaurus* grew large bony plates on its back as a protection. I have mentioned only a few by name but there were other types of dinosaur during this period. Incidentally, the word 'dinosaur' means 'terrible lizard.'

The brains of dinosaurs are said to have been rudimentary. It has been calculated that bulk for bulk, this would give the reptile one-thousandth of the brain weight of a normal man.

As I have intimated, dinosaurs are reputed to have persisted during a period of 100 to 150 million years. The last of the dinosaurs were *Monoclonius* (Mon-oh-klon-ee-us) and *Triceratops* (Try-sair-oh-tops). This era saw also the advent of birds and mammals. It is said that man did not live at the time of the dinosaurs, but we will return to this point later.

The Cainozoic era is said to have marked the advent of man and the continued development of mammals. Man is seen as a member of the climbing mammals, i.e., he is placed in the same group as apes and monkeys. Fossil bones of the so-called earliest ape-man known were found in Java in 1891. The Java primate (Pithecant-

thropus, as he is called) though less than human was more than ape. He was reputed to have lived 200,000 years ago.

Pitldown man, as determined by the Pitldown skull, lived 250,000 years ago, so it is claimed. We shall have more to say about this later also. Neanderthal man lived in caves during the Ice Age. Towards the end of the last glacial period the Neanderthal race is said to have disappeared from Europe. Modern man is said to have succeeded the Neanderthal race; it is said that the forefathers of modern man were known as the Cromagnon people.

### The scientific view of the universe

Scientists have long sought for an answer as to how the universe came into being. Did it start at some definite point in time, or was it because of some sort of continuous evolutionary process? In the mid-1920's, an American astronomer by the name of Edwin Hubble, examined the sky beyond the Milky Way by using the then new telescope (100 inch) at Mount Wilson in California. He determined that objects outside the Milky Way were galaxies like our own, and his explanation was that the universe is expanding, i.e., the space in which the galaxies are located is being stretched uniformly in all directions. This view was seen to be consistent with the evolution of species on the surface of the earth.

So, scientists argued, if the universe is expanding in the way mentioned, it should be possible to work backwards to discover the time when the universe was no bigger than a pin-head or an atom. Taking into account estimated rates of expansion, and calculating for a lessening gravitational attraction as the galaxies moved further away from each other, the scientists came to the conclusion that if the universe began at some finite point in time, the beginning must have been between 10,000 and 15,000 million years ago. Staggering isn't it?

Some scientists, notably Sir Fred Hoyle and his associates, accepted the fact that the galaxies were in fact constantly receding from each other, but they argued that the space between the galaxies was constantly being replenished by hydrogen atoms. This theory, which is known as the steady state theory, is now being challenged by recent observations.

Another theory which has been knocked around quite a bit is the 'Big Bang' theory. This purports to say that for the first 100,000 years or so, the universe was a rapidly expanding fireball, and that the first galaxies were formed after the first 1,000 million years. This theory also is now seen to be defective.

So we are now left with the present scientific conclusion that the universe had a finite beginning. There are those who will view this as a scientific mess, but at least it does bring into view that before the finite came, there was the infinite.

So there we have it. The picture of a universe thousands of millions of years old; life on earth covering hundreds of millions of years. So far as we here on earth are concerned, the pertinent question seems to be, 'is it an old earth or a young earth'? There are those who will say, 'does it really matter anyway'? Do we believe in evolution or creation? Or is it feasible to believe in creation *and* evolution?

(to be continued)

(All questions please to Alf Marsden, 377 Billinge Road, Highfield, Wigan, Lancs).



# “A QUESTION OF AUTHORITY”

## Why We Need Authority:—

During the time of the Judges events had reached an all time low for God's people. The tribe of Dan had set up a graven image and appointed its own priests. A corresponding devaluation of morals had occurred. It was so gross, and became so notorious that it is referred to by later prophets as “the days of Gibeah” Judges 19. A designation impregnated with the lurid picture of sickening degeneracy, Judges chs. 20 and 21. Civil justice was no more than tribal vigilantes bearing the sword with unmeasured severity on transgressors. An example of this was the eleven tribes taking justice into their own hands to revenge the iniquity of Benjamin. The consequence of which was the almost total obliteration of the tribe. All such anomalies have their source in the lack of authority. “In those days there was no king in Israel;” and no objective authoritarian standard of law recognised — “Everyone did what was right in his own eyes” Judges 21:25. Were not these things “written for our instruction that through perseverance and encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope?” Hope by reason of the fact that we can see the catastrophe of rejecting authority. Is there no king in the kingdom at present, should everyone do what is right in their own eyes today?

## Who Is Our Authority (King)?:

That might sound like a superficial question to most Christians. Yet it deserves more than a passing consideration. Because our circumstances verify an exact replica of the “I am of Paul,” I am of Apollo,” “I of Cephas” and “I of Christ” situation at Corinth. Who we subject ourselves to is a very important consideration, and when fairly answered will both pin-point the problem of diverse teachings and provide a solution to sectarianism. Authority in the religious sense is defined by Thayer (p. 225) as “The power of him whose will and commands must be submitted to by others and obeyed.” Who has that power of rule, or government, in the kingdom of heaven? Well it wasn't to be Moses because he prophesied of another, “The Lord God shall rise up for you a Prophet like me from your brethren; to Him you shall give heed **IN EVERYTHING HE SAYS TO YOU**. And it shall be that every soul that does not heed that Prophet shall be utterly destroyed from among the people.” After the meteoric career of John the Baptist, throughout which he stressed “That the kingdom of heaven is at hand,” there was one who excited amazement among the multitudes as he taught. Could this be the mysterious prophet? He was teaching them as one having authority, and not as their scribes. Like the power of mighty cannons his teachings struck fear into his enemies. “The officers therefore came to the chief priests and Pharisees, and they said to them, “Why did you not bring him?” The officers answered, “Never did a man speak the way this man speaks!” All the more reason to ask if this is the Prophet whose every word was to be heeded on pain of death? Just before His ascension into heaven Jesus said, “All authority in heaven and on earth is given unto Me.” Thus He has taken us out of our suspense. Yes, government was to rest on His shoulders, Isa. 9:6. He has the key of David, He opens and no one shuts, and He shuts and no one opens, Rev. 3:7. The Father has given Him authority over all mankind, Jn 17:2. His commandments are eternal life (Jn. 12:50) to those who obey, His words are the standard of judgement to those who reject Him, Jn. 12:47-48.

## The Authority Of Christ In The Apostles:

As there was a delegation of authority from the Father to the Son, Jn. 17:2 so the

long arm of the Fathers law was to be given a farther extention through the Son to the apostles, Jn. 17:8a, 14a, 18. All with good reason too! Jesus was on the threshold of His death, resurrection and ascension. His time to depart and be with the Father had come. Even though, as He put it Himself "I have many more things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now" Jn. 16:12. "But when He the Spirit of Truth, comes, HE WILL GUIDE YOU INTO ALL THE TRUTH," v13. On the evidence of verse twelve we can say that any theory confining the truth to the words of Jesus alone, is proved a lie by Jesus Himself. Samaritans had foolishly accepted the law and rejected the prophets. There still lingers a few latter-day Samaritans who accept Christ's word but reject the apostles.

May the words of the Saviour erase this mistaken notion from mens hearts forever. Another observation before passing on; the apostles were to be guided into all the truth. Jesus' promise has not failed "all truth" was revealed before the last apostle died. The death knell for groups who believe that new truths for our age are being revealed.

The day of Pentecost marks the time when Jesus by the Holy Spirit crowned the twelve with power (authority) from on high. That day, they became the mouthpiece for the Lord, "The one who listens to you listens to Me, and the one who rejects you, rejects Me; and he who rejects Me rejects the One who sent Me." The new born church, mere infant Christians recognised and submitted to the authority of Christ in the apostles.

"They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to breaking of bread and to prayer" Acts 2:42. Even the Gentiles in far off Thessalonica were praised by the apostle Paul because "When you received from us the word of God's message, you accepted it not as the word of men, but for what it really is, the word of God" I Thess 2:13. Children in their simplicity could shout "Hosanna to the Son of David" while the religious teachers in their blindness became indignant. How is it that the infant church could see clearly "That everyone who does not heed the word — of the apostles — shall be utterly destroyed from among the people," and the nearly 2000 year old church, only becomes indignant, when their word is pressed as authoritative? "If any one thinks he is a prophet or spiritual, let him recognise that the things which I write to you are the Lord's commands," I Cor. 14:37.

### **The Authority Of Christ In The Written Word:**

Yes, even the spoken word became statutory, and so highly was it regarded, that it was placed along side the Old Testament writings as scripture. "Just as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, wrote to you, as also in all his letters, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which the untaught and unstable distort, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction." 2 Pet 3:15-16. Paul also makes New and Old equally authoratative. In 1Tim 5:18 "For the Scripture says, "You shall not muzzle the Ox while he is threshing," that part is a quote from Deut. 25:4, and he continues "The labourer is worthy of his wages" our Lord's saying taken from Luke 10:7. Notice both are called SCRIPTURE. When Isaiah speaks about "The word of God stands forever" Isa. 40:8, he spoke not only of the Old Testament but of the writings of Peter and the other apostles as well, see I Pet 1:24-25. The O.T. is quoted as Scripture (Greek - GRAPHE; meaning — writing, anything written). 52 times in the New Testament. Not that they were just writings but they are inspired writings, "But know this first of all, that no prophecy of scripture is of one's own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the

Holy Spirit spoke from God" 2 Pet 1:20-21. The written teachings of the apostles are not in the least inferior to the documents of the first covenant, because both are inspired. The promise of Jesus to send the Holy Spirit to His ambassadors to guide them into all the truth (Jn. 16:13; 14:26) proves that, and so do many other Scriptures as well. So the inspired writings of the New and Old Testaments were together considered Scripture, and that a long time before any Council made a decree on the subject. In view of this evidence it is both reasonable and just to consider the "All Scripture" of 2 Tim 3:16-17, to include the inspired writings of both dispensations Being profitable for "Teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work." We have in our possession then "Everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who calls us by His own glory and excellence."

### **The Word Is The Only Verifiable Authority Today:**

If this is not so, how is it possible to know the will of God? "For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the spirit of the man, which is in him? Even so the thoughts of God no one knows except the Spirit of God." Unaided man cannot possibly discover the thoughts of God.

Fortunately, for us, He has not concealed His thinking, but has passed it on to the apostles for public propagation. "For to us God reveals them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God." "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things freely given to us by God, which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words" 1 Cor 2:12-13. No one else could make that claim for themselves, and as they are the only depository of divine teaching it follows, that any statement or thought about God's will, made by man or woman, not based on their revelations, would amount to pure speculation. Even if it is the Pope at Rome or the Archbishop of Canterbury, development of doctrine is a nonplus, because one can have no hope of knowing the thoughts of another person, let alone the mind of God. In addition to that, since the faith was once for all delivered to the saints, Jude 3. It is unnecessary and sinful to go beyond its boundaries, Gal. 1:6-8. The apostles were given all the truth, to look for more is superfluous.

### **Having Christ's Authority For What We Do And Teach Is Imperative:**

Jesus says "If you abide in my word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

Since that word can only be found in the New Testament it is evident that all who are guided by it are truly disciples of Jesus. "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me" Jn. 10:27. Book, chapter and verse keeps one within range of the voice of Christ. All the commandments and teachings of men are, "the voice of strangers." Only Jesus has the power of rule in the kingdom, His plea is: "Why do you call Me Lord, Lord, and do not do what I say" Lk. 6:46. His law is the apostles doctrine recorded in the inspired writings. To reject them as exclusively binding on every soldier of the cross is once again to create the abysmal conditions of the period of the Judges. When there was no king in the land and everyone did what was right in his own eyes.

Steve Kearney,  
253 Woodlawn Park,  
Firhouse, Co. Dublin,  
Ireland.

## SCRIPTURE READINGS

We are sorry that 'Scripture Readings' do not appear this month due to brother Scott being in hospital. I know that all readers will want to join me in wishing our dear brother every good wish for his speedy recovery. Brother Scott seems to have had a slight heart attack but I have had a 'chirpy' letter from him indicating that he hopes to overcome this set-back to his health and typically expressing concern about letting his 'S.S.' readers down. Brother Scott's readers will doubtless wish to remember brother Scott, in their prayers.

Our lives are a mosaic of minor parts — dishwashing, mending clothes, writing letters, answering phones, checking orders, typing invoices, visiting the sick, breaking bread with friends, and performing a hundred commonplace tasks.

How we play our role in this daily drama determines not the degree of our skill but the height of our joy.

### GOD-CONSCIOUSNESS — THE KEY TO GODLINESS

The word "godliness" is one of the most misunderstood words in the scriptures. Someone years ago, in observing the similarity between "godliness" and "God-like-ness," assumed that the two words meant the same. That false assumption was passed on to others, and has now gained a strong foothold in the thinking of a great number of people.

W. E. Vines in his *Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words* says that godliness 'denotes that piety which, characterised by a GODWARD ATTITUDE, does that which is well pleasing to Him.' (Emphasis mine — B.H.). A godly person, then, is one who

has a Godward attitude, is constantly conscious of God, and whose constant consciousness of God leads him to be obedient to Him. *God-consciousness is the key to being godly.*

Enoch was a man who was God-conscious, for he "walked with God" (Genesis 5:24). He enjoyed constant companionship with God. Wherever Enoch went, God went with him, and Enoch was always aware that He was there. He could not flee from God's presence (Ps. 139:7), nor did he seek to do so. He was a godly man.

How fortunate is that person who has developed within himself this God-consciousness! It is easy for him to *pray*, for God is so near to him. He does not *fear*, for he just places his hand in God's in his times of trouble (Ps. 46:1-3). The power of *temptation* is greatly reduced, for he never forgets that "all-seeing eye" that is observing his every move. He is *thankful*, recognising the God with whom he walks as the source of "every good and perfect gift." He loves God; he talks to God; he walks with God; he is always conscious of God's divine presence, he is never without God. Yet, this relationship never degenerates into just a "good mate" relationship, for he reverences God; he recognises His awesomeness; he gratefully acknowledges his own personal unworthiness of such a relationship with Almighty God.

God-consciousness is not easily developed. At first one must make a conscious effort to think of God, to realise His presence. In time, however, these thoughts of God will become a part of his sub-conscious, so that this God-awareness is with him constantly, day and night. He eventually loses himself under God's wings (Ps. 17:8), and comes to appreciate Paul's words: "*Ye are dead, and your life is hid, with Christ, in God.*" (Col. 3:3).

Truly, "*Godliness with contentment is great gain.*" (1 Tim. 6:6).

— BILL HALL.

## HOLIDAY AT CLEVELEYS

Several brethren in this area are trying to raise enough interest in order to fully book brother and sister Colin Leyland's Guest House at Cleveleys, Lancashire, for a week's holiday in August (9th to 16th). Brethren with nothing arranged holiday-wise might care to spend a week amongst fellow-Christians. The location is good, the air renowned and the food of high repute.

No set programme is intended — freedom for all, but the fellowship should be good. For those who are alone it may be an answer. Children are allowed. The price for adults will be £6.95 plus V.A.T. but a week's booking is the minimum. The limit will be 20-25 and I think about nine so far are interested.

Anyone interested should contact me without delay. John Partington, 86 Lord Street, Hindley, Wigan, Lancs. Tel. No. Wigan 56265.

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## BREVITIES

Faith, courage and loyalty are three things worthwhile; hang on to them.

If we are true to ourselves we cannot be untrue to anyone else.

Never betray the confidence of anyone, not even yourself.

With a heart full of love and understanding there is no room for discontentment.

God gives all of our time to us. How much of this time do we live for Him?

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## THE BLESSEDNESS OF GOD

The revolt of angels, the fall of man, and the miseries of sin, do not, for a moment, interrupt the blessedness of God. They were not, to Him, unexpected events, starting up suddenly while the watchman of Israel slumbered. They were foreseen by God as clearly as any other events of His Government, and

have occasioned neither perplexity nor dismay. With infinite complacency He beholds still His unshaken counsels, and with almighty hand rolls on His undisturbed decrees. Surrounded by unnumbered millions, created by His hand, and upheld by His power, He shines forth, God over all, blest for ever.

What an object of joyful contemplation, then, is the blessedness of God! It is infinite; His boundless capacity is full. It is eternal; He is God blest for ever. The happiness of the created universe is but a drop — a drop to the mighty ocean of divine enjoyment. How delightful the thought, that in God there is such an immensity of joy, beyond the reach of vicissitude! When we look around below, a melancholy sensation pervades the mind. What miserable creatures! What a wretched world! But when from this scene of darkness and misery, we look up to the throne of God, and behold Him, high above the darkness and miseries of sin, dwelling in light inaccessible and full of glory, the prospect brightens. If a few rebels, who refuse to love and participate in darkness on His footstool, God is light, and in Him there is no darkness at all.

LYMAN BEECHER on Matthew 6:10.

## WHAT MAKES A ROPE STRONG?

Pulling together! That's the answer. Many tiny strands, each weak by itself; but, united in a common effort, they become strong enough to bind a giant. What makes a rope strong makes a character or a church strong. When you take told of a rope you seldom think of those strands that are entwined about each other, so as to give the rope such strength. When we speak of a strong character or church, the little things that combine to make for unity and power are often overlooked.

Strands that make a character strong like a rope are many. Take habits of

speech, reading, clean associates, places and kinds of amusements are on the **must** list for a stalwart soul. Integrity, industry, ideals and a hundred other things are important items in the ropelike structure of a man's moral and spiritual fibre.

The strands that make a church are the individual. Under the hand and mind of God, they are directed towards a common end, united in a common cause — God's glory and man's salvation. That is, if the church is to be a strong church.

It cannot be strong unless its members are united. Strong like the church in Jerusalem: "All that believed were together," "Steadfastly with one accord," "One heart and one soul." (Acts, 2:44 and 46; 4:32).

A strong rope-like church is one that has renounced the world. We must be knit together in love, for love is the bond of perfectness (Col. 3:14). Remember this: Strong ropes don't just happen, neither do strong characters and churches. It takes pulling together!

The influence of every member, his time, his money, and his prayers should all be co-ordinated with that of every other member to give the church its greatest possible strength for its task.

### **New church planting**

The congregation at Kalulushi, west of Kitwe, has had five additional baptisms. Efforts are being made to establish further congregations in the villages near Kalulushi. S. Chisebwe (Mufulira) has embarked on a month's preaching tour of Luapula Province, in the far north of Zambia. Also he is making contact with Zaire church leaders from neighbouring Shaba Province of Zaire. The new congregation at Libuyu (Livingstone) has had 22 baptisms. There is now a large church building for new Solwezi Road congrega-

tion, Chingola, and an intensive preaching campaign is now planned. It was while visiting Solwezi Road that Chester Woodhall broke his ankle and put himself on walking sticks. The goal is to establish ten new congregations during 1980. The Kamfinsa area south of Kitwe is best known as the location of a prison. However, the villages of Kamfinsa are a target for current evangelistic endeavours.

### **Preacher training**

Harrison Yabe was converted in 1971 when the Chimwemwe congregation was being organised in Kitwe. He has recently caught the train to the southern border town of Livingstone in order to enrol as a student at the Livingstone School of Preaching. The Livingstone train is often twelve hours late. Harrison should do fieldwork helping itinerant evangelists in the northern areas of Zambia during his vacations.

### **Christian radio**

Churches of Christ continue to be a recognised group for religions broadcasting with Zambian Government approval. This approval was secured by Woodhall in 1977. The programmes recorded in the first quarter of 1979 were stockpiled and continued to be used by Radio Zambia throughout 1979. However, by New Year 1980 the stockpile had been exhausted. Although requested, no programmes were recorded by other members of Churches of Christ during Woodhall's leave. So Woodhall has started up Church of Christ programmes again — with an interview on Radio Zambia and a set of epilogues on TV Zambia. The cassette recorder used by Woodhalls for outside broadcasting has been stolen and this loss is restricting volume of output.

**Chester and Angela Woodhall**  
**Church of Christ Mission**  
 P.O. Box 2297  
 Kitwe  
 Zambia

**WHO HATH SEEN THE WIND**

Who hath seen the wind?

Neither you nor I,

But when the trees bow down their heads,

The wind is passing by.

Who hath seen our God?

Neither you nor I,

But when the trees bow down their heads

Then God is passing by.

There are three kinds of people. "The few who made things happen; the many who watched things happen; and the overwhelming majority who have no idea what happened."

## NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

**Kentish Town:** We rejoice to record the baptism of two young women Cythia Budu (pronounced Boodoo) from Ghana, influenced by her uncle who studied with brother ArkuMensah in Nottingham and was baptised there; and Matilda Soares, of Portuguese origin. We give thanks to God and may these two young women move on into full service for the Saviour.

R. B. Scott.

**Tranent.** On Saturday 1st March we held our annual social and a large number of brethren and friends met together and had a rich time of fellowship. The speakers were Bro. Rodger Parker from Wigan and Bro. Bill Mair from Buckie. Bro. Parker asked the question "Life is now in session, are you present?" and used as his text Mark 8:34. Bro. Mair spoke of "The Truth of God's Word" and used as his text 2 Peter 3:1. The gathering heard praises sung by Slamannan District Choir, a quartet, a duet, and individual items. The Church in Tranent wish to thank everyone who helped make the day such a success.

John Colgan.

## OBITUARY

**Kentish Town:** Thomas Humphrey. In early days a blaspheming seaman, but by the New Birth a 'born again' Christian. Our brother particularly gave sacrificial service in connection with the Sunday School, backed up effectively by his wife. The service was continued with the record of complete attendance for about thirty years and only ceased when frailty of the body made it impossible. Thereafter a ministration of visitation of the local old people was undertaken while sufficient strength remained.

With the advance of old-age brother Humphrey became unable to attend meetings and for a period was sustained by the word of God administered by his wife until the call came early on Monday, 14th April. He was 84 years. We miss him and extend special sympathy to his wife and family.

R. B. Scott.

**New Wellington Street, Blackburn:** The church at New Wellington Street, Blackburn, record with regret, the passing on February 16th, 1980, of sister Bertha Bromiley at the age of 72 years. She was added to the Lord's church at Hamilton Street, Blackburn in 1955. She has suffered much for many years and has spent much time in hospital on quite a number of occasions. Nevertheless, up to the last 3 or 4 years she was a regular attender at the Lord's table and will be missed by all. We particularly commend to the loving heavenly Father her 84 years old husband William (Bill) Bromiley, her sister and the family, but we sorrow not as those without hope. She was always cheerful even in her adversity and I again stress she was an example to us all. She was laid to rest on Thursday 21st February. Brother Alan Brunton conducting the service in the chapel and at the crematorium.

Harry N. Holden.

**COMING EVENTS**

The church at New Wellington Street, Mill Hill, **Blackburn**, are, God willing, holding a: **SPECIAL WEEK-END** on May 24th and 25th. Speaker on both days bro. John Diggle of Ilkeston.

On Saturday 24th the meeting will commence at 7.30 p.m. and on the 25th at 6 p.m.

We are looking forward to a rich time of fellowship and will warmly welcome any who can join us for either or both of these meetings.

Hy. N. Holden.

**COMING EVENTS**

**Buckie, Scotland:** SOCIAL to be held, God willing, on 7th June, 1980.

Speaker: Jack Parker, Wigan.

Tea will be served at 3.45 p.m.

A warm welcome is extended to all who can join us. Singing items greatly appreciated. Any further info. from John Geddes, 'Elmbank', Ianstown, Buckie. Tel. No. 0542-33793.

**CHANGE OF TIME**

**Slamannan, Scotland:** From Sunday, 20th April, 1980, and thereafter the morning service will commence at 12 noon instead of 11.15 a.m.

**CHANGE OF SECRETARY**

**Haddington, Scotland.** The Secretary is now Mr. Hugh Nisbet, 1F Station Court, Haddington, East Lothian. Tel. No. 0975 200011

**CHANGE OF SECRETARY**

**Burn's Street, Ilkeston:** The Secretary is now brother W. S. Bradley, "Jonquil", 212 Park Road, Ilkeston, DERBYS.

**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.

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