

# The SCRIPTURE STANDARD

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

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*'... He was buried ...'*

IN the series of booklets *The Fundamentals* the evangelist R. H. Torrey, writing of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, points out that one of the many proofs of the truth of the Scripture records is their mention of many apparently trivial details connected with the resurrection. For instance, we are told that in going to the grave "John outran Peter." Why ever should such a note be added, completely out of touch, we might think, with the tremendous event being recorded? Surely the mind of the writer should have been enveloped in the resurrection itself, and its meaning. Yet John remembers this and other insignificant happenings on that great day. Why? Simply because they took place. Their very simplicity and unimportance are a stamp of genuineness upon the Scripture record. No writer imagining or fabricating such an event as the resurrection would ever have filled in such personal touches as these little things which happened to him, of interest only to himself.

### **The Importance of Burial**

In the same way, had we been writing 1 Corinthians 15:1-4 we should never have put into a definition of the gospel the statement that "Christ . . . was buried." We should have stated the two tremendous facts that Christ died and was raised again. Of course He was buried, as is any dead body, but that is taken for granted and is not worth mentioning. Yet Paul stresses the fact of Christ's burial, and not only he but many other parts of Scripture, Old and New Testaments. For, although Paul does not state it, like Christ's death and resurrection, His burial was "in accordance with the scriptures." In writing of the sufferings and death of the Lamb of God Isaiah says, "They made his grave with the wicked and with a rich man in his death" (53:10). Spoken seven hundred years before Christ, these words are wonderfully fulfilled in the burial of the Messiah, when the rich man, Joseph of Arimathea, begged the body to lay in his new grave.

Through His prophet Hosea (13:14) God asks His people Israel many questions: "Shall I ransom them from the power of Sheol (the grave)? Shall I redeem them from Death? O Death, where are your plagues? O Sheol, where is your destruction?" The doctor of the law and inspired apostle, Paul, in 1 Corinthians 15:55 takes that scripture and sees it fulfilled in Christ's rising from the grave, so that the Sheol of Hosea and the Old Testament has now no fears, no sting, no victory.

Throughout the Old Testament the Jews are in their law instructed to bury their dead. These laws are meticulously followed to this day. Other eastern peoples than the Jews are most strict in burying their dead. The *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* in the article "Burial" says: "Any lack of proper burial is still regarded in the East, as . . . in ancient times, as a great indignity or a judgment from God. It is esteemed the greatest calamity that can befall a person. It gives men still untold distress to think that they shall not receive suitable burial, according to the customs of their respective race, or family, or religion—a fact or

sentiment that is often alluded or appealed to by way of illustration in the Scriptures. For a corpse to remain unburied and become food for beasts of prey was the climax of indignity or judgment. . . . It was an obligation resting upon all to bury even the dead found by the way. Even malefactors were to be allowed burial (Deut. 21:22-3). It was in strict accordance with such customs and the . . . Mosaic law . . . that Joseph of Arimethea went to Pilate and begged for the body of Jesus for burial."

Deuteronomy 21:22-3 instructs that the body of a man put to death for crime should not hang all night upon the tree. "You shall bury him the same day, for a hanged man is accursed by God." Again the inspired Paul takes this Old Testament scripture and applies it to Christ. In Galatians 3:13 he writes: "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us—for it is written (and here he quotes Deuteronomy) 'Cursed is every one who hangs on a tree!'"

Again, the fact of Christ's burial proves the reality of His death and resurrection. A theory is advanced that Jesus did not die on the cross, but swooned under the exposure to the sun, and that the coolness of the tomb had the effect of reviving Him! Such a theory is not worth a moment's examination, and those who advance it know it to be ridiculous. To get rid of belief in the miracles unbelievers have to advance even greater miracles!

### The Significance of Christ's Burial

But by far the most important aspect of Christ's burial is too often overlooked. Let us remind ourselves that in 1 Corinthians 15:1-4 Paul is showing that the gospel consists of Christ's death, burial and resurrection. In Romans 6:3-4 he reveals that these great gospel acts are depicted in the experience of "all who have been baptised into Christ Jesus." The full passage reads: "Do you not know that all of us who have been baptised into Christ Jesus were baptised into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life." It means that the atonement wrought by the death of Christ operates on and in us through immersion; that because of our belief in Him as Saviour and obedience to Him as Lord, His blood shed in the giving of His life cleanses us from sin, and when we rise from the water it is in "newness of life." We are new creatures, have experienced the new birth of water and the Spirit, have entered into new relationship with God. We are as pure at that moment as a child in its natural birth. "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 8:1).

A criticism often urged against us is that we "make too much of baptism" or "preach baptism too much." When this charge was made against the late Bro. James Anderson he admitted it, but made it clear why. Because so many other preachers do not mention baptism, he had to do their share of teaching its necessity as well as his own. We should not have to labour this subject in every gospel message. But because many others ignore it, we have to show to hearers that there is something else to do to accept the salvation which Christ has won through His death. We dare not let them go without being sure that they have not only heard the gospel but know how to obey it and to respond to its appeal. Every mission we hold to save men and women demonstrates that we could have as many "conversions" as popular revivalists if only we would be content by such "converts" stepping to the front, or putting up their hands or "professing salvation." But we have no right or authority to alter God's way of salvation in any detail. To be true to God and His word we must present immersion in its scriptural setting. In doing this we enter into no judgment upon any: "It is before his own master that he stands or falls" (Rom. 14:4). And in this case the Master is the Son of God.

### The Divine Ordinance of Baptism

In stressing immersion we need go no farther than the New Testament: that is strong enough. Even to read what it says, without comment, is sufficient to leave any seeker after truth without excuse. There can then be no charge of "putting our own construction" upon the teaching.

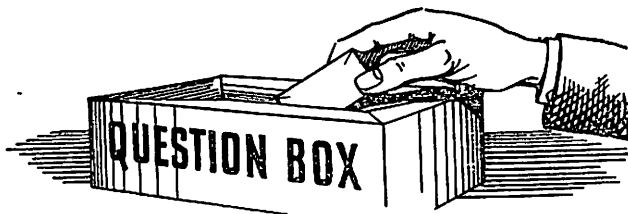
There is the witness, too, of some of the finest Bible scholars who do not themselves practise immersion. Such men have written about baptism, what it is

and what it does, in words as firm and strong as any we use. Hear this, for example, from Bishop Anders Nygren of the Lutheran Church, in his *Commentary on Romans*:

"It is immediately evident that in these words (Rom. 6:3-4) Paul makes reference to the external form of the rite of baptism. When he who is baptised is immersed in the water, the act signifies burial 'with Christ'; and when he again comes up out of the water, that signifies resurrection 'with Christ.' But it would be an utter misinterpretation if, for that reason, one were to characterise Paul's view of baptism as 'symbolical,' in the sense in which that word is generally used. For, according to Paul, in baptism we have to do with realities, not merely with symbolical representations. That which baptism symbolises also actually happens, and precisely through baptism."

In setting out the facts of the gospel the Holy Spirit shows the necessity and truth of the Saviour's burial coming between His death and resurrection. Not straight from death to resurrection, but from death through burial to resurrection. So in the Christian's union and identification with His Lord. Following his argument in Romans 6:3-4 Paul shows that Christians have been crucified (he speaks of himself in Galatians 2:20 as having been "crucified with Christ"), that they have died with Christ. Then he says that we must consider ourselves "as dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus" (v. 11). But between this death and new life must come burial, as with the Saviour. But alas! this burial is omitted, as would have been the mention of Christ's burial had 1 Corinthians 15 been written by any other than an inspired man. But the Holy Spirit does not omit Christ's burial, nor does He omit that which typifies it, the sublime figure of immersion. And so between the death to sin and the old life on the one hand and the entering into the new life in Christ Jesus on the other comes immersion, the burial of the old man and the rising of the new.

EDITOR.



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#### Q.—What constitutes modest apparel for a Christian woman?

A.—This is a question which rightly often exercises the minds of Christians, especially Christian women. A great deal of sincere but often unbalanced writing appears from time to time on the subject, with mere opinions being advanced as scriptural principles. It is therefore important to realise clearly what the scriptures teach on the subject.

1 Timothy 2:9-10 (R.V.) says, "In like manner that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefastness and sobriety; not with braided hair, and gold or pearls or costly raiment, but (which becometh women professing godliness) through good works." This passage occurs in connection with Paul's teaching in regard to women in public worship. Paul is exhorting Christian women not to dress with ostentatious clothing and jewellery as if it were a fashion display, but to remember the occasion and dress and conduct themselves accordingly. Note that Paul is not forbidding any kind of adornment, for even the woman's apparel is adornment, but it is to be modest in character. He is not forbidding the wearing of jewellery. J. B. Phillips's rendering of this passage, although somewhat free as far as the text is concerned, sets forth the meaning. "Therefore, I want the men to pray in all the churches with sincerity, without resentment or doubt in their minds. The women should be dressed quietly, and their demeanour should be

modest and serious. The adornment of a Christian woman is not a matter of an elaborate coiffure, expensive clothes or valuable jewellery, but living a good life."

Peter's statement on the matter must also be considered. 1 Peter 3:1-4 (R.V.) says: "In like manner, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that even if any obey not the word, they may without the word be gained by the behaviour of their wives: beholding your chaste behaviour coupled with fear. Whose adorning let it not be the outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing jewels of gold, or of putting on apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in the incorruptible apparel of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price." Peter is not condemning all love of dress, neither is he forbidding the giving of attention to the hair, nor the wearing of jewellery generally. The word "not" used in this passage, as in 1 Timothy 2:9 is not used in a negative but in a comparative sense. What he is forbidding is too great an emphasis on dress. Bengel rightly points out that the words "plaiting," "wearing" (literally, putting round oneself) and "putting on" are intended to convey the idea of elaborate and time-wasting processes in attending to dress. Peter particularly has regard to laying so much emphasis on dress that a Christian woman with an unbelieving husband considers that by this means alone she can win him for Christ.

We quote J. B. Phillips again: "In the same spirit you married women should adapt yourselves to your husbands, so that even if they do not obey the word of God they may be won to God without a word being spoken, simply by seeing the pure and reverent behaviour of you, their wives. Your beauty should not be dependent on an elaborate coiffure, or on the wearing of jewellery or fine clothes, but on the inner personality—the unfading loveliness of a calm and gentle spirit, a thing very precious in the eyes of God. This was the secret of the beauty of the holy women of ancient times who trusted in God and were submissive to their husbands."

Both Peter's and Paul's exhortation therefore go beyond the immediate circumstances and apply to Christian women at all times, for they show that a woman's adornment both before God and before men, is her character. Every Christian husband will confirm this for, like the writer, he will not remember a thing about the clothes his wife wore when he first met her (he probably paid little attention to them anyway!), but he will remember the character she displayed through the natural feminine beauty that God had given her.

As to the actual details of what constitutes modest dress in a woman, everyone has his opinion, but opinions are not scriptural principles, and this should always be borne in mind. It is noteworthy that both Peter and Paul avoided such details, except where they were absolutely necessary to the illustrating of principles. This must always be so, for modesty in dress is a relative matter varying according to the customs and ideas of any particular age or people. For instance, the length of skirt that even the most modest woman wears today would have been considered most immodest fifty years ago. Conversely, and illustrating from men's fashions, for a responsible brother to appear today in a Teddy-boy suit would be considered irresponsible and immodest, but in Edwardian times this was the dress of the sober citizen.

The Christian woman's dress on the one hand should be neither garish sex appeal nor a walking fashion display. On the other hand, she should not be a frump, dressed with such peculiarity that she gives the impression that Christianity is a sour and morbid affair. She should array herself within the limits of what is considered good taste and modesty, realising not only that character is the true ornament, but that character is often displayed in dress. She will not be able to please everybody perhaps, but two guiding principles will help in making decisions. Firstly, she should do nothing nor wear anything about which her conscience has any doubt (Rom. 14:22-23). Secondly, she should avoid offence, not thinking of herself first, but the good of others (1 Cor. 10:31-33).

Responsibility lies on the older Christian women to teach the younger these things (Tit. 2:3-5) and on both in developing such maturity of character that they may be able to judge wisely in such matters (Phil. 1:9-11).

**Q.—In the light of Matthew 5:28 is a woman as guilty as a man if even unknowingly and unintentionally, by the way she dresses, she arouses evil desires in his heart?**

**A.**—If a woman sets out to so dress as to arouse evil passions in a man, she is more guilty than the man, for he is a victim of the temptation. But some men will look upon a woman to lust after her whatever her dress may be, because their hearts are evil in the first place. This therefore is not the woman's responsibility, and Jesus rightly places the guilt where it belongs—upon the man. Much stress is laid on the undressed state of a woman arousing wrong desires in a man, and this may be so, but it ought also to be pointed out that a woman can be fully clothed and yet so dress that she has an even more disturbing influence upon man. Every Christian woman knows or should know these things and so dress not only for her own sake, but for the sake of others, even if it is only to avoid embarrassment.

## *From a Christian's Diary.*

By BEREAN

**Rome and Peter.** It is disquieting to find non-catholics accepting the theory that Peter dictated much of Mark's Gospel while Marcus was with him in Rome, yet this was clearly stated recently in the question and answer department of *Sunday Companion* including the words, "See 1 Peter 5:13 where 'Babylon' stands for 'Rome'."

There is no direct scriptural evidence that Peter was in Rome at any time and this text at the end of Peter's first letter seems to be the only possible way of insinuating the Romish theory into Scripture. There is indirect evidence that Peter was not in Rome, for example Paul's desire to impart spiritual gifts to the Christians there (Rom. 1:11) which would have been unnecessary if Peter had been there; but let us consider 1 Peter 5:13 just here. Is it right to interpret Babylon here as Rome merely because the word seems to have this significance in the figurative language of Revelation? There is little doubt about "the mother of harlots . . . in purple and scarlet . . . Babylon the Great . . . drunk with the blood of the saints" (Rev. 17:5, 6) but is it, therefore, the right handling of the word to assert that Peter was also making a veiled reference to the great city?

In the previous verse (1 Pet. 5:12) is a reference to Silvanus, or Silas, a real life personality (2 Thess. 1:1; 2 Cor. 1:19) and then in verse 13 mention of Marcus, another far-from-figurative character (Col. 4:10; 2 Tim 4:11). Why then should a figure be introduced into such a literal context?

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**Babylon.** Peter's use of this word can have two alternative meanings. The first assumes it to be a Babylon in Egypt and is based upon the same premise as the Roman argument which declares that Babylon is Assyria had ceased to exist in Peter's day. If this were true it might be reasonable to suppose that the letter was written from an Egyptian town (or even from Rome) but it is very debatable and forces us back to the literal meaning. Adam Clark quotes the following on this passage: "For in the first century the ancient Babylon, on the Euphrates, was still in existence; and there was likewise a city on the Tigris, Seleucia, not far distant from the ancient Babylon, to which the name of modern Babylon was given." We must be careful not to accept a figurative suggestion until the normal literal meaning becomes untenable, or the figurative sense is directly indicated.

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**Table or Altar?** One of the bones of contention between sacramentalists since the Reformation has been whether the "Communion Table" should be made of wood or stone. Readers may be surprised to know that learned Anglican convocations still debate this thorny problem, but before we dismiss the subject as trivial should we not ask ourselves whether we are not in danger of enlarging

similar trivialities when we dogmatise on the need for special furniture and effects in meeting places?

To the churchman a stone altar built against the chancel wall denotes the place for a "priest" to offer up the sacrifice of "the mass", whereas the more portable structure of wood, set away from the wall (as directed following the Reformation) appears to be more like a table behind which the minister can stand. This kind of interior designing, however, has no scriptural support. Whether the elements of the Lord's Supper are placed at the end of the room, away from the wall, in the middle of the room, up on a rostrum or down on floor level is immaterial. This is rather like the nonconformist idea of the central pulpit placing precedence on preaching rather than on sacrament. . . None of this has any significance in an assembly worshipping in spirit and in truth. Insistence upon such visual forms and ceremonials with set methods and furnishings constitutes distraction from true worship.

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**The Table of the Lord.** When Paul contrasts "the table of the Lord" with "the table of devils" (1 Cor. 10:21) he is contrasting the true worship of the Lord with the idolatrous worship of heathen gods. Notice that heathen worship involved "sacrifice to devils" (v. 20) so the "table of devils" was an altar of sacrifice, but it was not the altar which constituted "the table" but the whole act of worship. The apostle is therefore using his figure of a table—whether of the Lord or of devils—as indicating the intense personal communion and fellowship of the worshippers in each case.

The Lord's Table is certainly not an altar, nor is it a table in the sense of a tangible piece of man-made furniture. The only material elements of the Lord's supper are bread and fruit of the vine and it is not to these we refer when we sing G. Y. Tickle's impressive lines:—

"O what a feast ineffable is this,  
Thy table spread with more than angels' food—"

This superangelic food is the spiritual sustenance which we receive by faith in the Lord and obedience to His will. The hymn continues:—

"Angels the highest never taste the bliss,  
The dear communion of Thy flesh and blood."

These words would imply transubstantiation if the Lord's table were visible and tangible.

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**Spreading the Table.** The "spreading of the table" tends to develop its own traditional form in each congregation. What is most important is that we should recognise that spreading the table is not a matter of laying a "fair linen cloth" upon a "dedicated" piece of furniture and putting upon them special traditional pieces of silver plate. It consists of making possible a simple remembrance of the facts of the Gospel, which have procured our salvation through faith. This can be done anywhere that the saints meet around the emblems of the Christ's body and blood, whether furnished with a wooden table, a stone table or no table at all.

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**Dedication.** The "dedication" of soulless building materials has become a regular practice among religious friends who have apostasised from the pure faith in Christ Jesus. It is now a familiar occurrence among those we once called our brethren. A religious weekly recently reported that the minister of a group of "Churches of Christ" conducted a Communion service at which "the Baptistery was dedicated by the senior elder. Members of the congregation repeated their Baptismal vows."

While I am curious to know what a "baptismal vow" may be and how it can possibly be repeated, I am more curious to know by what scriptural authority a baptistery can be dedicated. In the Old Covenant scriptures we can read of the dedication of a house, the wall of Jerusalem, the temple, its altar and all its

precious vessels, and also of Nebuchadnezzar's image, all material things which have no part in the church of the Lord though some have a spiritual counterpart. But in the New Testament, except for a reference to the Jewish feast of dedication (Jn. 10:22) there is only one mention of dedication (Heb. 9:18) where the apostle refers to the dedication of the first covenant with blood, indicating that the New Covenant was similarly dedicated by the shedding of Christ's blood.

Notice that both of these texts refer back to the Old Covenant which was abrogated by our Lord's death. We have neither direct command nor apostolic example for dedicating material things in the church of the Lord.

## SCRIPTURE READINGS

### AUGUST

2—Isaiah 60:1-14.	Rom. 3:19-31.
9—Genesis 15.	" 4.
16— " 3:1-21.	" 5.
23— " 2:1-17.	" 6.
30—Deuter. 5:22-33.	" 7.

### The Exceeding Sinfulness of Sin (Rom. 7:13)

We think it true to say that in the most civilised society today the biggest hindrance to the gospel is indifference. The indifference in the case of intelligent people must be due to failure to recognise the terrible nature and consequences of sin. Probably false teaching about the Bible, especially the Old Testament, is responsible in large measure for this. The Law of Moses is the best teacher of the holiness of God, the origin of sin, and the need for good, holy and pure lives to please Him. If, however, the books of Moses are a hotch-potch of legend, priestly invention and forgery, of what interest can they be, so goes the thought, to intelligent people? So-called Christian teachers and preachers admit and even acclaim these ideas, and so mankind drifts away from true standards of conduct and true ideas of God.

Let us not forget that Moses wrote the first and second greatest commandments, and his law, both ceremonial and practical, is based upon them. We may not see the reasons for all the enactments in detail, but we do know that strict obedience must have produced a whole nation of God-loving, pure and righteous people. The people failed to keep the law, but it was finally and completely fulfilled in the perfect Man.

The sacrifices imposed by that law

impressed most emphatically the dreadful nature of sin by requiring death as the penalty. That the perfect Man had to die to complete them still further emphasises this. The priority of His life should have drawn out all that was good in the hearts of those who respected Moses, but so wicked had the leading professors become that their own sinful inclinations brought about His suffering and death. He was betrayed by coveting and put to death by envy. The most innocent suffered the most. Is it one of the most damning indictments of sin that it always brings suffering upon the innocent?

Neglect of the commandments, which are holy, just and good, is responsible for all the evil there is. Every one of us must acknowledge his share in the universal disobedience. As light reveals darkness so the law reveals sin. It covers, under the further and final teaching of the Saviour, every evil thought. We ought then with humble contrition and a great longing, like that of Paul (Rom. 7:22-25), to purify our own lives by the grace and power of God's Holy Spirit. He works in us both to will and to do His good pleasure.

But this terrible thing, sin—does not every evil from which mankind has ever suffered, is suffering and will suffer, stem from it? We can see many things for which it is directly and immediately responsible and their fruits accumulate, and are inescapable. No society can continue to exist unless it is restrained in some way—hence "the powers that be are obtained of God." Think of an individual case—a mother's suffering when her son becomes a murderer. Here is agony of mind almost unbearable—many lose their reason under similar stresses, and at the present time it seems that mental sickness is as serious a menace as physical—if it is not responsible in large measure for the latter.

It is written of those whom God destroyed with a flood (it may well be in mercy as well as judgment), "the imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." When the fountain is impure all the supply is poisoned. Nothing that man has ever designed has provided a remedy for mankind's sin.

**The Exceeding Wonder of God's Love  
(Rom. 5:8)**

If the law reveal the sinfulness of sin, how wonderful is the love which brought God's own Son into a world which had totally rejected His counsel and deliberately chosen sin and lay degraded and disgraced in it. I wonder if there is any verse in the Bible so often quoted, and so effective in bringing the greatness of that love before our minds. It is fitting it should be there after so true and depressing a picture of the condition of man had been given. It was just impossible for man to lift himself up, and those who had the advantage of possessing the oracles of God had failed as a nation to obey them or maintain even a fair condition of right-doing. We do not forget the humble remnant represented by Nathaniel, Simeon, Anna Zacharias and Elizabeth. Their faith had not failed, and God honoured them. So God sent His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin.

Great indeed must be the love of a pure, righteous and all-powerful Creator, who originally provided all that could be needed for complete happiness and fellowship, who sacrificed Himself in order to bring back into harmony and peace with Himself, those who have proved totally unworthy of His continued gifts. It is impossible that sin can go unpunished. Complete anarchy and final destruction must be the outcome of wrongdoing. No true conception of God can attribute wrongdoing to Him. Wrong conceptions of Him lead to more and more sin—"worshipping the creature instead of the Creator."

It is true that "in the darkest spot of earth some love is found," and instances of unselfish sacrifice for others are known, as our text indicates; but only man regenerated by the love of Christ can exhibit that wonderful love which He has so gloriously poured out on the human race in dying for its sins. We cannot realise the infinite burden which He bore—we can just gain a faint picture by thinking of some suffering of an

individual or individuals we know, and multiply it as a spiritual, a mental and a physical burden. "He loved me and gave Himself for me."

R. B. SCOTT.

## *A Successful Church.*

WAS ever a Church more successful, as the Lord counts success, than the first Church at Jerusalem? Did ever a Church grow so rapidly? Her hundreds soon became thousands. Additions were made 'daily.' Why this success? We are apt to say that the people are prejudiced to the Gospel and its doctrine. But what people are more prejudiced today than the people of Jerusalem at that day? They killed the Prince of Life and had a murderous hate of all His followers. 'The way,' as their religion was called, was regarded as an apostasy from the true worship of God. What then were the elements of success in this church, which indeed was the 'mother' church? We suggest the following:

(1) **The Apostles preached the whole and pure Gospel of Christ;** In plain terms the people were told of their sins, the consequences of sin, the urgent need therefore for salvation, and the means and terms of pardon. The apostles were doctrinal preachers, and the doctrine of Christ was the foundation of their success.

(2) **The church continued steadfastly** in the apostles' doctrine, fellowship, breaking of bread, and in prayers. They did not work or meet by fits and starts; they had no 'specials'—their work and witness was special all the time—so there was no room or need for special efforts and occasions. It was intensive and continuous in the things here mentioned. There were no spasmodic attendances at the 'breaking of bread' or any slackening of personal effort in soul-winning. They were all soul-winners, too.

(3) **The church was solidly united.** 'All that believed were together'; 'continuing daily with one accord in the temple'; 'the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul'—united in the apostles' doctrine. There were no class distinctions—rich and poor, learned and illiterate, clergy and laity—but all were solidly 'one in Christ' brothers and sisters.



(4) **The church was a liberal church:** They continued steadfastly in the 'fellowship.' This word *koinonia*, literally means 'partnership,' but though it has a wider and more general meaning, is understood here to have special reference to the pooling of their money or means for the church's needs, particularly for their poor at that time. The Jerusalem Church gave all they had to the Lord; not because they had to, but it was a spontaneous outburst of their love for each other. They 'had all things in common' (See Acts 2, 44-45).

(5) **The church was a prayerful church.** They continued steadfastly in prayer. Whenever we cease to wrestle daily with God in prayer we become cold and indifferent. There is urgent need for individual and corporate prayer 'Continuing instant in prayer'; 'pray without ceasing and in everything give thanks,' etc., are Divine commands we must not neglect. But let us pray in faith, nothing doubting. Then we may expect a Divine answer to our prayers.  
SILAS.

## Briefs

USUALLY, when a man breaks a promise, he gives another one just as good.

SHAMGAR had an ox goad,  
David had a sling,  
Dorcas had a needle,  
Rahab had some string,  
Samson had a jawbone,  
Moses had a rod,  
Mary had some ointment,  
And all were used for God.

[References: Judges 3:31; 1 Sam. 17:40; Acts 9:39; Joshua 2:18; Judges 15:15; Exodus 4:2; John 12:9.]

## Lesson Outlines

### Series 1

### Lesson 5

**Conversion.**—Mission to Samaria.

**Lesson Verses.**—Acts 8:4-12.

**Memory Verse.**—Acts 8:12.

**Objective.**—It is from the overflow of the heart that the mouth speaks' (Matt. 12:34).

**Time.**—A.D. 33.

**Places.**—The city of Samaria. Many villages of the Samaritans.

The city of Samaria was about 42 miles north of Jerusalem. It was built B.C. 926 by King Omri as the capital of the northern kingdom, Israel (1 Kings 16:24). Ahab, son of Omri, built here a large temple for Baal worship. The view to the west of the city was across the plain of Sharon to the Mediterranean. In B.C. 720 Samaria fell to Shalmanezzer, who took many Israelites into captivity in Assyria, and replaced the Israelites with Assyrians. Herod named Samaria Sebaste, in honour of Caesar Augustus. The village Sibastiyeh now stands on part of the ruins.

At Jacob's well in Sychar of Samaria, Jesus talked to the woman of Samaria about the water of life (see John 4:1-42).

Acts 1:8 records that the good news was to be preached in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, all the world. Persecution brought about the fulfilment in Samaria.

**Persons.**—Multitudes in the city of Samaria, including Simon the sorcerer, those in the many Samaritan villages; Philip, Peter and John—the preachers.

The Samaritans worshipped in Mount Gerizim, the Jews in Jerusalem. 'Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.'

The preachers. (1) Those who were scattered abroad, in particular, Philip, one of the seven 'servers of tables' of Acts 6. Philip's preaching was supplemented by signs, but he could not impart the holy Spirit by the laying on of his hands; (2) the apostles Peter and John. On receipt of the news that the Samaritans had received the Word of God, Peter and John left Jerusalem for Samaria. After prayer and the laying on of the hands of the apostles, the believing immersed Samaritans received the holy Spirit.

**Message.**—(1) Those who were scattered from Jerusalem preached the 'word'.

(2) Philip proclaimed 'Christ' in the city of Samaria (v.5), and also preached 'the good news of the Kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus Christ' (v.12).

(3) Peter and John testified and spoke 'the Word of the Lord,' and on the way back to Jerusalem announced the good news in many Samaritan villages.

**Results.**—The men and women of Samaria had been astonished by the magic-practising Simon. But hearing Philip preach, and seeing the wonderful

signs that accompanied his preaching, (a) foul spirits came out of many possessed by them; (b) paralytics and lame folk were restored to health; and (c) there was much joy in that city.

When the Samaritans believed the Message given by Philip, they were immersed, men and women. Simon also believed and was immersed; but when he saw that the holy Spirit was given by the laying on of the hands of the apostles, he wanted to buy this authority for himself. Peter said to him, 'To perdition with your money and yourself, for thinking that the gift of God may be obtained for money. Your heart is not right in God's sight. Repent of your wickedness and supplicate God, if indeed the thought of your heart may be forgiven; for I perceive you are a sac of venom and the essence of malevolence.' Simon answered, 'You supplicate the Lord on my behalf, that nothing of what you have said may befall me.'

**Emphasis.**—Jesus said, 'for every idle word that men shall speak, they shall be held accountable in the Day of Judgment. For each of you by his words shall be justified or by his words shall be condemned.' (Matt. 12:36-37). And again 'what comes out of a man, that makes him unclean. For from within out of men's hearts, their evil purposes proceed — fornication, theft, murder, adultery, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, licentiousness, envy, reviling, pride, reckless folly: all these wicked things come out from within and make a man unclean.' (Mark 7:20-23).

Our prayer, 'Create in me a clean heart, O God; and put a new and right spirit within me.' (Ps. 51.10).

See also for reference Gal. 5:16-26.

A. HOOD.

want to act or be prejudiced—that the church at Ince is going to adopt individual cups."

The same writer asks the question: "Has the church at Ince in fact been offered a set of trays and vessels, and does she intend to use them whether they cause division or not?"

In view of this enquiry the church at Ince considers it necessary to make the following statement:—

The congregation here has not had any offer of trays and vessels, and the use of individual cups by the congregation has never been suggested by any brother or sister. In fact, several brothers have clearly stated that they would oppose any attempt to introduce them, on the grounds that a change is not necessary, and would, no doubt, offend some of our own members.

#### Ince Building Report

Steady progress is being made on the erection of our new meeting-place. The building has reached floor level and the floor joists have been fitted. Much expense has been saved through many hours of labour given by our own and a few brothers in the district. The brethren are labouring for the bricklayers, excavating for drains, and have already salvaged several thousands of common bricks from loads of hard-core which we purchased when a local cinema was being demolished.

We say a big "Thank-you" to all who are helping us, and to all who have generously contributed. We still need more gifts or loans if our building is to be completed and equipped, so please send on to Philip Partington, 636 Atherton Road, Hindley Green, Wigan, Lancs.

	£	s.	d.
Total Gifts to date . . . .	765	14	8
Our own contribution ..	500	0	0
Promise of Loan . . . . .	100	0	0
Total . . . . .	£1,365	14	8

A sum of £634 5s. 4d. is needed to reach our target of £2,000.

## NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

### THE CHURCH AT INCE: A STATEMENT

In response to a recent appeal for contributions towards the cost of erecting a meeting-place at Ince-in-Makerfield (Lancashire), the secretary of a congregation writes: "We have heard, but we not know—and therefore do not

**Wigan, Scholes.** The church had the services of Bro. Albert Winstanley from Tunbridge Wells for a gospel mission from June 13th to 28th. We heard some inspiring messages from Bro. Winstanley, and at the outset of the

mission, on Lord's Day, June 14th, we witnessed the immersion of Margaret Watson, who has been meeting with us regularly for several months. We pray that she may continue to serve the Lord to His honour and glory. We also received back into fellowship Bro. Peter Bradshaw and his wife, Sister Jane Bradshaw, whose service around the Lord's Table is now constantly maintained after a period of casual attendance. While we are grateful to the local churches for their valuable support throughout this effort, we have most cause for thankfulness in the number of non-members who joined with us at each gospel meeting. Many were consistent in their attendance but, while they were impressed by the truth revealed by the preaching, no more additions to the church were made; but we pray that they may yet yield to the Master in the way He has appointed. Open-air meetings met with a mixed reception, nevertheless we were encouraged by the number of children who, even if out of curiosity, gathered round. These, after being put at their ease by Bro. Winstanley, began to sing lustily the hymn choruses which he taught them. Many of these children are now Sunday School scholars and attend our Monday evening children's meetings. We express the deep appreciation of the church to Bro. Albert Winstanley for his untiring efforts in the Lord's service. May he never weary of the work he has been called to do. J. ASPINALL.

## OBITUARY

**East Ardsley.** The church at East Ardsley lost one of her oldest members in the passing of Sister Warren, the widow of the late Bro. H. Warren. On Lord's Day, June 21st, she fell asleep in Jesus, after having been unable to meet with us very often during these last two years owing to her inability to get about. She became a member of the church in 1916, and was a regular attender until her disability. The interment took place on Wednesday, June 24th, at the East Ardsley Church burial ground. The services were conducted by Bro. L. Murphy, of Dewsbury, both in the meeting-room and at the graveside. She leaves a son and daughter to mourn her loss, and we pray that God's blessing

may rest upon them and comfort them at this time of separation. "Blessed are the dead that died in the Lord; yea, saith the Spirit, they rest from their labours and their works do follow them."

W. WINTERSGILL.

**Morley.** The church has suffered a loss by the passing of our Sis. E. Baines. These last few years she had suffered greatly, having been in hospital for deep X-ray treatment, then home for injections and tablets, yet always suffered with a hope and trust in God that she would be better, even to the last. The doctor felt about three weeks ago that it was advisable to send her for treatment, for she was so weak and full of pain. Then it was decided, with Bro. Baines's consent, to operate. This was successful, but her heart was too weak, and our dear sister passed away. She was a sister who "did what she could," and would have done more. She loved her Lord.

Our deepest sympathy is extended to our Bro. Baines, whom we commend to Him as the source of all comfort.

F. A. HARDY.

Bro. Harold Baines has received so many letters of sympathy from churches and individuals that he finds it impossible for a while to reply to them all, though he will attempt to do so in time. He asks this acknowledgment to be made in the meantime. He has been deeply touched by the affection and help of the brethren and thanks them all.

**Pittenweem.** Sister Paterson fell asleep in Jesus on July 11th. Our hearts were saddened by the passing of such a worthy member of the Lord's body, and our sincere Christian sympathy goes out to her husband, daughter and many friends who are saddened by their loss. Her outstanding quality was steadfastness. She remained from the beginning to the end firm and loyal to her Saviour. The quiet, unassuming, cheerful demeanour was of great benefit and blessing to all who were privileged to fellowship with her. Rarely was our sister absent from any service of the church, and indeed there were occasions when she was present and not too well. We are gladdened, however, by our happy memory of her Christ-like manner of life. We commend her loved ones to our heavenly Father.

J. MCL.

**VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL**

August 15th-22nd, 1959

**SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT**

Accommodation was originally limited to eighty, this being the number of beds available. However, after the limit was reached a number of enquiries were received from brethren anxious to attend. We have been able to arrange for another twenty beds, so that the limit for bookings is now increased to one hundred. To date our list numbers 86, so that another fourteen places are available. Brethren wishing to come should write immediately, as these places will be allocated on a "first-come-first-served" basis. Cost for week (full board and including outing to sea) £3 per head.

Applications: A. E. Winstanley, 43a Church Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent.

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**CHANGE OF MEETING PLACE**

Glasgow.—Due to population movement the church meeting in Hospital Street, Glasgow, in future, will meet as follows: Sunday, Croftfoot School, Croftpark Avenue, S.4. Sunday School 10 a.m., Breaking of Bread 11 a.m. (buses 4A, 5, 13, 14). At Bro. A. Morton's home, 7 Stepford Path, Easterhouse. Gospel and Bible study 6 p.m. (buses 41, 42 or S.M.T. via Smellie's Garage). Thursday, Bible study and praise, Hospital Street, 7 p.m.

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**BIRTH**

GARDINER.—At 29 Beech Avenue, Thornton, Fife, on July 6th, to Bro. and Sis. Andrew Gardiner, the gift of a daughter (Melanie Ruth).

**AUTUMN CONFERENCE RALLY**

to be held (D.V.) on

Saturday, 12th September

in the

CONGREGATIONAL SCHOOL,  
LONDON STREET, FLEETWOOD

2 p.m.: Three ten-minute addresses on the theme 'The Christian in the world today.' Time will be allowed for discussion. A further discussion will then follow on the question 'Is the Authorised Version of the Bible out-of-date?'

4.45 p.m.: Tea will be provided at Burton's Cafe, Albert Square, near the school.

6.30 p.m.: Public meeting at which the subject will be: 'Is Christianity as it was at the first adequate for today?'

We regret that it has not been found possible to have the names of speakers ready in time for this notice. We propose to circularise churches with this information as soon as the list is complete.

It will be appreciated that as tea is at a café, it is ESSENTIAL that those intending to be present should notify us—not later than Saturday, September 5th, please. As stated in our preliminary notice, brethren desiring accommodation to be booked for them should contact Bro. A. L. Frith, 12 Poulton Street, Fleetwood. All other correspondence and any queries to Bro. Eric Winter, 77 Kelvin Road, Norbreck, Blackpool.

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**CHANGE OF SECRETARY**

Morley.—Bro. M. Gaunt, 58 King Street, Drighlington, near Bradford (Tel. Drig 387).

**CHANGE OF ADDRESS**

Harold Baines, c/o 10 Pilden Lane, Bradford Road, East Ardsley, near Wakefield, Yorks.

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

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

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

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