

# The SCRIPTURE STANDARD

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

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## *Saving Words*

ONE of the most singular things, in these times of apostasy and disloyalty to God, is that men talk about "called and sent preachers," but very few of them ever come to the grandest occasion since creation's dawn, where we have an account of "called and sent preachers," of how their preaching cut the hearers to the heart, what they inquired, and what they were commanded to do.

They rarely come to those grand occasions where the Holy Spirit came to guide the "called and sent preachers" into all truth, nor do they follow the directions given by the apostles to those inquiring the way to the kingdom.

Why do they not come here, if they have any love for what was preached "by the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven?" Why do they not come here, if they hold what was preached by truly "called and sent preachers?" Why do they not come here, if they delight in that which is truly the work of the Holy Spirit?

Why not, if they would understand how things were at the start, come to the "beginning?" The reason is that they do not receive the terms of pardon as laid down by Peter. They do not accept the use of the keys of the kingdom, as set forth in his words, opening the kingdom, or giving the terms of pardon. They have "another gospel, which is not another," but a perversion of the gospel of Christ. In turning away from the terms of pardon set forth by the Holy Spirit, through Peter, they have no terms. They have no plan of salvation, no definite terms with which, if a person complies, he has the promise of remission of sins. They can exhort the sinner to seek, to believe, to give up his whole heart, to keep back nothing, but never come to the promise of God that he "shall be saved." They have closed their eyes to the light of the Gospel, and are literally in the dark as to the way of salvation.

Some man responds, "But I do not believe in baptism for the remission of sins." Who has preached "baptism for the remission of sins"? "You have done so, not five minutes since," he replies. Are you sure of that? "I am; I cannot be mistaken," he replies.

Well, you are not mistaken. You heard it, but it was when the precise words of Peter were quoted, "Repent and be immersed, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins." Do you say you cannot receive such teachings? If you do, it is to be regretted; but it cannot be helped if you should refuse to receive the precise language of Scripture. "I do not mean that," says a man, "but I do not receive your interpretation of it.

There has been no interpretation of it given, nor anything but the precise words of Scripture; and if you reject anything it must be the language of Scripture. It is the language of Scripture that is here used, and not any man's interpretation.

"I want the evidence of pardon," says a man. That is all right. You ought to have the evidence of pardon. But where is the evidence of pardon? Is it an old revelation or a new one? Is it in the Bible or not in the Bible, through Christ or directly from God?

You say, "In the Bible." Right: it is in the Bible. Here it is: "He who believes and is baptised, shall be saved" (Mark 16:16). Here is the evidence of pardon in the promise of Jesus, "Shall be saved."

"Is that all the evidence of pardon?" says one. Is not that enough? "That is the mere word," continues the objector.

What do you mean in calling the Lord's word "the mere word?" Do you mean that you cannot rely on it? "The thief on the cross was saved without baptism," continues the objector. How do you know that the thief was saved at all? "I did not know that anybody denied that." No matter whether anybody denies it or not, how do you know that he was saved? Jesus said to him, "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise." True, Jesus said that, but that is "the mere word." Is not that sufficient? Certainly it is; and if you have got so far that you can believe the word, turn back to the commission: "He who believes and is baptised shall be saved." The words of Jesus are as true in one case as they are in the other.

They are beyond all doubt true in both cases. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, repent and be immersed, and you have the promise that you shall be saved. Think of the power of the three words "shall be saved." If you cannot depend on these words, it is not immersion you need, but **faith**.

Immersion is of no value to any man who has no faith in the word of God, or not faith enough in it to rely on it for pardon, and even for the hope of heaven.

If the Lord were to take you from your seat to heaven, and set you down before the throne, and you should exclaim, as one of old, "Lord Jesus, I am a poor sinful man," and the Lord should then reply, "Thy sins, which are many, are all forgiven," and then return you to your seat, you would spring to your feet in ecstasy, exclaiming, "I am pardoned." But where is the evidence? Only in the words, "Thy sins are all forgiven." You may trifle with them as you please, call them "mere words" or anything else, but they contain the evidence of your pardon. Strike them out and you have no evidence of pardon.

"I intend to turn to God before I die: but there is time enough yet," says one. How do you know how much time there is yet? You are like the man in a yawl, two miles above the falls of Niagara, with two good oars, with his hands folded, floating directly on toward the great cataract. A man on shore calls to him: "Friend, there is danger ahead. Lay hold of your oars and get to the shore, or you will go over the falls." He looks up with an air of indifference, and says, "I know there is danger ahead, but I intend to come to shore before I get to it." He moves a mile, and another friend calls to him and entreats him to come to the shore. He still thinks there is time, and goes on another half mile. The third friend calls to him and entreats him to arouse himself as to his condition. He lifts his eyes, sees the cloud of spray rising, the rainbow in the mist, and hears the roar of the immense waters as they pour in majesty down; sees the mighty rush of the waters and the whitecaps on the rapids above the falls; is filled with alarm; seizes the oars and struggles, but in a few moments discovers that it is too late. He calls to a man on the tower for help. The man exhorts him to struggle for his life. This he does, now nobly, but it is too late. He writhes and cries, "O, why was I so simple as to wait till it was too late." Over he plunges into the fearful deep below, and is lost.

Will you, my friend, waste your life in sin and folly, and then entertain the thought of reforming the work of a lifetime in a death struggle, and be thus saved? If you do, depend on it, you may lament your folly where lamentation will avail nothing, where there is no repentance, but where the worm dies not and the fire is not quenched. "Turn, O, turn, why will you die?" Where there is mercy, grace and compassion, turn and live forever. "Whoever will," says the Lord, "let him come." "Come to Me, all you who labour and are heavy laden, and you shall find rest." Come, O, come, and have the peace of God which passes all understanding. —Selected.

## *Denominations Tested by Scripture.*

### V.—THE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

SINCE the official title of this body is "The Holy, Orthodox, Catholic, Apostolic, Eastern Church," it will be understood why men prefer to speak of "The Greek Orthodox Church," or simply, "The Eastern Church."

**Origin.** The Roman Church does not care to be reminded that the Greek Orthodox Church has a history quite as long as her own. Nevertheless, this is a fact. The Christian faith began in the East, not in the West; and the language of the New Testament scriptures was Greek, not the Latin of Rome. For many years, the language used in the church's worship was Greek and the Latin Mass was introduced at a much later date.

It was the Council of Nice that declared that three "Patriarchs" were to be recognised by the entire Church. These were the "bishops" of Antioch, Alexandria and Rome. At this time, the Roman Empire was still a political unity. Later, when the division took place into what history knows as the Eastern and Western Roman Empires, the bishop of Rome discovered that he was the sole "Patriarch" in the West, whilst in the East there were four. To the originals—Antioch and Alexandria—two more had been added, Jerusalem and Constantinople. This simple geographical fact is important because it helps to explain that whilst the Roman Church recognised one man—the Pope—as her head, the government of the Greek Orthodox Church is comprised of a group of Patriarchs, each one of whom is a "Pope" in his own diocese and is not answerable to his fellows.

However, not only was the empire divided into East and West, but the seat of government was moved from Rome to Constantinople. When this happened, the bishop of Rome began to see in his counterpart in Constantinople a very serious rival for the supremacy which he had long regarded as his own. After all, the Patriarch of Constantinople had the Emperor and his court now residing within his diocese! This fear was not without grounds, because in 451 A.D., the Council of Chalcedon declared the bishops of Rome and Constantinople to be equal in might and authority. The jealousy between them continued until in 606 A.D., when the bishop of Rome out-manceuvred his rival and persuaded the Emperor Phocas to bestow upon him the title of "Universal Bishop." This was received with acclamation by the Roman churches, but the supporters of the claims of Constantinople refused to recognise the appointment.

The bishop of Rome himself made matters worse when, in 867 A.D., he meddled in the appointment of a new Patriarch of Constantinople. This was deeply resented by the Greek churches and the first indications of a serious break became apparent. Finally, in the year 1054 A.D., the friction and distrust which had continued from the 5th century came to a head. The breach between the Roman Church and the Greek Church was made. Even then, as so often happens, the true reasons for separation—jealousy and pride—were not disclosed, but rather were concealed beneath mutual accusations of heresy.

**Doctrinal Differences.** For many years the two groups had argued about what was called the "procession of the Holy Spirit." To the statement in the so-called "Apostles' Creed," which says that the Holy Spirit proceeds "from the Father," the Roman Church had added the latin word *filioque*, which means, "and the Son." The Greek churches resented the change and insisted on leaving out the word. There were other differences too. The Greek Church does not recognise indulgences. She does not believe the Roman doctrine of Purgatory. She denies the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of Mary. She does not believe that mankind is born utterly corrupt because of the sin of Adam, and she teaches that what we inherit from Adam is the *inclination* to sin.

She has never practised sprinkling for baptism, but even though she baptises babies, these must be immersed in water. Nor does she use instrumental music in her worship. Indeed, the singing in her services is of great beauty. She rejects the Roman doctrine of priestly celibacy. Every village priest of the Greek Orthodox Church must be a married man. And, incidentally, the title he wears is "pope," which is equivalent to the "father" of the Church of Rome. The Greek Church teaches that divorce is possible, but only on the grounds of adultery. Whilst the Church of Rome uses unleavened bread in her Mass, the Greek Church uses ordinary bread. She does not follow the Roman practice of fasting on Friday. (Originally, the Church of Rome began to fast on **Saturday**, as a protest against the Jewish observance of the Sabbath, but this was later changed to Friday, as being more suitable, since it was on a Friday that the Lord was crucified). Again, there are no statues in the buildings used by the Greek Church; only pictures.

Many of these differences were referred to in a letter circulated by the bishop of Constantinople in 1053, warning other churches against the heresies of Rome. The following year, the Pope's messengers arrived in Constantinople and laid a decree of excommunication on the altar. Not to be outdone, the bishop of Constantinople issued a decree excommunicating Pope Leo 9th and all the churches which submitted to his authority. Since then, the two organisations have had no official contact, since, in theory, neither knows of the other's existence.

Today, the Greek Orthodox Church has a membership of about 150 million, made up of Greeks, Turks, Russians and other peoples of Slavonic origin throughout the world. In many points, she still resembles the church of the fourth to the tenth centuries, because, whilst, as we have seen, the Church of Rome has been constantly shifting her position and developing her doctrine as it suits her

purpose, the Greek Orthodox Church has changed very little indeed in the last thousand years. But, remember that this does not mean she has maintained the purity of the New Testament Church. Even before the year 606, when she began to leave the Roman churches, a great number of changes had already taken place in religion, and we see in her the apostasy of over a thousand years ago in what we might call a petrified form.

FRANK WORGAN.

## *The Vacation School at Bangor*

26th July to 11th August.

ALL who attended agreed that this was an extremely helpful experience. The studies on "Problems of Relationships" gave valuable help for all brethren on practical problems of discipleship. The men's classes also were of a very practical nature, dealing with the theme, "How to prepare lessons for preaching and teaching." The meetings for ladies were a success, and it was felt that the sessions were edifying. The evening prayer and singing sessions were, as always, a source of rich inspiration.

The services of brethren Tom McDonald and Philip Partington, who preached the gospel during the first and second weeks respectively, were highly appreciated. Both "preached Jesus" with simplicity and conviction, and we are confident that this faithful proclamation will bear fruit.

May I thank all who worked hard and willingly to make the school a spiritual success?

At the next Vacation Bible School, in addition to the men's and women's classes, there will be special classes for young folk. It is hoped to announce next month where and when V.B.S. 1963 will be held.

A. E. WINSTANLEY.

### *Problems of Relationship: Children.*

(Blackboard lesson drawn from each letter of the word CHILDREN).

Reading Ephesians 5:22 to 6:4. Newspaper cutting: Today: The Child; Tomorrow: The Citizen, could be paraphrased: Today: The Child; Tomorrow: The Christian.

#### EIGHT PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

(1) **Christian Approach.** Everyone present either are or have been children. To some a popular problem (certain sections); to others a prominent problem (world generally); to many a personal problem (parents). The world has its own views; ours should be Christlike.

The problem of how should a child be brought up. Impossible to generalise, no set rules; to be raised "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" must mean use the Christian approach.

(2) **Harmony.** (Complete understanding between parents). If father and mother are not of "one mind" then the problem of relationship will greatly increase. What that understanding should be.—Responsibility of mother (cannot be over emphasised). Her work of great importance—with children most.

Responsibility of father (again of vital importance). "As for you, fathers, do not irritate your children but bring them up tenderly in the instruction and admonition of the Lord." Husband is the head of the house, final authority.

(3) **Impartiality.** Would it be Christlike to treat one person better than someone else? Certainly not. Never let us be guilty of showing more love to one child than to another. May call for self-discipline. Impartiality must be practised at all times.

Apostle John called himself "The disciple whom Jesus loved." This does not suggest that John was loved by Jesus more than the other disciples.

**Prodigal Son.** This parable demonstrates the impartiality of a loving father. It would be quite wrong to suggest that this son was at any time more loved than the elder son. The result of favouritism can be seen in the story of Joseph—envy. Each child excels in different ways.

(4) **Leadership.** Parent must show a good example. The way a child looks to its parents for guidance must be stressed here. The adolescent and adult life are greatly influenced by the leadership (or lack of it) by the parents.

Good leadership: prayers, scripture readings (in home), regular attendance (meetings of the church).

Bad leadership: criticism of brethren, inconsistency (in anything) to mention only two. Be sure that as a parent your leadership is beyond reproach.

(5) **Discipline** (to some, a frightening word). No parent wants a spoilt child through lack of discipline, nor a scared child because of too much. The correct kind of teaching and example during the child's infancy will largely solve the problem of discipline in the home.

From a child's point of view life is full of correction, school, home, everywhere. Whilst discipline is resented by the child, it is nevertheless expected. "The rod and reproof give wisdom, but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame."

(6) **Restraint**. (There is nothing easy about being a parent—patience, tolerance called for). We need to remember our own childhood days. Some parents think "As child grows from infancy, the position will improve—less need for patience." Then—"In a few more years time"—less need for tolerance. The need for patience, restraint, probably is at its greatest as the child grows older. Christlikeness must be our continual aim.

(7) **Encouragement**. (Being a parent isn't a problem all the time). Encouragement is a necessary part of family relationship. Many parents find so much time for television and other forms of entertainment, and so little time to encourage the good in their children. There is a place for the "Thou hast well done" as well as for chastisement. As we encourage and applaud that which is good in our children, we lay the foundation for that which is well pleasing to our Heavenly Father.

(8) **Neglect**. Not all adults are necessarily parents, but everyone of us can be guilty of neglect to children. You may contribute regularly to the support of Children's Societies and similar worthy causes—and you may still be neglectful.

There may be no children of marriage, but you can have children in your home, either adopted or fostered. Even sisters in the Church, though unmarried, can apply to the local authorities for information concerning child welfare in the home. Let none of us be neglectful in fulfilling our duty towards the child of today who by our example may become the Christian of tomorrow.

R. RENSHAW.

## *A Summary of the Sisters' Meetings.*

ON Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings of both weeks.

First Monday: Sis. Pam. McDonald gave the talk on Luke 10:38-42, "Martha's and Mary's." Do we all come under either category of character? Martha or Mary—Mary feeding on spiritual food or busy Martha preparing material food?

**Discussion:** Both characters are needful. Mary chose the good part Jesus said, by being a good listener to good conversation, but hospitality is very necessary and valuable work. One can be a good listener at a meal table, and be well rewarded for time taken in preparing a meal. This is just one instance of being a good listener whilst busy and both Martha's and Mary's are needful in the Christian life.

First Wednesday: Sis. Beatrice Eccles led a discussion dealing with the two questions: "Should women wear hats in church services?" and "Should sisters use make-up, including finger nail and hair fashions?" Make-up is all right if not overdone. It is not good to make ourselves conspicuous. It was mostly agreed that hats or head coverings are necessary. To wear hat or head covering is what God's Word means in showing woman's willingness for man to be the head. At the same time, man uncovers his head in church services to show Christ is head over man and all of us are in subjection to Christ's authority.

First Friday: Sis. Dorothy Parker introduced a discussion on "What can sisters do in connection with church work?" Conclusion: Visiting of elderly people in their homes; helping them when and where possible; hospitality to children from children's homes; or adopting or fostering children with the thought of bringing them up in a Christian atmosphere and home; remembering also our own members in similar ways.

2nd Monday: Sis. Beatrice Partington. Owing to hospitality being such an inexhaustible subject, Sis. Partington took this up again. She later entered on the subject of whether very young children should be taken into gospel meetings.

**Discussion:** Some for, some against.

Second Wednesday: A beautiful exposition was given by Sis. Miriam Partington on the book of Ruth. Love of all kinds was brought out in this lovely, true story: love of woman to woman—Ruth to Naomi; Naomi to Ruth and Orpah; love of

woman to man—to Boaz; love of woman to child—Obed, Ruth's son. The understanding and unselfishness of Ruth and Naomi resulted in love and tenderness. These traits of character should be seen in Christians' lives, for in many of our hymns we sing to the effect that we would be like Jesus. The story of Ruth was read by two sisters.

Second Friday: Sis. Breakell presiding. All these talks and discussions have given us much to think about and, more, to pray about, which brings me to a topic so valuable and so needful: To pray; how to pray; when to pray; and where to pray.

The discussion was not so much concerned with prayers within the church, for sisters are to be quiet. Yet it may be a good suggestion that a few quiet moments be allowed, so that sisters may also make known their requests or thanks to God silently. (Elders kindly note).

Personal prayer was the chief subject: where?—anywhere, everywhere. When?—at all times, in gladness, sadness, troubles or difficulties, night and morning, at bedside. How often do we kneel and pray? "Ere you left your room this morning, did you think to pray?" If Jesus was to come into this room now what would you do? We feel that we should want to get to Him as quickly as possible and fall at His feet in homage, in worship.

Do this at least night and morning, to own God as Father and Jesus as Son and in return gain His blessing. Forgiveness is necessary also, but if we bow in allegiance it helps to keep us humble; prayer requests for others can be continued in bed, if so desired.

**Result:** All in agreement, especially to pray anywhere, on 'bus or busy street. Many sisters took part during these sessions in Bible Readings and singing solos. So a happy fellowship ended with prayers for the Lord's work and His servants.

EDITH NEWHAM.

## *Gathering Material for an Address*

(Substance of a talk on Sermon Preparation, given at Bangor, 1962).

**SELECTING** material calls to mind a woman who is selecting a piece for a new dress; she chooses the colour, considers the quality, decides on it, then takes it home, designs it, and sews it until it becomes the finished article. This gives us many ideas for selecting and preparing an address.

Much prayer and thought are essential in preparation, because there is no substitution for hard work. Books are important, but young brethren should be selective in their reading, because too widely varied reading can cause one to be book-bound, with consequent confusion. In this connection, I suggest four books as a minimum necessity: a good reference Bible, a Greek and English New Testament, a Strong or Young's Concordance, and a good dictionary. These books, with a good Bible knowledge, provide rich material.

We ought to try to give order to an address, and to this end brethren should use notes, with headings and sub-headings. It has been said that a sermon is like a building: it starts with an idea; then a plan; next the material is gathered; then the workman begins to build, putting the material in its proper place. In other words first the text or theme; then the plan; next the scriptures bearing on the subject; then the orderly building.

Our late Brother T. E. Entwistle once told me that he found the word **IDEA** useful as follows: **I** for Introduction, **D** for Discussion, **E** for Exposition, and **A** for Application. Some may find this a help in preparation.

Another way to prepare is to question the subject under consideration: Why? Where? When? What? In this connection a good background to any address could be formed by asking who wrote or said it, what is its historical value? Why it was said? To whom it is said? And is it applicable to your audience?—in other words: What message has it for us today?

It is very notable in the New Testament that Jesus used everyday scenes or events to illustrate the points he wished to enforce. The Apostle Paul, too, when he went to Mars Hill in Athens, saw an altar with the inscription: "To the unknown God"; from this he preached a powerful message. By this method we can find useful material.

I trust that these notes may help some brethren in the furtherance of the Gospel.

J. E. BREAKELL.

# SCRIPTURE READINGS

## FOR OCTOBER

|                      |            |
|----------------------|------------|
| 7—Psalm 34.          | 1 Peter 3. |
| 14—Proverbs 11.      | 1 Peter 4. |
| 21—Proverbs 3:21-35. | 1 Peter 5. |
| 28—Joshua 1.         | 2 Peter 1. |

### PETER'S FIRST LETTER

Behind every letter is the personality of the writer, and when it is an honest man he reveals himself. However, we feel we know Peter from other scriptures also, and we all have a warm place in our hearts for him on this account. This is surely because we recognise human weaknesses in him which we ourselves have. If we are honest with ourselves, we know what it is to deny our Saviour in a time of trial. Most of us have done so in conditions much easier than those which faced Peter at the door of the hall. We too have gone asleep when we should have been watching and praying. We are prone to allow our prejudices to hinder fellowship, as he did at Antioch, and to be boastful when we should be humble.

So let us listen the more readily to Peter's instructions since his weakness did not prevent his becoming one of the outstanding servants of Jesus. We know that if, like Peter, we believe the resurrection, and sincerely repent of wrong-doing, seeking God's help to overcome, He will keep us from falling. We do not have the miraculous powers or the authority of an apostle, but we have the same promise of divine help in times of trial: He will with the trial make the way of escape, and we are never tempted more than we are able to bear. We do have direct spiritual contact with our Father—something closer still than the actual physical contact experienced by Peter himself with his Lord. But what a wonderful experience that was! And besides, he was with Him on the holy mount (2 Pet. 1:18).

Those to whom Peter writes are suffering persecution. He has known this, too—he might even be subject to it while writing. What a close fellowship is developed when we suffer together! His first thought is to encourage his readers by pointing them forward to the issue of their faith. He wants their suffering to be met with complete assurance, as he himself did, that the outcome of their struggles will be so wonderful as to completely overshadow the temporary setbacks they have experienced. All Christians will suffer the same. Beyond the battle, however, is a triumph not to be compared with any earthly one, for it is eternal and final,

in the heavens, beyond all possibility of subsequent failure, and exceeding in glory the highest imagination. But the battle is hard and long. There is no truce at all. We cannot spiritually sit back. We shall find rest to our souls: not the rest of idleness, but the rest of complete confidence of final victory. We may lose all in the struggle. In fact Jesus said "He that loseth his life for my sake shall find it." Peter had been personally warned of the outcome of his faithfulness (John 21:18), and we understand he suffered death by crucifixion. Nevertheless, if we grasp the significance of the future bliss it will "fill us with unutterable and exalted joy" (1:8, R.S.V.).

Peter's anxiety is not for Christians to escape the sufferings but so to conduct themselves under it that they will develop a stronger faith and a purer life. He wants them to set their hope fully on the future favour of God (1:13), and yet he is severely practical, concentrating his teaching on the daily life. They are to be holy—that is, "set apart"—and yet they must be subject to human government (2:13); behave themselves with the strictest honesty towards their human masters (and we must remember their service was slavery); regard their relationship with husbands or with wives, as the case may be, as involving sacred obligations of service and love, regardless of the characters of those with whom they are dealing; and finally in their relationship with their fellow-men, have no resentment on account of ill-treatment. All this is related to the life and example of the Saviour Himself.

The positive emphasis is upon sober, serious effort of mind, to learn and to keep learning, like growing children. We are reminded of our new birth (1:3 and 2:2) involving us in a new kind of life, with the other left right behind (1:14; 2:1).

Christians must regard their part in the spiritual temple of God as the supremely important side of life. We are each one having a part in the House of God, part of the fabric, so to speak; and this is so much more important than any other part we play in life, having eternal consequences. The other prominent positive commands are to love one another sincerely and fervently (1:22; 3:8; 4:8-10) and to be humble.

On the negative side, we are warned of the danger of falling back into the old evil ways—ignorant passions, malice, fleshly desires (1:14; 2:1; 2:11; 4:2 and 3). These warnings might almost seem unnecessary, and yet how many who begin well in the Christian life fail to avoid these pitfalls. They seem specially dangerous in prosperous and comfortable times. While persecution and even

poverty oppress us we feel our need of God's power the more, but alas for the day of self-sufficiency! Is that why we are called upon to rejoice under

trial? We cannot doubt this is so even if we shrink from trouble, when we consider the example and the teaching of the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls.  
R. B. SCOTT.

## *How Best to Reach People with the Gospel.*

Summary of a "forum" discussion at Ince, Wigan, on Monday, April 23rd, 1962. Purpose: to stress the urgency of our task and to arouse all Christians to work.

### **Why is it imperative that we do reach people with the gospel?**

Because the Son of God commanded it (Mk. 16:15-16; Matt. 28:18-20). The urgency is underlined by Bible teaching concerning the doom of those "who know not God, and that obey not the gospel" (2 Thess. 1:7-10. Note "should not perish" in Jn. 3:16). Jesus came to save those who are lost.

If a Christian had opportunity to save a life physically he would do so unhesitatingly. How callous to be silent when what we say may help to save men's souls. People will not believe and obey unless they hear and we must tell them (Rom. 10:14).

### **The gospel meeting**

This meeting is not as effective as it could be. Every member of the church should regard it as an obligation to be present, and should be diligent in bringing others to hear the glad tidings.

Audience-co-operation should be sought in gospel meetings. In New Testament times preachers expected (and got) questions. A brief talk, followed by a long question period might be much more useful than the orthodox type of meeting with a long "sermon."

Open-air preaching ought to be the rule, not the exception. Why not, in summer months, have the Sunday night "gospel meeting" out-of-doors? This method would reach many who would not come inside—and usually reach far more non-members than we normally do.

Gospel meetings should not be stereotyped affairs. We ought to be ready to try new methods which challenge hearers and provoke thought.

### **Other meetings**

Meetings which can be very effective in leading souls to Christ, other than those of the orthodox kind:

*Home Bible studies.*—These have the advantage of being informal, and in them people are much readier to ask questions. Studies can be undertaken,

by which non-Christians are taught systematically. Also, a number of such meetings could be held simultaneously in different places.

*Door-to-door work.*—This is apostolic—Paul "taught... from house to house" (Acts 20:20). There is no method so effective for finding interested people. Jesus told the apostles to "Go" to the people.

*Adult Bible classes.*—Our Bible school work should not be confined to children. Regular classes for adults do invaluable work.

*United gospel meetings.*—Where there are a number of churches close together united gospel campaigns could be undertaken. The effort of a group of churches might have a much greater impact on a locality than the separate efforts of individual congregations. Such united effort in the open air should be regular in the life of the churches.

*A possibility.*—It was suggested that representatives of various denominations be invited to come to meetings and speak on their distinctive teachings and practices, then submit to courteous questioning. We might find some willing so to do—then have them hear what we have to say and question what we affirm and teach.

*Other means.*—Public discussion, debates and forums were mentioned, but it was felt that these had only a limited value in making known the gospel.

### **Effort by every Christian**

Making known the glad tidings of salvation is not the prerogative of a special class in the church. Every child of God ought to be so filled with love for the souls of men that he or she will gossip the gospel. Here are some things every disciple can and must do:

*Make friends.*—We must be friendly, get to know people, and through personal friendship try to lead them to the Saviour.

*Personal work.*—We must be ready at all times to talk to people about the Lord and His Word (see Acts 8:4).

*Use literature.*—Gospel tracts can be enclosed in letters, given to friends, left in trains, etc. We ought to have some with us always, to leave with those to whom we speak. Portions of the Bible



(especially Acts of Apostles) can be distributed usefully.

*Live helpfully.*—We should always be ready to visit the sick in their homes or in hospital; to help where help is needed; to know when people are in difficulty of any kind and “lend a hand”; pray with the sick; comfort the bereaved—“do good unto all men . . .”

**Commercial means of preaching the gospel**

It was felt that one useful method was of printing gospel articles in newspapers.

**What about Evangelists?**

It was agreed by the four members of the forum that we ought to have more full-time workers. This would require that churches accept the responsibility to support them. More men are needed for working with (a) local assemblies; (b) districts of churches, and also to (c) break up new ground. We should be quite sure in our own minds that we really believe in men devoting their whole lives to the Lord's work. If we do so believe then it is our solemn obligation to support suitable men. Elders ought always to be on the look-out for brothers who could be trained to do full-time work, whether as preachers or personal workers. It would be grand if such could be sent out “two by two” as was the Lord's method. They would thus constitute a church themselves, breaking the bread together, and would not be as prone to discouragement as when working alone in new ground.

A.E.W.

*Literary Midas.*

Midas was a king in Greek mythology who almost brought about his own destruction when, as a result of his ignorance, everything he touched was changed into gold—even the food he tried to eat. Man becomes a literary Midas when he attempts to change the meaning of God's words, and, as surely as Midas, will bring about his eternal destruction. Consider a few of God's unchangeable words:—

**Not:** James 2:24 “by works a man is justified, and *not* by faith only.” Faith only is *not* enough. A man must also repent, confess and be immersed for the remission of his sins before he stands justified in God's sight.

**Went:** Our Lord, describing the attitude of the penitent son in Matthew 21:28-31 said, “he repented and went.” This act of going shows that simply being sorry for sin is not enough. The New Testament penitent believer *went* on to confess Jesus as the Son of God

and to be immersed for the forgiveness of his sins.

**Unto:** Paul, writing in Romans, 10:10 said, “confession is made unto salvation,” not into salvation. To get into a saved state, one must also be immersed into the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit for the forgiveness of his sins.

**Also:** Peter 3:21 “baptism doth also now save us.” He did not say baptism only saves us, he said baptism also. What are the other essentials? Faith, repentance and confession.

—Bible Talk.

*The Art of Listening.*

Listening is considered the essential factor in face-to-face communication. To appreciate the full meaning of this statement, the following analogy will help:

When we “tune in” a certain radio station, we at the same time “tune out” other stations. If the station drifts, we try to focus it again for better reception. We are not satisfied with anything less. The human mind operates very much on the same order. When we speak to someone, the listener may or may not have anything on his mind. To listen well, he must clear his “mental decks”; he will then be “in tune” with the person who is speaking.

It is quite true that on subjects in which we have deep interest, and in which we are personally involved, it is difficult not to be in a listening mood. However, we assume that a student has a lot to gain even from material with which he is only vaguely familiar.

To help the student get the most from listening, the following guideposts are offered:

- (1) Listen actively—not passively.
- (2) Train yourself to get the main idea and meaning from material spoken.
- (3) Exclude from your thinking while listening, interfering thoughts and feelings.
- (4) Make the speaker realise that you are with him while he speaks.
- (5) Have an open mind on what the speaker has to say.
- (6) Allow the speaker to finish before asking questions.
- (7) Check yourself to see if you “drift” while supposedly listening.
- (8) Remember that there is no limit on improvement in listening habits.
- (9) Make it your business that once you decide to listen, this will serve as motivation for further listening.
- (10) Don't be annoyed by a poor speaker, he may still have something important to say.



(Conducted by  
A. E. Winstanley,  
43a Church Road,  
Tunbridge Wells,  
Kent).

### THE FIRST SACRIFICE

ADAM AND EVE had a number of sons and daughters (Gen. 5:4). The first of their children they named "Cain," the second "Abel." Cain became a "tiller of the ground" and Abel a shepherd.

In the process of time each made an offering to the Lord. Cain brought "the fruit of the ground"—vegetables. His brother offered "the firstlings (first-born) of the flock." You might think that there was nothing unusual in the fact that their offerings differed. After all, each was giving what he had. But we need to look a little further than that.

#### Only one accepted

God approved of Abel and his offering, but Cain met disapproval for himself and what he offered. Why? Read the story carefully (in Genesis 4), and you will find no reason is given. But there is a reason—a very good one, too. "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent (a better) sacrifice than Cain . . ." (Heb. 11:4). So his sacrifice was better because it was "by faith"; but what does that mean? Faith (or belief) is the result of testimony: "So then, faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10:17). It is as simple as this: to hear what God says, to believe and obey, is to act by faith.

#### Why God was displeased

Obviously God had told the two brothers what they must bring as an offering. If he had not done so He could not fairly prefer one to the other. The reason God was displeased with Cain and his offering was this: Cain knew what God had asked, but deliberately offered something else. Cain's vegetables may have been good ones—the very best, but God had said sheep, and nothing else would do. If the Lord asks for a particular thing it is because He wants just that, and nothing else will do. Cain disobeyed, and disobedience is sin.

#### A righteous man

We are told that Abel "had witness borne to him that he was righteous, God bearing witness in respect of his gift" (Heb. 11:4). Abel was "righteous"—he did that which was right. He listened to God's word, believed it and

obeyed it, so God was pleased with him. The story can be summed up very simply: disobedience is sin, obedience is righteousness.

#### An important principle

The things recorded in the Old Testament are "written for our learning" (Rom. 15:4). They are there to teach us great lessons, important principles. Here is one clearly taught in the story of the first (recorded) sacrifice: God will not accept in His worship anything other than he has commanded. And that, by the way, explains why Churches of Christ do not do quite a lot of things practised by other religious bodies.

Offer people ask: "Why don't you use an organ or piano in your meetings?" or "Why don't you 'baptise' babies?" It is because, like Abel, we are concerned to do what God has said, and not to substitute something else.

#### SOMETHING TO DO

ASK your parents (a) if they have good, used clothing which they can spare; and (b) who in your district collects it for sending to refugees. They will see the connection. There are hundreds of thousands of people (men, women, boys and girls) who desperately need clothing. We are very well blessed. We can—must—help them. Jesus once said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

#### DID YOU KNOW?

MANY owls and hawks have eyeballs larger than ours. In many birds the eyes weigh more than the brain, and in some birds one eye does. These eyes have a third eyelid, which is drawn back and forth rather like a windscreen wiper as the bird rushes through the sky.

The eyes of the owl are ten times more sensitive to faint light than ours. Some hawks have such remarkable sight that, high in a tree, they can see small prey over a mile away. To enable it to get grubs from trees, the woodpecker's tongue is so long that it curves over inside the bird's head and is rooted in front of its eyes.

Many birds have a built-in sense of time that is so exact that after flying inland for long periods they can return to shore for feeding at the hour when the tide is right.

*"The Site of the Good Intent"*

PROGRESS REPORT on the erection of a meeting house for the church temporarily meeting in the Y.M.C.A. Building at 5 Mount Ephraim Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent.

Work is proceeding steadily. Much of the brickwork has been done, window and door frames are in position, and the builder says "It will not be long before the roof is being reared." We thank God and take courage.

| OUR FINANCIAL POSITION                       |  | £      | s. | d. |
|--|--|--------|----|----|
| Total received to date (September 7th) ..... |  | 5,430  | 6  | 3  |
| (including our own contributions).           |  |        |    |    |
| Amounts paid out:                            |  |        |    |    |
| For Steelwork .....                          |  | 204    | 5  | 0  |
| To Builder .....                             |  | 878    | 0  | 0  |
|  |  | <hr/>  |    |    |
|  |  | 1,082  | 5  | 0  |
|  |  | <hr/>  |    |    |
|  |  | £4,348 | 1  | 3  |
|  |  | <hr/>  |    |    |

The "target" set, to pay the builder for his work, is £6,000, which means that we still need £569 13s. 9d.

## LOANS

The local Trustees have decided to appeal to the Brotherhood for loans to raise this remaining amount, which, at the present rate of building, is likely to be needed soon. If any who read this are able to lend us any amount (large or small) please write to the address below. We appeal to all brethren everywhere, to pray for us.—A. E. WINSTANLEY, 43a Church Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent.

## NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

**Blackburn, Park Road:** The church is again encouraged by a further manifestation of the power of the gospel. Selina Ashby had been attending our meetings for a number of weeks before she was finally persuaded she had a need of baptism in order to be "born again" and added to the Lord's church. The word of truth, faithfully preached, was the means of her coming to the Saviour. On Tuesday, August 28th, 1962, she was immersed into the ever-blessed Name. The brethren at Park Road desire to express their sincere thanks to the church at Scholes for all their help and co-operation. To God be the glory.

R.R.

**Bedminster, Bristol:** We had the joy of witnessing the good confession and baptism of Miss Jean Doxsey, on Sunday, September 2nd. Our new sister has been attending our meetings for some time and expressed her wish to follow her Lord in the way He has appointed. Bro. Frank Worgan was passing through on his way to Devon for holidays, and he delighted us with a wonderful exhortation. Truly a red-letter day. A.D.

## OBITUARY

**Peterhead:** It is with deep sorrow that we report the passing from this earthly life of Bro. Aik Strachan, who died on the evening of August 26th, at the age of 61. Our brother had been an active member for the past twelve years, holding the position of church secretary till January, 1961, when ill-health forced him to retire from that position. It did not keep him from taking an active part. He was also a most able preacher of the Gospel, and his passing has left a gap in our ranks that will be hard to fill. We commend his sorrowing wife and family (three sons, two daughters), all of whom are in the church to the care and love of our heavenly father. He was laid to rest in Balmoor cemetery on August 29th, after a service in the meeting-hall. Bro. W. Steele conducted both services.

J. Buchan.

**Peterhead:** Sister John Strachan and family wish to convey their heartfelt thanks to all their brethren who remembered them in their love and prayers, also for all expressions of sympathy, both personally and by letter, and to brethren who travelled from Tranent, Dalmellington, Edinburgh and Buckie; their presence was a great comfort.

## COMING EVENTS

Zoar Street, Morley, annual autumn rally. Saturday, October 6th: Tea 4.0 p.m., meeting 6.15 p.m. Speaker: Bro. A. Gardiner; chairman, Bro. C. Limb.

Sunday, 7th: Breaking of bread 2.30 p.m.; gospel meeting 6.0 p.m., when Bro. Gardiner will serve the church.

Come and help us make this a memorable occasion.

## WIGAN DISTRICT CHURCHES

United Gospel Meeting in Queen's Hall,  
Market Street, Wigan,

SATURDAY, 13th OCTOBER (D.V.)  
at 7.30 p.m.

Preacher: Bro. Dieter Alten (Germany).

Please make a special effort to attend this meeting. Visitors needing overnight accommodation are asked to contact Philip Partington, 636 Atherton Road, Hindley Green, Wigan, Lancs.

**Ince-in-Makerfield** (Lancs.) Gospel Effort, 7th to 19th October, 1962 (D.V.). Meetings every night. Weeknights at 7.30 p.m., Sundays at 8 p.m. Preacher: Bro. Dieter Alten (German evangelist). We ask for your prayers; and your presence whenever possible.

**East Ardsley Anniversary**, Saturday and Lord's Day, October 27th and 28th. Saturday: tea at 4.15, evening meeting at 6 o'clock. Chairman, Bro. J. Robottam (Wortley). Speakers: Paul Jones (Birmingham) and R. McDonald (Dewsbury). Lord's Day: Bro. Jones will serve the Church.

## CORRESPONDENCE

## "A Cry from the Heart"

In last month's "S.S." we published a letter from Bro. H. Houston to Bro. Paul Jones, together with an editorial note and appeal. We need not repeat these, but ask our readers to turn up the letter to refresh their memories.

In response, Bro. Jones has received letters from brethren in the Bathgate district, throwing further and clearer light on the matter on which Bro. Houston wrote. We are grateful for these letters and for the interest the brethren are showing in this case.

We now understand the situation much better. We desire to make a sincere apology to the churches and brethren concerned for any wrong impression given that Bro. Houston has been neglected and left alone. The letters show that this is not so. We are deeply sorry for any reflection that may have been cast upon these brethren, or for any unjust judgment to which they have been submitted. It would have been wiser if, before publishing Bro. Houston's letter, we had made inquiries to clarify the matter. We ask the Slamannan district brethren to accept our assurances that there was no intention to reflect upon their actions, and that Bro. Houston's letter was published in good faith and only with the desire to help our brother in his need.

We are not at liberty to reproduce or quote from the letters, but we have written the senders personally to the same effect as this note. EDITOR.

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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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