

The SCRIPTURE STANDARD

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

VOL 26. No. 7.

JULY 1960

The Abuse of Authority in the Home

THE right kind of a home is a place in which the woman is womanly and the man manly. It is a good thing for a man to know that he is a man, for a woman to know that she is a woman, and for a child to know that he is a child. Sad results come when a child fails to recognise his position and becomes disrespectful; when the woman tries to be a half-man, half-woman, disliking her own unique capacities; and when the milk-toast husband fails to rise to the responsibilities which the headship of the household demands.

It is not an accident that a generation of domineering wives, irresponsible husbands, and disrespectful children has appeared at the same time. The man who cannot rule his wife as God commanded, cannot long rule his children. The man who does not have the respect and loving submission of his wife will soon have children who treat him with disrespect. The result is bad for all concerned. Women are cheated if their husbands do not take real leadership and children are cheated even more. Only when the place of authority is accepted by the husband and honoured by the wife can the true dignity of both manhood and womanhood be appreciated. The strength of a man's character and the beauty of a woman's character appear most normally when he takes his Bible-given place as leader and she takes her place as helper.

Discipline

Authority can be abused. It can be to a man's honour or to his disgrace.

(1) It is an abuse of authority for a man to handle his children with harsh revengeful discipline. The Bible plainly commands bodily punishments for a child. "He that spareth his rod hateth his son; but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes" (Prov. 13:24). Effective discipline must be done in love. Much discipline is only an expression of revenge, is offensive to a sense of justice.

Too many parents tolerate defiance until they are exasperated. They tell the child, "No!" He defies them. At this time, they should quietly and in complete self-control punish disobedience. Instead, they endure his disobedience until aroused to a keen and bitter vexation, and then they "let off steam" by punishing the child in a spirit of anger. They have done wrong, and probably the child has been wronged. The same spirit is seen in parents who knock their children about their heads. A boy's head is not a "soccer" ball. It is not his head that has been padded for punishment. Punish the child, and do it thoroughly, then pull him on your lap and tell him that you love him and why he must learn obedience.

(2) It is an abuse of authority for a man to force his family into circumstances where they cannot obey God. Some men are "enemies of the cross of Christ . . .

whose god is the belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things" (Phil. 3:19). They want nothing to do with the church and will deliberately plan to move their families out of contact with the church. Other men are spiritual midgets who don't believe that God will keep His word. They don't believe that God will adequately provide for them if they keep their families close to the fellowship of the church. They will uproot their families and move them into a spiritual desert for a more pleasing paycheque. There is no Christian fellowship, no sound scriptural preaching, no place to continue steadfastly in the apostles' teaching and the breaking of bread; unless in fact these are fulfilled in the hope itself and propagation of the gospel in the new situation.

These things are given second place and money matters are given first place. The Bible says, "Wives, be in subjection unto your husbands" (Eph. 5:22), and "Let every soul be in subjection to the higher powers" (Rom. 13:1). But when civil government tries to force a Christian into a position where he must disobey God, then, "We must obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29). I do not believe that a Christian wife must submit to an unchristian husband when he attempts to force her into circumstances where she cannot obey God. This is an abuse of authority. A husband has no authority to defy God.

Example

(3) It is an abuse of authority for a man to expect right-doing without exemplifying right-doing. God demands as much morally and spiritually of a man as he does of a woman. God expects a father, in every way, to be an example of spiritual fervency and moral purity, even as his wife is to be. God has one standard of right-doing for both. Cigarette smoking is wrong for a woman. It is dirty, wasteful, rude, and harmful. The same is true for a man. Cursing is wrong for a woman. It is indecent, wicked, and against God. It is just as wrong for a man.

Any man who sets one standard for his wife and children and another for himself is a hypocrite. He is advocating what he does not practice. Any man who drinks, smokes, and laughs at filth, but doesn't want his family to act like that is plainly a hypocrite. Any man who wants his family to do right and to be Christians, but doesn't set the pattern, is a slacker and a shirker and doesn't deserve a loving family. His family cannot thoroughly respect him. You have no right to expect your boy to be one bit better than you are. If your actions cancel what you have to say, if your children act like you do, you have no right to rebuke them or discipline them.

God needs strong men for heads of families. God needs men of character who will use their authority for his honour. Man, if your home is wrong, you are wrong! You are first of all responsible. Have you misused the place that God has given you? Only God through Christ can make a man what he must be in order to be a good husband and father. May you say like Joshua "... but as for me and my house, we will serve Jehovah" (Josh. 24:15).

Nearer Destruction Than Ever Before

The following Press cutting, sent to us by one of our readers, is worthy, we think, of inclusion in our pages for wider publicity. It is an expression of an opinion that we all share, and it may help towards the creation of a point of view which may ultimately lead to a change of heart in this and other nations of the world.

MISDIRECTED PROGRESS in scientific fields, a growing over-emphasis on material well-being, and the better-than-the-Joneses attitude of a "sick" society were condemned by the Vicar of Skegby, the Rev. A. J. Balmforth, at the annual civic service in St. Mary's Parish Church, Sutton, Notts., on Sunday morning.

Mr. Balmforth told a packed congregation: "We tend to think what very clever people we are. Progress has been so very fast in the last half-century. What a tremendous lot of undreamed things we can now do.

"To fly faster than sound is old stuff: we can shoot at and hit the moon, we can explode terrific bombs far more deadly than the world has ever known, even create power from the sea.

"Yet in fact," he continued, "as the Conference that never was in Paris at the beginning of this past week has plainly shown, we have become so clever that we are nearer to completely destroying ourselves than we have ever been before.

"Our cleverness hasn't done anything to produce better men and better women, a happier and more peaceful world, a better understanding between nation and nation, and race and race.

Living Standard High

"We are so often told that our standard of living has never been higher, and quite naturally each of us likes the material comforts and pleasures that we enjoy today. Any rise in our standard of living is acceptable, but there is a very real danger that we let our material well-being cloud and blot out all else. So many have done just that.

"They regard it all as of their right," Mr. Balmforth added, "and woe betide anyone who comes between them and getting it. Yet the truth is that clever though we may be, on our own by no means can we do it all, by no means can we make a world of security and happiness and peace. We are in fact dependent upon all sorts of peoples and things for our daily life, but above all and over all we are dependent upon God for the fundamental gift of life itself, without which there would be nothing."

On the subject of nuclear armaments, Mr. Balmforth asked: "Isn't there something very sick with a society that is forced to spend vast sums on hydrogen bombs and the like—while such as Cancer Research has to beg and the old aged people, who have served their community well, are kept on a low standard?"

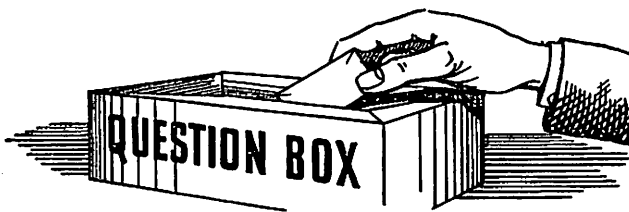
World Drifting Along

"You know, one's mind boggles at the thought of the outcome of a world and a society rent asunder, drifting along living only from minute to minute. Surely man was destined for and has it within himself for something greater than that.

"Happily, though slowly, I believe more and more are finding a Christian faith and a Christian discipline, living under the law of God and trying to carry it out in daily life, as the only thing to make sense of life."

Concluding, he added: "It seems to me that we might well remind ourselves that man alone is not enough. In these days when we are exhorted on all sides to go one better than anyone else, how inhuman, unmerciful and hard society can become."

—"Notts. Free Press," May 27th, 1960.



CONDUCTED BY
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IN answering the question last month in regard to whether the Roman Emperor Constantine instituted the observance of the first day of the week as the Lord's Day we showed by evidence from both the Old and New Testaments that the scriptures deny such a theory, for the Lord's Day was observed regularly and continuously from the first day of the week upon which Christ rose from the dead.

Evidence From the Early Fathers.

We now turn to the sub-apostolic age, and here again can be found abundant evidence that the first day of the week was observed as the Lord's Day by all Christians. The evidence is mostly drawn from the writings of the Early Fathers. Their unanimous testimony is striking, for amid the many disputes and controversies that arose in the early church during the first three centuries after the death of Christ, there was one matter over which there never appears to have been any dispute, and that was the observing of the first day of the week as the Lord's Day.

Pliny. Our first witness is not a Christian at all, but a Roman and a pagan. Pliny, governor of Pontus and Bithynia, writing to the Emperor Trajan, about the year 100 A.D., tells how Christians in his province had confessed that they "on a fixed day before dawn meet and sing a hymn to Christ as God."

Ignatius and others. The first Christian witness is Ignatius, who was born in A.D. 30, and therefore was contemporary with both the Lord and the Apostles. Writing about the year 110 A.D., he says, "Those who were brought up in the ancient order of things have come to the possession of a new hope, no longer observing the Sabbath, but living in observance of the Lord's Day on which our life also is sprung up again by Him in His death" (Epistle to Magnisians, chapter 9). References to the Lord's Day are also found in the epistles ascribed to Clement of Rome, about 95 A.D., and to Barnabas, 120 A.D. However, it is fair to state that some scholars believe that at least some of the letters of these three writers are spurious, and of much later date.

Justin Martyr. The first undisputed evidence for the observance of the Lord's Day in the writings of the Early Fathers comes from Justin Martyr. In his Apology addressed to the Emperor Antoninus Pius, written about 140 A.D., he says, "On the day called Sunday an assembly takes place . . . and the records of the Apostles and the writings of the Prophets, are read. Then when the reader ceases, the president, in an address, urges and exhorts to an imitation of these good things read. Then we stand up altogether, and pray; and as was said before, when prayer is ended, bread, wine and water are brought, when the president in the same way offers up prayer and blesses them with all fervency, the people responding, and saying, Amen; then takes place a distribution to and receiving by each, of those things which have been blessed, and they are likewise sent by the deacons to those that are not present. Then the rich, and those who wish, at their discretion, each gives what he thinks proper."

Bardesanes, of Edessa, was a heretic, but he gives clear testimony to the Lord's Day. Writing in his book, "The Laws of the Countries," addressed to the Emperor M. Aurelius Antoninus, written about 180 A.D., he says, "Lo! wherever we be, all of us are called by the one name of the Messiah, Christians; and upon one day, which is the first day of the week, we assemble ourselves together, and on the appointed days we abstain from food" (Cureton's Translation).

Dionysius and Melito. Dionysius, Bishop of Corinth, writing in 170 A.D. a letter to Rome, speaks of "The Lord's holy day." Melito, Bishop of Sardis, about the year 180 A.D., wrote a book concerning the Lord's Day. It is not extant, but the fact that a work was especially written upon the subject, shows its importance at that time.

Irenaeus was bishop of Lyons. Writing about 178 A.D., he not only asserts that the Sabbath is abolished, but writing against the introduction of the feast of Easter into the early church, he says, "The mystery of the Lord's resurrection may not be celebrated on any other day than the Lord's Day, and on this alone should we observe the breaking of the Paschal Fast."

Tertullian, writing towards the close of the second century says, "We solemnise the day after Saturday in contradiction to those who call this day (Saturday) Sabbath" (Apology, chapter 16).

Origen was a man of great learning and extensive travel. Writing at the close of the second century, he showed the superiority of the Lord's Day to the Sabbath, and declares that it is one of the marks of the perfect Christian to keep the Lord's Day.

Cyprian and others. Cyprian of Carthage, 253 A.D., Commodian, 270 A.D., a Christian historian of Africa; and Victorinus, bishop of Pettau, 290 A.D., who wrote several commentaries, all mention the observance of the Lord's Day in their writings.

The Apostolic Constitution of about 250 A.D. makes a number of references to the Lord's Day, including exhortation to meet more diligently (Book 2, section 7).

Anatolius, bishop of Laodicea, writing about 270 A.D., says, "Our regard for the Lord's resurrection, which took place on the Lord's Day, will lead us to celebrate it."

Peter, bishop of Alexandria, 306 A.D., says, "We keep the Lord's Day as a day of joy, because of Him who rose thereon" (Canon 15).

Athanasius, bishop of Alexandria, writing at the beginning of the fourth century, in his commentary on Psalm 118, verse 24, says, "What other day can this be than the day of the resurrection of our Lord? . . . But the word points to the day of the resurrection of our Saviour, and to its name, which is, confessedly, the Lord's Day."

Eusebius, the great church historian, although having a sabbatarian idea of the Lord's Day, says in his commentary upon Psalm 92, "The Word, through the new covenant, changed and transferred the feast of the Sabbath to the rising of the Sun, and gave to us the image of the true rest—the day of salvation—the Lord's Day—even the first day of light . . . We perform those things which were enjoined on the priests to do on Saturday; for we offer up spiritual sacrifices and offerings—which are called offerings of praise, and sacrifices of thanksgiving; . . . and everything, which it was usual to do on the Saturday, these we have transferred to the Lord's Day, as being more suited to the Lord than it, and being the chief day, the first, and more honourable than the Jewish Sabbath."

Edicts concerning the Lord's Day. In 321 A.D., the Emperor Constantine, having adopted Christianity and made it the state religion, issued a decree concerning the observation of the Lord's Day, in which he enjoined that "all judges and the civic population, and workshops of artisans, should rest on the venerable day of the Sun." Four years later, the council of Nice, assuming the universal acceptance of the Lord's Day, issued directions concerning the posture of worshippers on that day. The Council of Laodicea, the date of which is not certain, but was held sometime between 318 and 367 A.D., in its twenty-ninth Canon enjoins on all Christians, "not to imitate or act like Jews, in resting on the Sabbath, or Saturday, but to labour on that day; and, honouring the Lord's Day in preference to it, to rest from labour thereon, if they are able, as becomes Christians. But if they should be found judaizing, let them be an anathema from Christ."

Summary and Conclusions. In the light of the evidence we have examined, it has been plainly shown that the claim made by some, that the observance of the Lord's Day was instituted by Constantine or one of the church councils, is completely false.

As we have seen, the Lord's Day is a divine, and not human institution. Its significance was prophesied in the Old Testament; it is the day on which Christ rose from the dead; it is the day upon which, from the very evening of the resurrection day, the disciples began regularly gathering together; it is the day upon which the church was established; the day which was recognised by apostolic command; the day which was universally observed throughout the early churches and which continued to be observed down through the ages.

We have also seen that all this is acknowledged by writers, in some cases more than two centuries before Constantine or the church councils. But even more significant is the fact that writers like Athanasius and Eusebius, writing about the time or after the church councils, continued unanimately to attribute the institution of the Lord's Day to the Lord, and not to the edicts of men.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR JULY

3—2 Kings 5:1-19.	Matt. 18: 1-20.
10—1 Chron. 13.	„ 18:21-35.
17— „ 15:1-16.	„ 19: 1-15.
24— „ 15:25-26.	„ 19:16-30.
31— „ 16:7-36.	„ 20: 1-16.

Samuel

The two books which bear this name were also called first and second books of Kings—first and second books of Kings being then third and fourth. Obviously only the early part of the first book of Samuel could have been written by him. The prophets Nathan and Gad were probably the writers of the rest, but we have no direct evidence of authorship, which is immaterial. The sad deterioration of the nation recorded in Judges seems to reach its climax with the capture of the ark of the covenant by the Philistines. By that time religion had become superstition, and even the High Priest was unworthy of his position. His weakness in relation to the behaviour of his sons led to his rejection.

Samuel, whose descent is traced to Kohath, and who was thus due to share the work of the tabernacle (Num. 4:34-37), was born in answer to the prayer and vow of his mother Hannah. His name means “heard of God” due to this fact. As in the book of Ruth we find thoughts of God taking a place in the lives of some of His people at least. The picture of a household divided through bigamy is a warning but this is modified by a loving husband and Hannah “taking it to the Lord in prayer.” They were not the only family party which went up to the tabernacle to worship regularly, or recognised their dependence upon their God. Note also the generous sacrifice offering (1:24) indicating the prosperity of the family. Hannah’s deep gratitude to God was fittingly expressed by her vow and the fulfilment of it without murmur. We are glad that Elkanah so readily agreed. It would indeed touch them both deeply to give up the child who would be specially precious. God richly rewarded both (2:21), and out of their sacrifice came great blessing to the whole nation.

Eli and his sons, and no doubt their predecessors, had failed to uphold that standard of righteousness which was specially required of those who served in the tabernacle and went into God’s presence in the Holy of Holies. So God ceased to reveal Himself there as He had in better days. However, He did so in other ways, as is shown by the message of warning brought by the “man of God” (2:27). This had become “rare” instead of “frequent” or “widely spread” (3:1 margin). But with Samuel, young as he was, God did communicate His word. It can be assumed without question that the boy took a keen interest in what he was doing in the service before Eli, and he would thus learn God’s will. “And the child Samuel grew on, and was in favour both with the Lord and with men” (2:26), reminding us so clearly of the child Jesus. Here we would comment on the place of the parents in the lives of the children. How serious a responsibility they have, and what untold blessings to humanity godliness in this sphere has brought—or rather shared.

It was a heavy task for the child to reveal the fate of Eli and his family to the old man himself, and this was perhaps a preparation for the even heavier duties that fell upon him to rebuke and correct the whole nation later on. Obviously Samuel developed so readily and effectively in the position of assistant to Eli that God was able to use him in instructing the worshippers in their duties, and impressing upon all the righteous judgments of the law, the need for repentance and the reasons for their troubles.

And so all Israel began a reformation under Samuel’s guidance. The loss of the ark through their superstition and folly taught them a lesson they so much needed while the work of Samuel continued so effectively that for twenty years they “lamented after the Lord” (7:2). He made plain what has always been and is still true, that “returning to the Lord with all the heart” is the condition for having His blessing and deliverance.

It may well be that the church today needs the heart-searching and repentance illustrated so remarkably in the divine history. Prosperity and apparent progress can only be real and lasting when it is accompanied by inward grace, and is its outcome.

R. B. SCOTT.

CORRESPONDENCE

'This Do . . .'

Dear Editor,

Individual cups are used upon hygienic grounds only. There is no N.T. warrant for them. Advertisements have stressed, "Danger at the Communion Table." This indicates our Lord instituted something dangerous to health.

A few brethren, finding themselves in an assembly where cups were used have sought to solve the problem by sharing with the next brother or sister. This seems to me to be just tinkering with this innovation. My own attitude would be to stay away, or refuse to partake.

That Jesus used one cup of which the eleven apostles partook is beyond question. One cup was enough, but surely the idea was and still is, that of collective fellowship when we come together. If, therefore, the church is of such a size that one cup is not sufficient there is no reason why, after thanks have been given, the fruit of the vine should not be divided into two, three or even more cups, that all things be done decently and in order. What matters is that collective fellowship be observed by a number of brethren partaking of the same cup. Some churches might well give prayerful thought to this.

I am as much against one cup which is not sufficient to serve the congregation as I am against individual cups. Twice the cup has reached me with hardly enough to wet one's lips. Some sanctified common sense is called for in these things. Brethren deplore the division on this question, but surely those who have departed from clear N.T. teaching and practice are responsible and not those who are contending for it.

A. L. FRITH.

Dear Bro. Editor,

May I submit some observations re the question of the use of individual cups at the Lord's Table. Undoubtedly this is a subject fraught with the gravest dangers and consequences if allowed to continue in dispute without settlement. Most brethren even repudiate the claim that this practice or innovation (for

such it is) is a matter of opinion; hence the attitude which we all should adopt regarding this question.

But the purpose of this communication is to find the cause and suggest a remedy. First then what are the circumstances which have given rise to this practice? It has been contended that it is in strict accord with the Divine pattern. We refute such a claim and aver that not one shred of reasonable evidence has so far been produced in support of any other but one cup. The adoption of more than one cup is pressed by some for reasons of expediency or convenience, particularly in respect of large churches.

If it is proposed to make this the ground for a plurality of "the Cup" then the only answer to that must be: when an assembly becomes too unwieldy for one cup then it is too big and the real need is for some to depart and commence a cause in other parts, thus fulfilling the evangelical nature of the church.

Finally it is suggested that individual cups are to be preferred on the grounds of hygiene. Those who argue thus are fearful of becoming contaminated by a possible disease; they thus make every brother and sister suspect they are in danger of becoming as the scribes and Pharisees (Matt, 23). Support for the individual cup has been excused in some quarters by those who object to the presence of lipstick on the cup. This objection should never be allowed to become an argument for the use of the individual cup. The writer feels that should this be a real danger, our sisters can well be relied upon to deny themselves this adornment "for one brief hour" for the sake of the gospel. I join with all those who plead for the exercise of Christian graces and with those who are prepared to resist any and every attempt to change the pattern of those things "once delivered to the saints."

BASIL JAYNE.

Dear Bro. Editor,

It is not my intention to discuss at length the cups question; I leave that to the brethren who are more capable than I. But I wonder if the advice of a sister would be accepted in this discussion?

I speak as a mother who is deeply grieved and concerned for our young people for, as Bro. Gorton said, the

Church is in danger of being split wide open over this matter, and I am only afraid that some brethren may find it hard to retrace their steps to our former practice. If they could, it would be a blessing for all, for I sincerely believe that the children, who did not ask for this trouble, are going to be the ones to get hurt the most.

My hope is that every parent who reads this letter will remember the solemn responsibility laid upon them, and try to do all in their power to stop this division before it is too late. I ask in all sincerity, have we all stopped to consider what our children are thinking about all this controversy? How do they feel towards brethren who once visited their homes, were such friends of Mum and Dad, but now, through some reason, they do not come any more?

I feel more sorry for our teenagers. They are the ones who should be our chief concern, for in a very few years they will be the workers and preachers in the church. This is a sobering thought, brethren, and one which should make every parent think hard and long before going further along this path which is going to affect them.

I speak to all mothers to use their efforts to halt this tide of division, and get back (if only for our children's sake) to the position we have held for so many years in this country, and see to it that our children are given a heritage of which they will be proud.

The Hindley Bible School had, as usual, a large percentage of young visiting this year, and it made my heart sad as I thought of what the future holds for them. At the time of writing, I can only see tender friendships between boys and girls broken and lost ere they were formed. We say we love our children, and their welfare is dear to our hearts: then let us all get back to our old associations with brethren with whom we have so much in common, and renew our friendship so that the young folks need no longer stand by helplessly and see brethren fighting each other on this matter. We owe it to our children—**are we going to fail them?**

I feel a happy solution would surely be to get back to the use of one cup (which never caused division) for, as an American brother said to me many years ago, as he saw it, it would be the best for the British brethren to continue as they have always done. What a pity others did not share his views.

I believe that this is indeed the crossroads for us, brethren, and I solemnly beseech of you to restore order in our ranks so that we may go ahead with the job we were really saved to do, that of saving and winning souls for the Church of our Lord.

DORIS MORGAN.

Dear Brother Editor,

Frantic efforts to find support in the New Testament for individual cups help us to understand why so many are satisfied with reasons given for infant sprinkling. There is as much support for the one as for the other.

I wish to compliment Bro. A. Ashurst on the admirable and sound way he answered Bro. Channing. The cup is scriptural; cups are not; nor can any use individual cups because it is more scriptural to do so.

New Testament writers did not argue about container and contents. We read, Jesus "took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them saying, Drink ye all of it, for this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (Matt. 26:27, 28). Language could not be plainer. All references speak of cup, never cups.

If those noble souls who have gone before had tamely submitted to innovations and departures from N.T. teaching and practice, we would not have had the faith and liberty of today.

When a church gets too big for the one cup it is time to hive off and form another assembly.

The question is asked, "Does Christian unity demand uniformity?" The dictionary defines uniformity as "agreement with a pattern and rule." That is what Churches of Christ exist to plead for—unity by a return to the Divine pattern and rule found in the New Testament.

H. WILSON.

Dear Bro. Editor,

The raising of other issues, just because they can be connected with the subject under discussion, is to be deprecated, for the simple reason that they tend to cloud the discussion. We should face the question of the rights or/and wrongs of the one cup or multiple cups.

Did the apostle Paul love the Corinthians any less for thanking God that he baptised none of them and rebuking them for their abuse of the Lord's Supper? Consider the letters to the Romans, Galatians and others. Are the brethren of the present day less capable of loving whilst rebuking? It is the truth that matters first and foremost. The disciple who loves his Lord in spirit and in truth will love his brethren the more for that reason.

The communal cup is destroyed by the individual cup and prevents the communion of the assembly in the symbol of the blood that flowed and the price that was paid for our common salvation. It is significant that no reason or excuse has been advanced for the change-over. Why?

Sitting on the fence is refusing to make a decision either way irrespective of the question at issue. We have neither liberty nor licence to tamper with the Word of God. To do so indicates the lack of that reverential fear of hurting

or grieving the Lord Jesus Christ, whom we profess to love in spirit and in truth.

The Lord has given us the example. I appeal to my brethren to follow Him by doing as He has requested.

S. WILSON.

Dear Bro. Editor,

If I understand a right Bro. Ashurst and those who support him, they are trying to teach us that in order to be loyal to New Testament teaching, and to "Do this" as the Saviour commands, only one cup must be used, out of which all present, many or few, must drink. I understand this to mean, one church, one cup.

May I say that this is a new doctrine, so far as this country is concerned. It has never been the rule, and certainly not the practice, for one church to have only one cup; and I would point out that during that time we have had biblical scholars of no mean ability among us, some of whom were well known to the writer. If we have been wrong all these years, it has taken some of us a long time to find it out. Churches have each made their own arrangements as to times of meeting, order of service and method of distributing the emblems. I was brought up in a church where four cups were used; most of the churches in this district use two; we use one, but only because it is sufficient for our needs. The church here celebrated the Lord's Supper each week for forty years without a cup at all. So for obvious reasons I cannot accept this new doctrine; the feast means more to me than trinkets. When the Lord instituted the feast, it is true he took a cup, but he was not instituting a cup service, but a memorial service. Elements he used were bread and wine, which we know was fruit of the vine, and it is the partaking of these emblems that brings us in communion with the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ and makes us one body, "for we all partake of one bread and drink of one cup" (the Lord's) although we are hundreds of miles apart.

I wonder if those who have introduced this new doctrine—one church, one cup—are conscious of the great disservice they are doing the cause of Christ. Before we know where we are we shall have a splinter society like they have in the States, known locally as "one-cuppers". I beg of them to think again before it is too late.

EDMUND HILL.

Dear Bro. Editor,

There is a tendency to go to opposite extremes regarding the cup. Some are inclined to favour "individual cups", whilst others object to more than one cup being use at all. (1) This modern innovation, in my judgment, mars the purpose of the feast, which, in part, is to symbolise the unity of the body of Christ (see especially 1 Cor. 10:16, 17, where the oneness of that partaken of is emphasised). Turn next to 1 Corinthians 11:23-27 and note the phrases used. "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. . . . For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink the cup. . . . Whosoever shall eat the bread, or drink the cup of the Lord unworthily. . ." Neither Jewish traditions of Passover observance, modern medical opinion, nor personal preference should weigh with us, in a matter so sacred. (2) But, where is the difference in principle, it is asked, between individual cups, and using two or more cups in the distribution? To my mind there is a great difference. First, the motive is altogether different. Second, the fellowship is not marred thereby, for, to all intents and purposes, we partake in common of one cup. But take a church where two hundred or more partake. What size of "cup" would be required if but one is to be used? How could it be passed round "decently and in order"? How long would it take? And, if only one cup is to be used, then only one plate must pass round with the one loaf. Even under the law God preferred mercy to sacrifice; and in the N.T. we are taught that "the commandments of the Lord are not grievous."

JOHN McLAREN.

Dear Bro. Editor,

I venture to write as an unrepentant member of an Association Church in order to briefly comment upon recent letters.

I support Bro. Partington in his attitude of allowing each congregation to act as it sees fit. I deplore Bro. Spencer's suggestion that brethren should withdraw from those brethren who do not use "the one cup". (Most assemblies use two cups poured from one container.)

Surely there has been enough division within the movement. The souls of men and young people too are perishing while we are at variance over the cup question, whether we should use instrumental music or not, etc. How much do these latter things really matter in the light of the high calling to which God in Christ Jesus had called us? Are we not required to be above all witnesses to the essential facts of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ? Make that our aim and these other things will fall into their true perspective and indeed take care of themselves

T. R. STREETON.

[We are being more generous than could be reasonably expected in publishing the above letter from a self-confessed "unrepentant member of an Association Church". We do not think that users of individual cups, or those in sympathy with the practice, can be proud to have such support from a member of a self-styled denomination: the Association of Churches of Christ. It seems to us, however, that Bro. Streeton has made out as good a case as can be put forward outside the New Testament, for there is certainly no case in the N.T. itself. It is consequently not surprising that arguments for toleration of individual cups have so far been advanced without the slightest support of or reference to Scripture, in spite of the fact that some good Bible scholars are found among the defenders of the practice. Once such a passage were found, that of course would be final, as it would be for the use of instrumental music. The coupling of the use of individual cups with instrumental music as a cause of needless controversy among us is significant. It is sometimes good "to see oursel's as others see us". We wonder when these brethren who have caused division will at last see the outcome of their introduction of or sympathy with this completely unnecessary and knowingly divisive practice. The gain is going to be nothing, and the loss too terrible to contemplate. It is not too late even yet to put right the damage done.—Editor.]

Lesson Outlines.

SERIES 1, LESSON 15

Conversion: Antioch in Pisidia. 2.

Lesson Verses: Acts 13:44-52.

Memory Verse: Acts 13:47.

Objective: "Now that faith is come, we are no longer a custodian; for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God through faith. For as many of you as were immersed into Christ, have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female: for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ, then you are the offspring of Abraham, heirs according to promise" (Gal. 5:25-29).

Time: A.D. 47. The next sabbath.

Places: Pisidian Antioch; Iconium. On being forced to leave Antioch Paul and Barnabas went 100 m. E. to Iconium in Lycaonia.

Persons: Almost the whole city of Antioch, Jews and Gentiles. Paul and Barnabas; disciples; the Lord; the holy Spirit.

On this sabbath almost the whole city gathered to hear the message of God. This filled the Jews with envy and they spoke against Paul and Barnabas, who replied: "It was necessary to proclaim the message of God to you first [as they had done on the former sabbath] but since you scoff and do not deem yourselves worthy of eternal life, we turn to the Gentiles."

Message: "The Lord has commanded us to preach to the Gentiles." Paul quotes: "I have set you to be a light for the Gentiles; that you may bring salvation to the uttermost parts of the earth" (Isa. 49:6). See also Isaiah 42:6; 45:22; 52:10; 60:1-4; Luke 2:29-32; Acts 26: 14-18, 23.

Note that the "you" of Isaiah 49:6 is the Lord Jesus Christ.

Jesus said: "I am the light of the world, he who follows me will not walk in darkness but will have the light of life" (John 8:12).

Results: The Gentiles were glad and glorified the message of God. Those disposed to eternal life believed. The message was spread through the whole region. The Jews stirred up persecution, turning influential women and leading townsmen against Paul and Barnabas who departed to Iconium. They shook the dust off their feet against them, indicative of complete separation; they had spurned the love of God in Christ; but the disciples were filled with joy and with the holy Spirit.

Glorified. To glorify the message was to account it true and accept it.

Emphasis: The love of God in Christ extends to all men, Gentile as well as Jew. "Go into all the world and proclaim the news to all creation, whoever believes and is immersed will be saved, he who disbelieves will be condemned" (Mark 16:15-16).

Those who hinder others from entering into the kingdom of God, incur divine wrath. "Woe to you hypocritical scribes and Pharisees." You obstruct people's way to the kingdom of heaven. You neither go in yourselves, nor allow those who are going in to enter" (Matt 23:13).

A. HOOD.

NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

Aylesbury.—We rejoice to report the baptism of Mrs. Freda Adams, which took place in the open air near Aylesbury on Tuesday, June 14th, 1960. Mrs. Adams was formerly a member of the Church of England, but has been attending our meetings for some time. We pray that our sister "may grow up into him in all things," and we feel assured that she will become a faithful and diligent servant of the Lord.

L. CHANNING.

Dewsbury.—We are pleased to report the baptism of Herbert Hardy, on May 22nd. Once more we express our thanks to the Morley brethren for their kindness in making available their baptistry.

R. McDONALD.

Castlemilk, Glasgow.—After many years of toil and struggle to keep the Church of Christ alive in Glasgow and to carry on our faithful stand and the faith of the New Testament, we are at last seeing a brighter day. During that time we were earnest in prayer to our heavenly Father for help, so that His gospel could be brought to many. Our prayers were answered and help from some of our brethren did come, and also help with the arrival of two American evangelists.

Since then we have worked well and hard together, going to the people in their homes and giving them literature, inserting articles of the faith every Saturday in the *Glasgow Citizen*, also preaching each Lord's Day evening the gospel in Bar-Lanark and Castlemilk.

The results: Many are interested and already it gives us great joy to report that three have been baptised and one restored to fellowship.

May we have your prayers for a strong, active, living Church of Christ.

A. B. MORTON.

Ilkeston.—The church here held eightieth anniversary meetings on May 28th and 29th, which were a source of joy and inspiration to all present. On Saturday about one hundred brethren and friends sat down to tea. We were much cheered by the presence of brethren from Morley, Dewsbury, Doncaster, Wigan, Hindley, Birmingham, Leicester, Loughborough, Kirkby-in-Ashfield, Eastwood.

After tea, over one hundred gathered for the public meeting. Bro. F. Gregory presided and gave the church report. Bro. L. Morgan gave us an inspiring message of hope from Isaiah 35, basing his thoughts on the "Way of Holiness." He called for consecration of ourselves to God and pointed out that the Church was God's instrument to lead men and women into the way of holiness.

Bro. A. E. Winstanley, Tunbridge Wells, took for his theme, "Does God care for beetles?", bringing out the thought that God has an interest in everything He had created from the smallest insect to men and women.

Lord's Day was a very full day of worship and service. Forty-seven members gathered around the Lord's Table. Bro. Winstanley exhorted us from Revelations

2:4, "The church which had lost its first love." He gave us a warning against the neglect of not putting the Lord's work first. At the afternoon service, a good number of brethren and friends gathered to hear the children sing and recite. They gave of their best. Bro. Winstanley gave a talk entitled "Cups", bringing many valuable lessons to children and adults. Sis. E. Wells trained the children for recitations and Sis. Gwen Smith and Sis. M. Brown had charge of the singing.

The evening gospel meeting was well-attended, many friends being present to hear the gospel proclaimed. Bro. Winstanley preached from the Gospel of John 1, verse 29: "Behold, the Lamb of God." He made a powerful appeal to those outside Christ to accept God's offer of pardon through faith, repentance and obedience, so that their sins might be blotted out through the blood of the Lamb and they might receive the gift of eternal life. The meetings throughout were a source of joy and inspiration.

F. G.

Doncaster.—A very helpful and encouraging time was spent on Saturday, May 14th, on the occasion of our spring tea and rally. A fair number of brethren was present at tea, and for the meeting that followed, a good company gathered—brethren being present from Morley, Dewsbury, Ilkeston and Eastwood. Bro. Harold Baines presided over the meeting and gave an excellent lead, and Bro. Bradley spoke words of welcome to the visitors present.

Bro. R. McDonald was the speaker, and his forceful and challenging message, based on words of Amos the prophet, was much appreciated by the brethren.

We are very happy to report the baptism of a young man on Thursday, June 2nd. Bro. John Price attended our gospel services on two Lord's Days, with his wife, who is associated with the Saltney church, and on the second occasion, after hearing a very faithful message from Bro. Lewis Murphy, came forward and asked for baptism. He was received into our fellowship.

We pray that Bro. and Sister Price will be very happy with us, and find much spiritual blessing and help, in the services of the church.

J. GARNETT.

Newtongrange.—Again the power of the gospel has been manifested in Newtongrange. The church here was overjoyed on Lord's Day, June 12th, to witness the immersion of two who have been attending our meetings for some time. We hope that they with us will continue to grow in the grace of our Lord and Saviour and to glorify His name.

Our two young members are Bro. and Sister D. Carson.

We wish them joy in the Christian race; may they be kept faithful to the end.

W. H. ALLEN.

OBITUARY

Newtongrange.—The church has suffered a very severe loss in the passing of our Bro. George (Dod) Robertson. He had been in poor health for some time, but we had thought that he was on the mend. However God had other plans for him and it came a great shock when he was taken on June 13th.

He was a brother beloved by all who knew him, as was evidenced at the meeting-place of the church and at the cemetery, where a very large number of people assembled to pay their last respects to him. We are much indebted to the church in Haddington and to Tom Nisbet in particular, who officiated at all the services. We believe that in the passing of Bro. Robertson God has lifted the Church of Christ here high before the eyes of men who aforesaid knew not the gospel. We have lost a warm and close friend, but our loss is heaven's gain. We sorrow not as others who have no hope for Bro. Robertson spent his Christian life preparing himself for eternity.

We commend his loved ones—his wife—and his family—our sister Marjory—Tom and Anne, to our heavenly Father to sustain, comfort and keep them in this their hour of trial and sorrow.

W. H. ALLEN.

Scholes, Wigan.—The Church reports the passing of Brother Charles Lowe, on May 19th, at the age of fifty-eight years. Bro. Lowe was added to the church in 1951 and continued as a consistent and faithful member until a few years ago, when

he was stricken with illness which caused him much suffering and great weakness. His activities in the church and his attendance at the Lord's Table together with his desire for the scriptural progress of the church were affected by his sufferings and loneliness during the latter part of his life. The sympathy of the church at Scholes goes out to all relatives and friends who mourn his passing. The service at the meeting-house and at the graveside was conducted by Brother James Melling Senior.

J. ASPINALL.

COMING EVENTS

Preliminary Notice—Autumn Rally

The church in Cleveleys invites the brethren to hold the Autumn Rally in our area once again. The suggested date for the rally is Saturday, 10th September, but it may be necessary to ask that it be brought forward a week, *i.e.* to the 3rd September. The venue will be in either Fleetwood or Cleveleys.

We regret that more definite information is not available at time of going to press. Details will appear in August issue. All correspondence meantime to Bro. Eric Winter, 77 Kelvin Road, Norbreck, Blackpool.

TEMPORARY CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Lewis W. Murphy, c/o D. Robinson, 81 Costons Avenue, Greenford, Middlesex.

CORRECTION: EDITOR'S ADDRESS

In the June S.S. the Editor's address appeared incorrectly. It should be, as in the past sixteen months, 133 Long Lane, Hindley, Wigan, Lancs.

THE SCRIPTURE STANDARD is published monthly. Prices: Home, one copy for one year, 8/-; two copies 15/6; three copies 22/- post free. Canada and U.S.A.: one copy, one dollar; Africa, Australia, New Zealand: One copy, 7/6; two 14/-; three 20/6. All orders and payments to the 'S.S.' Agent and Treasurer: PAUL JONES, 41 Pendragon Road, Birmingham 22B.

All matter for insertion must be sent before the 10th of the month (news items the 15th) to the Editor: C. MELLING, 133 Long Lane, Hindley, Wigan, Lancs.

Forthcoming events and personal notices: 3/- for three lines minimum; 8d. per line over three lines.

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.

THE SCRIPTURE STANDARD is printed for the publishers by
Walter Barker (Printers) Ltd., Langley Mill, Nottm.