

The SCRIPTURE STANDARD

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

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OCTOBER, 1973

SOME RULES FOR BIBLE STUDY

(IN response to the "RULES" appearing on the front page of the S.S. of August, Bro. F.B. Sykes of Nelson has written the letter which we print below. The letter was sent by the editor to the "source" of the "RULES"—Bro. F. Melton of Tonbridge, Kent, for his reply to Bro. Sykes's objections. Although the publishing of both together means taking up considerable space, we thought it best to do so, even at the expense of holding over some regular features in the S.S. EDITOR).

26 Ethersall Road, Nelson, Lancs. BB9 0RP
22nd August 1973

Dear Brother Melling,

I am deeply disturbed by "Some Rules for Bible Study" in this month's "Standard", and cannot accept its allegations and inconsistencies.

Para. 3: "Have profound faith in all it (the Bible) says." (I agree with that).

Para. 8: "Not all the statements recorded therein are true," (If they aren't true they must be lies! Can one have profound faith in lies?)

Para. 10: "The book of Revelation is full of symbolic teaching."

I recently held a brief correspondence with a brother on the same subject. He asked if I seriously suggested that Revelation should be "taken literally"; contending that it was "merely symbolic". This was distressing, coming from a prominent member of one section of Non-Association Churches of Christ. I have had many skirmishes with leaders of the Association regarding the Scriptures. They also ask if I seriously suggest that Jonah's encounter with the fish, and the Garden of Eden, and several other incidents, should be "taken literally"? But I never expected that a leader of a Non-associating Church of Christ would ally himself with such "liberalism".

Perhaps I should look for a deeper cause. A few years ago, while in conversation with an evangelist of the same movement, the subject of Revelation cropped up. He, too, casually dismissed it as merely "symbolic". These three instances force me to the conclusion that this viewpoint is that of a distant hierarchy who have ruled that the members of the movement must, at least, voice the same opinion.

Para. 3 of "Some Rules" also states: "We must accept it all (speaking of the Bible) or reject it all." (Again I agree. But applying this to Revelation, all, or none, is literal; or all, or none is symbolic.) If the latter, what then is the hidden meaning of "These are they which came out of great tribulation and have washed their robes

and made them white in the blood of the Lamb"? "And Godshallwipe away all tears from their eyes and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall their be any more pain." Beautifully symbolic, but a cruelly delusive hope? Can symbol be inspired?

The words "scriptures" and "scriptural" denote the Bible in its entirety and should not be confined to the New Testament only, as the prevailing custom to be.

Therefore, in para. 18 the writer should have said 'Produce the New Testament for all you do in religion', for that is the standpoint he takes. To follow his advice as written would erect at least one barrier to the doctrine of his church.

Had space permitted, I would have liked to comment on another of his own: "Speak where the Bible speaks, and be silent where it is silent." I am afraid I could fill a whole issue of the 'Standard' to prove the fallacy of such a claim!

A final error: In para. 18 he is speaking of the Bible and quotes Revelation 22: 18-19. (Quoting "symbols"?) These verses do not refer to the Bible as a whole, (which is a collection of books) but to Revelation only! John is speaking specifically of "this book of prophecy", as he already stipulates in preceding verses. (Perhaps he had a foreboding of this latter-day attitude to his revelation.)

The church at Nelson, in its preaching and teaching, taboos such words as "symbolic", "allegory", "figurative", "not literal", "mythical" and all others of uninspirational elasticity. These are not a Firm Foundation — rather theological quicksands!

Yours in the Lord,

S.B.SYKES

REPLY TO BROTHER SYKES:

Although I have not met you personally, I appreciate your interest for the truth. If I should at times seem to stress a point rather strongly, please be assured I am not motivated by any sense of ill will but am striving rather to "contend earnestly" for that which I believe to be the true will of Christ.

The article "Some Rules for Bible Study" which you evidently find offensive, is not original with me but I do believe that these rules were accurately stated. I am deeply wounded, however, by the suggestion that this method of "Bible interpretation" is in any way connected with "liberalism." I deny this charge completely.

I shall now try to answer your objections point by point. I deny that there are any "allegations" or "inconsistencies" in the article whatsoever as I believe the following answers will reveal. We are obviously agreed that ALL the Bible is the inspired word of God. "Liberalism" denies that this is so.

The statement "not all the statements recorded therein are true" does not conflict in any way whatever with the above statement that all the Bible is inspired of God. Didn't you read the references that were given following that paragraph? i.e. Job 2:9 and Psalm 14:1? There are many such examples. Consider the advice given to Eve in Genesis 3:4 when she was thinking about partaking of the forbidden fruit—"thou shalt not surely die"— was that a lie, Bro. Sykes? Do you believe the statement to be true? I don't think that you do, because the devil spoke those words. They are inspired only in the sense that Moses was directed by God to record faithfully what was said. It was said to God concerning Job: "Put forth thine hand now and touch all that he (Job) hath, and he will curse thee to thy face" (Job 1:11). Is that a true statement? It is false because Satan said it, not God. After Christ's resurrection, soldiers were taught to say, "His disciples came by night and stole him away while we slept" and "this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day" (Matt. 28:13-15). Does that make it true? Certainly not, because the context reveals it to be a lie.

One of the most important rules of Bible study is to consider the whole context. There is nothing more misleading than to take a statement or thought out of its original context. Secondly, one must consider who is speaking, to whom they are speaking and under what dispensation of time they are speaking — Patriarchal (from Adam to Moses), Mosaic (Moses to Christ) or Christian (after Christ). I am reminded of the man who felt that God had an important message to reveal to him through the Bible so he opened his Bible at random and his eyes chanced to fall upon the statement "he ... departed and went and hanged himself" (Matt. 27:5). Thinking that surely this was a mistake, he tried again, reading "That thou doest, do quickly" (John 13:27).

Bro. Sykes objects to the statement that "the book of Revelation is full of symbolic teaching", but one would not have to go "to the book of Revelation to establish the fact that symbolic language is used many places throughout the entire Bible. One must be cautious, however, not to read a symbolic meaning into every passage he reads. Certainly, the common, or more literal meaning is preferred unless the context demands it be symbolic. The Old Testament prophets are filled with symbolic language and Jesus and His Apostles used symbolism quite freely. A symbol is properly: "A thing representing or typifying something else by reason of relationship or association; emblem, written character, letter, figure" (*Everrman's English Dictionary* by D.C. Browning). The parables of Jesus may be called a type of symbol — a parallel — story to teach a spiritual or divine truth.

Jesus is called the "lamb of God" — a literal sheep in the field or of the innocent nature of a lamb? Jesus is also called the "lion of Judah" — literal African variety or the strength and dignity of that noble beast? Jesus is called "the light" of the world, "the door" to salvation, etc. Jesus told certain Pharisees in Luke 13:31-32, "Go ye, and tell that fox (Herod), Behold I cast out devils, and I do cures today and tomorrow, and the third day I shall be perfected." One knows very well that Jesus was referring to the sly and deceptive nature of that man.

I am absolutely amazed when Bro. Sykes says that "the church at Nelson, in its preaching and teaching, taboos such words as 'symbolic', 'allegory', 'figurative', 'not literal' (mythical means something that is not true, therefore cannot be related to the others in any way). If this is true, then the Lord Jesus and His Apostles would be "taboo" in that congregation because they set the example for the rest of us to follow. Many times Paul based his entire argument upon "figures" and "allegories" taken from the Mosaic dispensation. Paul was the one who said that Adam was a "figure" of him that was to come (Rom. 5:14). Paul makes a strong argument in the book of Galatians for the abolition of the law of Moses based upon the relationship of Abraham and his two sons, Isaac and Ishmael, as well as their mothers, Sarah and Agar. Paul specifically states that the bonds-woman "Agar is Mount Sinai" (the Jewish nation) and that Sarah is "Jerusalem which is above... which is the mother of us all" — "*which things are an ALLEGORY, for these are the two covenants*" (Gal. 4:21-31). Read it, Bro. Sykes, this is Paul speaking. Would the Apostle be welcome to speak at Nelson? One might as well throw away the entire book of Hebrews, if he forbids "figures" and "symbols", for that whole book and the arguments therein are built upon "figures" (Heb. 9:9) and "shadows of the law" (Heb. 10:1). What do the men at Nelson preach anyway? Who has decided that these words are taboo?

As for the book of Revelation, it is written in the same type of language as the Old Testament prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, etc. Revelation is itself prophecy (Rev. 22:18). It is unbelievable to me that you think that all the language of the prophets and Revelation is to be entirely literal. While I indeed affirm that we must "accept all the Bible or reject it all." I am not saying that we must accept it all as literal or all as symbolic. It must be accepted as precisely what the inspired

writers intended it to be. Note that in "Some Rules for Bible Study" it is specifically stated that a given passage should be taken "as literal unless the context forces a figurative interpretation". This can be abused both ways. It is quite obvious that practically all of the book of Revelation was intended by the Holy Spirit through John to be symbolic, although there are some literal passages (see Rev. 1:9). Consider some brief passages in Revelation concerning Satan, "that old dragon" — a literal angel coming down with a literal chain in his hand to bind a literal dragon (Rev. 20:1-3)? His literal tail reached through the literal heavens and literally plucked the stars out of their literal orbits several million miles or light years away (Rev. 12:4)? Yet, he was to be put in a literal pit or hole in the ground, which was literally bottomless, tail and all. Where could one dig a literal hole in the literal ground for such a gigantic beast? Bro. Sykes, how can you suggest that denying such an interpretation is "liberalism"? I consider your interpretation as sheer materialism. Where is your spiritual concept? I can almost hear someone saying "God can do anything". Yes, I know that but what does God intend to do, that is the question. Jesus and His Apostles took the same type of language in the Old Testament prophets and translated it into spiritual terms — the Lord's church. We should do the same. Most people who accept such a literal interpretation believe in the millennial reign of Christ on earth. Do you?

I see no difficulty in understanding what is meant whenever we are told "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain" (Rev. 21:4). When the righteous are "changed in the twinkling of an eye" and "this corruptible must put on incorruptibility, and this mortal must put on immortality" (1 Cor. 15:50-55); surely • these things will come to pass.

It would be liberalism to deny the narrative of "Jonah's encounter with the fish" or to suggest that the creation or narrative concerning the garden of Eden were simply allegories. But there is a big difference between those and prophetic language, the parables of Jesus and the figures and allegories of Paul.

Now, Bro. Sykes, I do not know what you mean by "look for a deeper cause" or this "viewpoint" of a "distant hierarchy" (whatever or whomever that is) but I! bid you stick with the scriptures. It makes little difference what some "distant hierarchy" may think, for we have the Word of God as well as they — so scriptures, please — that's what we are interested in.

The words "scriptures" and "scriptural" do indeed refer to the entire Bible, but are you not aware, Bro. Sykes, that the Apostle Paul spent the majority of his preaching career teaching the Gentiles that they are no longer bound to obey the law of Moses as contained in the Old Testament scriptures. Paul fought the Judaizing teachers all the way from Jerusalem to Rome on this very point. I do not know what passage of Scripture to cite first to prove that point, seeing that it is the main theme of all his writings (see Acts 15; books of Romans, Galatians and Hebrews). Jesus said "ALL AUTHORITY is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Matt. 28:18). Where are Moses or the Old Testament in that statement? When Christ died upon the cross, He left His last will and testament — the New Testament. If we be followers of Christ, we will hear (obey) His voice only (Matt. 17:1-8). I am not saying I do not believe the things that Moses spoke. I believe every word to be inspired of God, containing many divine principles, profitable for our learning and comfort (Rom. 15:4), especially the Psalms. But Moses and the prophets spoke of and to Israel — the Jews. If we were Jews or proselytes living during the days of Moses, we would hear (obey) Moses. We are, however, Christians living under Christ.

Yes, I certainly do believe that one must "produce the New Testament scripture" for all that we do in religion today. Since Jesus is the head of His body, the church

(Eph. 1:22-23; 1 Cor. 12:12), the body, or church, must first have a command from the head, Christ, before it can do anything at all. But Bro. Sykes, you are "shifting gears" so quickly in your reasoning and thought that I have no idea what you mean when you say "his advice as written would erect at least one barrier to the doctrine of his church". What barrier? between whom? whose church are you referring to? The only church I know anything about in the scriptures is the Lord's church.

Regarding what you call "a final error". Although this particular verse (Rev. 22:18-19) does refer primarily to the book of Revelation, it is a principle throughout the entire Bible. God told Israel in Deuteronomy 4:2 "ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish aught from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you" (one of those divine principles). Also in 2 John 9, we are warned that "whosoever goeth and abideth not in the teachings of Jesus Christ, hath not God but whosoever abideth in the teaching of Christ hath both the father and the son." Certainly, my brother, that covers the whole Bible.

As for the phrase "We speak where the Bible speaks and are silent where the Bible is silent", it would indeed take up one whole issue of the S.S. but I would be delighted to discuss it

P. MELTON

GREAT DOCTRINES OF SCRIPTURE

X: SANCTIFICATION

"FOLLOW after peace with all men, and that sanctification without which no man shall see the Lord." (Hebrews 12:14, R.V.)

This text emphasises the importance of our subject in the words, "without which..." It is the aim of all Christians to see God, to see Jesus: and the writer says this is not possible without sanctification. Through the ages God's children have longed to see God. Moses asked this special privilege and the Psalmist wrote, "As for me, I shall behold Thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with Thy likeness." To this end men of God have toiled and borne trials, troubles and tribulations. But all the work, all the sacrifice, all the suffering will be vanity without SANCTIFICATION.

What Sanctification Is

This word has been defined as a synonym of the word SEPARATE. But this is not sufficient, for the separation is always a dual one — separation from and separation unto. True sanctification is never less than that. It is

SEPARATION FROM

Sin' The World! The Flesh!

(1) **Separated from Sin.** By union with Jesus in His death a person has his past sins removed, blotted out, remembered no more against him for ever. Furthermore he does not now live in the general atmosphere of sin, sinning constantly and wilfully, but has been given a new spirit by which he is able to refuse to obey his sinful nature, in addition he has been freed, separated, from the penalty of sin. He has passed out of death into life.

(2) **Separated from the World.** Still in the world but no longer of it. Not that there is any call for a sanctified person to seek seclusion from the world:

"We need not bid, for cloistered cell,
Our brethren and our friends, farewell."
but rather

"The things of earth will grow strangely dim,
In the light of His beauty and grace."

This is not an easy attainment, for "I see the sights that dazzle, The tempting sounds I hear." These all mean less and less as a sanctified person appreciates the deeper things of the Spirit — the very things which are denied to the worldly person.

(3) **Separated from the Flesh** And yet still in the body. Very much so, but with a growing understanding that this body is but a means to an end and not the end in itself. We more fully understand the relationship between body, soul and spirit; the more we realise that the part of our triune composition which we count most important, is, after all, of the least importance. Unfortunately many of us have allowed the Devil's shop-window into our homes. By it he pollutes our minds with sin, he advertises the world with all its glamour and he elevates the flesh in all its immorality — and puts these things forward as being the normal.

Sanctification is firstly, separation from all these things and is only to be experienced, in Christ Jesus. It is also

Separation Unto

God and the performing of His will. This aspect of Sanctification is also termed Consecration.

It must always be in this order: separation from before consecration. In Romans 6:22 Paul speaks of "being made free from sin and become servants to God." He also explains how this can be effected: "I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, for this is your reasonable service." Consecration and sacrifice go hand in hand. We have been saved to serve. God cannot be satisfied with anything less than our all. If I am in a sanctified state then, "How can I, Lord, withhold life's brightest hour. Prom Thee, or gathered gold, or any power?" All that I have is now no longer mine, And I am not mine own: Lord, I am thine" If this mind is in a man then may he claim to be Sanctified.

Sanctification is A WAY OF LIFE

It is a new relationship, even adoption into the family of God. It means that these sanctified live as sons and daughters of almighty God and seek to maintain the honour of this blessed relationship in all things and at all times and in every circumstance. Beyond living this earthly life as a child of God, this new way of life holds the great promise of inheritance with Jesus the only begotten Son of God.

Thus we contend that Sanctification is
 Separation from Sin, the World, the Flesh;
 Separation unto the Will and Work of God;
 and is a New way of Life.

Having seen what sanctification is, let us now consider

What Sanctification does

It makes a person HOLY: sanctified man is a Holy man, he is a Saint!

It frees a man from all evil (see Lev. 11:44).

In that it is separation from sin, it separates from the consequences of sin. (Rom.6:23, and Ezek. 18:18).

It provides an entry into heaven (Rev. 22:14-15) the unsanctified are outside.

It prepares a person to see God:

"Oh, How shall I, whose native sphere is dark, whose mind is dim,
 Before the Ineffable appear, and on my naked spirit bear,
 That uncreated beam?

There is a way for man to rise to that sublime abode —

An offering and a sacrifice, A Holy Spirit's energies,
 An Advocate with God.
 These, these prepare us for the sight of holiness above:
 The sons of ignorance and night,
 May dwell in the Eternal Light,
 Through the eternal Love.

The Apostle John expresses the same thought (1 John 3:2-3) "everyone that hath this hope set on him, PURIFIETH himself even as He is pure". In the original Greek this word "purifieth" is taken from the same word as "Sanctification" in our opening text.

Having considered very briefly what Sanctification is and what it does; let us ask

How is Sanctification Effected?

In studying this aspect of the subject it will be necessary only to supply chapter and verse and ask the reader to look the passages up for themselves.

SANCTIFICATION is of God, through the death of Jesus. Eph. 5:25-26. Col. 1: 21-22; Heb. 10:10; 13:12). Sanctification is never merited; it is not an attainment. It is a state into which God calls sinful man through obedience to the Gospel. (Heb. 3:1). It is a holy calling. It is natural therefore, that, when the Apostle Paul wrote to people who had obeyed the Gospel and had been called into this blessed state of sanctification, he should address them as saints. (Rom. 1:7; 1 Cor. 1:2 etc.)

Notice the weight that is given to our text by the first two words: "follow after" This means pursue as an occupation; be diligently concerned about sanctification in order to maintain it. One would like to think that, when a motor car is purchased new, it is in perfect order. Presume this to be so; but run it for a few hundred miles and it needs a service. Just as machines need to be regularly serviced so must a person constantly attend to sanctification. This was perfect to start with but we must strive, purify, to keep it thus. It can be thrown away (see 2 Peter 2:20-22). It can be neglected (Heb. 2:3). Let us ask ourselves, are we in this state of Sanctification? Are we maintaining our Sanctification?

P.JONES

WALKING BY FAITH

"FOR we walk by faith, not by sight..." said Paul in 2 Corinthians 5:7. That same apostle states, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17). If we do not "hear" something in the Bible, we cannot do that thing by faith, and "whatsoever is not of faith is sin" (Romans 14:23). Walking by faith not only means that we must do what we "hear" the Bible say, but also that we must not do what we do not "hear" it say, We must respect the silence of the word of God. For example, the writer of Hebrews declares that Israel had to respect the silence of God in relation to the priesthood

pointing out that a change in priesthood demanded a change in the law: "For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood" (Hebrews 7:14). How simple this principle is, but how poorly man seems to understand it!

Denominations and digressive churches of Christ ring with cries like, "Where does the Bible forbid it?" and "There is no exclusive pattern" And on the force of such sentimental mechanical instrumental music has been added to the worship of God, and human institutions have been appended to the church of Christ. When will religious people learn what it means to walk by faith?

SCRIPTURE READINGS

OCTOBER 1973

- 7-Genesis 18:1-15 3 John
 14-Psalm 51 1 Tim. 1:1-17
 •21-Ezekiel 18:20-32 1 Tim. 1:18 to 2:15
 28-Psalm 1 1 Tim. 3

TWO PITHY LETTERS (2 & 3 John)

MY dictionary gives the meaning of 'pithy' as 'energetic, terse and forcible'. This is a correct description of the second and third letters of the apostle John. Doubts about authorship are mainly groundless and certainly fruitless. The letters are important as showing up conditions in early churches of Christ! A respected brother once said "If we have the right plea Satan will get busy among us very quickly". He has done this with accomplished subtlety, or the "Restoration Movement" would not be fragmented as it is today. He was perhaps even busier in the early church where the power of Christ was so mightily at work.

A Family Letter

Whereas John's first letter is not specifically addressed, these two we regard as personal. How fitting this is with other New Testament writings, mostly written for an immediate purpose and serving an eternal one — "My word shall never pass away". One of the sisters in the church where John worshipped had a sister in another church. Both sisters had children, and some of them were following their mother in faithful Christian living. This good news reached the apostle and he accordingly wrote this letter of congratulation, affection, encouragement and warning. It concludes with greetings from the children to their aunt.

It has always been one of the means of progress of the gospel that it spreads among close relations first. Families do not stay together, and as they separate out, the gospel goes with them. We have the simplest and earliest evidence among the apostles. There were two pairs of brothers, and quite possibly other close

relationships, resulting in the more wonderful spiritual relationships. One of the greatest joys of the Christian life is to have members of the family remaining faithful, whether in the same or in other churches of Christ — the children in the same happy fellowship and service as the parents. We are aware of course that the gospel cannot be propagated by physical means — the birth into the kingdom is by the incorruptible seed (1 Peter 1:23).

This happy fellowship is however limited to "those who know the truth" (2 John 1), especially as even in that early stage of the church's history "the world is becoming full of imposters" (2 John 7 — Phillips). With the coming into the dark heathen world of the glorious light of God's truth and love, there was much open hostility, but even more dangerous, subversive influence within the community of believers. John's first letter, and the other inspired writings of the New Testament indicate that this was prophesied and prepared for. The great apostasy and the man of sin had not yet appeared, but both were already there in embryo in the persons of teachers who perverted the message — in particular by denying, as we have seen in studying the first letter, the reality of God manifested in the flesh, and in other ways.

In the exercise of the Christian graces so urgently pressed upon her in the opening thoughts, the faithful sister might well open her house to travelling preachers; so it was needful to warn her not to accept such without assurance of their adherence to the plain truths of the gospel. It would appear from the words "transgresseth, goeth onward or taketh the lead" (2 John 9) that some thought they had on improvement on the faith once and for all delivered — "higher criticism" in the first century! The apostle of love demands rejection with emphasis. Clearly the reason is that any digression from apostolic teaching is dangerous and disastrous. The story of the Dark Ages needs no further comment — popery, idolatry, ignorance and persecution.

We are happy that this letter is addressed to a good woman and her children exercising themselves in good works and adherence to truth.

The Third Letter

Reveals a travelling ministry among the churches. One of the earliest writings of that time outside the canon of scripture throws light also on this work. Some of the prophets travelled around giving inspired teaching, only at that time available through the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit. Their work would be mainly local as is so plain from Paul's first letter to Corinth, and from his desire to visit Rome (Rom 1:11); but a wider work would also be necessary and was undoubtedly carried out. Numbers of these men would survive the apostles until the the gospels and epistles were completed and available. While the prophets had a special honour and authority, many other Christians would be working as evangelists and teachers, spreading the most wonderful message of the world's history as widely as they could. Such would rely upon the support and hospitality of Christians everywhere.

It is evident they declined help from outside the church — in contrast with so many up-to-date Associations, begging from all and sundry and earning title such as "Evangelism Incorporated" and "The Church Mendicant". This is of course a lesson for the Lord's people to be generous in their contributions so that men and women giving their full time to teaching and preaching, have sufficient to live on. Professionalism is a snare into which many have fallen. The Gaiuses and the Demetriuses are greatly needed whose mutual ministry must give backbone to the churches and defeat the Diotropheses if and when they arise to draw away from "what ye heard from the beginning" (1 John 2:24). We need to do much heart-searching to understand that every member of the church is a full-time Christian. This is what accounts for the astonishing progress of the early church in a hostile world, and the lack of it the failure of the church in a "friendly" world — in some places! R.B.SCOTT

CORRECTION - VERY URGENT
S.S. September, p. 106, col. 1, COMING
EVENTS: Kentish Town, 102nd Anniversary of opening of Hope Chapel, Prince of Wales Road, should be OCTOBER 6th, NOT 16th.

We are deeply sorry for this error and hope that the meetings will not be adversely affected in either attendance or spiritual blessing. EDITOR

HOLIDAYS

NO doubt many brethren reading this will have had an enjoyable holiday this year. As you lookback at your photographs and fading tan can you also remember the fellowship you had with your brethren on the Lord's Days of your holiday? If you can't look back on the latter may we suggest that next year you visit the Torbay area of Devon. Here you have a choice of caravans, camping, flats, bed & breakfast or full board. Most of all, you can have fellowship with the brethren at Devonport. Plymouth, on the Lord's Days. We are only few in number and would dearly love visits from brethren on holiday. We are sure that you also will enjoy your holiday much better knowing that you remembered the Lord on His day. If anyone needs any help don't hesitate to contact us at:

133 Ellacombe Church Road,
Torquay, Devon, TQ1 1LW.
Telephone: Torquay 27729.

With Christian love to you all.

BROTHER AND SISTER W JONES

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THE BIBLE AND MEDICAL SCIENCE

THE following is an excerpt from *None of These Diseases* by S.I. McMillen, M.D. which should be required reading for every serious Bible student:

As late as the 1840's when the Viennese were feasting on the superb waltzes of Johann Strauss and his son, Vienna was famous as a medical centre. Let us look in on one of the famous teaching hospitals of that day, Allege-meine Krakenhaus. In the maternity wards of this celebrated hospital one out of every six women died, and this frightening mortality rate was similar in other hospitals around the world. The obstreticians ascribed the deaths to constipation, delayed lactation, fear, and poisonous air.

When the women died, they were wheeled into the autopsy room. The first order of each morning was the entrance of the physicians and medical students into the morgue to perform autopsies on the unfortunate victims who had died during the preceding twenty-four hours. Afterwards, without cleansing their hands, the doctors with their retinue of students marched into the maternity wards to make pelvic examinations on the living women. No rubber gloves were worn.

Then a young doctor named Ignaz Semmelweis was given charge over one of the obstretic wards. He observed that it was particularly the women who were examined by the teachers and students who became sick and died. After watching this heartbreaking situation for three years he established a rule that, in his ward, every physician and medical student who had participated in the autopsies of the dead must carefully wash his hands before examining the living maternity patients.

Before the new rule went into effect, fifty-seven women had died in Dr Semmelweis's ward. Then the rule of washing the hands was instituted. The mortality rate dropped dramatically to almost nil. Was Semmelweis acclaimed by his fellows? On the contrary, lazy students prejudiced obstreticians, and jealous superiors scorned and belittled him so much that

his annual contract was not renewed. His successor threw out the washbasins, and up shot the mortality rate to the old terrifying figures. Were his colleagues convinced then? Not at all! We mortals might as well face it — the human mind is so warped by pride and prejudice that proof can rarely penetrate it.

Semmelweis tried to get a respectable position in the hospital again, but to no avail. Shocked and depressed, he left Vienna without saying good-bye to his few friends and went to Budapest, his home city. There he obtained a position in a hospital; there too the mortality rate of pregnant women was frightful. Again he instituted the practice of washing the hands before examining the individual patient. At once the grim reaper was halted, but again prejudices and jealousies overpowered the proof and many of Semmelweis's colleagues passed him in the hospital corridors without speaking.

Dr Semmelweis wrote an excellently documented book on his work, which only spurred his assailants to the bitterest sarcasm. The strain plus the death cries of dying mothers so haunted and weighed on his sensiiive nature that his mind finally broke. Ignaz Semmelweis died in a mental institution without ever receiving the recognition he richly deserved.

Many, many centuries before Semmelweis, God gave to Moses detailed instructions on the safest method of cleansing the hands after handling the dead or the infected living (Numbers 19). The scriptural method specified not merely washing in abasin, but repeated washings in running water, with time intervals allowed for drying and exposure to the sun to kill bacteria not washed off. Furthermore, the scriptural method also required contacts to change to clothes that had been washed and dried (and sometimes burned). The Biblical technique was so different from and so much more effective than anything man ever devised that again it is logical to believe the regulations were given, as the Bible claims, from God to Moses.

Christian Messenger.

REBUKE A WISE MAN

PROVERBS 9:8-9 reads: "Reprove not a scorner, lest he hate thee; rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee. Give instruction to a wise man, and he will yet be wiser; teach a just man and he will increase in learning." Although this inspired advice is directed to the rebuker, it sets forth how one may determine the character of the person who is rebuked. One who hates his rebuker is a scornful rather than a wise man. All who are rebuked classify themselves by their attitude toward the one who has rebuked them.

Christians need to learn to accept and use criticism (rebuke) properly. Each rebuke should be carefully evaluated for its worth. Upon determining the validity of a rebuke, the one rebuker should make correction, and he should love his thoughtful critic. We must not be so proud as to reject, without consideration, all censure. Our prayer should be: Help others to care enough to rebuke us, and help us to be wise enough to love them because they care. With this attitude, we can help each other to be better Christians.

IT is not to those who *wish* for righteousness, but to those who *hunger and thirst* for it and would sell all to gain it (as the famishing would sell all other things for bread) that the promise is made, "They shall be filled."

NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

BRO. & Sis. W. Jones, 133 Ellacombe Church Road, Torquay, Devon TQ1 1LW
Tel. Torquay 27729

ROY & Lily Renshaw, 82 Carlinghurst Road, Blackburn, BB2 1PN, Lancashire.
Tel. Blackburn 62228

DONATIONS IN RESPONSE TO WOOD STOCK (S.AFRICA) APPEAL

Rec. Nod) £5; (2) £31; (3) £10;

TOTAL £46

Woodstock, South Africa: On Lord's Day, 12th August, Everet Johnson was baptized into- Christ. Welcome into the family of the Lord.
T.W.H.

THE church at NELSON will shortly acquire new pews. If any church is desirous of obtaining those at present in use they may have them free of charge apart from paying the carriage, There are twelve pews, each 8feet long.

Please contact R.B. Sykes, 26 Ether-sail Road, Nelson, Lanes. BB9 ORP.

COMING EVENTS CHURCH OF CHRIST

Longshoot (Scholes) Wigan, Lanes.

Handing over of New Meeting - House
Friday October, 5th 1973

FIRST MEETINGS LORD'S DAY
OCTOBER 7TH

TO ALL BRETHREN:

Within a few weeks of taking possession invitations will be sent to the churches to join with us in a joint gathering to give thanks to God and to ask His blessing upon His work which will go forth from this new house in coming years (God willing). If possible the announcement will be made also in the "Scripture Standard".

Inquires: Secretary, C. Melling,
133 Long Lane, Hindley, Via Wigan,
Lanes. Tel. Wigan 56301.

CHANGES IN TIMES OF MEETINGS Easthouses, Midlothian:

Sundays:

10.30 a.m.	Sunday School
12 noon.	Lords Table
6 p.m.	Gospel

Wednesdays:

7.30p.m.	Bible Study
8 p.m.	Midweek meeting

Fridays:

6.45 p.m.	Sunshine Corner
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Easthouses, Midlothian: Annual Social, Saturday October 27th, 4p.m. in Newbattle High School, Easthouses Road, Easthouses. Chairman David Dougall (Wall-acestone). A warm welcome.

HAVE YOU A FRIEND

A friend is one who knows full well
Your credits and your fame,
The things which you are proud to tell—
And loves you just the same.

But if he is a real true friend
He also knows your shame;
The things you hide and would defend—
Yet loves you just the same.

If poverty should come your way,
If injury should maim;
If life is marred and you must pay—
He loves you just the same.

Now, should you have a friend like this,
(No matter what his name)
For, you to use, the wish is his—
He'll love you just the same.

He'll help you bear what must be borne,
However fierce the flame;
He'll work with you to blunt the thorn—
And love you just the same.

Don't think this friend acts for reward:
He'll waive his every claim;
Your happiness and good he'll guard—
And love you just the same.

No deed of yours will him offend,
No word his rage inflame;
Your true desire he'll comprehend—
And love you still the same.

He cannot read your every thought,
But waits for your request;
He'll take or bring, he'll do you ought—
And thus his love attest.

P. JONES

DOES EDUCATION PAY?

What a question!

Does it pay to prepare ground before
sowing the seed?

Does it pay to polish the precious' stone,
before marketing it?

Does it pay to sharpen the tools before
working with them?

Does it pay to have a mind rather than be
a mere animal, and to think with a trained
mind?

Does it pay to make the most of the
faculties God has endowed one with or
let them remain dormant?

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