

# The SCRIPTURE STANDARD

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

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## WHAT'S IN A NAME

Bouquets, banner-headlines and a wave of celebrations have, predictably, greeted the birth of the Duke and Duchess of York's baby girl. The army of press reporters, literally camped-out night and day outside the hospital for the past two weeks, can now go back to their offices and fuel the speculative fires of the next stage of the proceedings, i.e. the name to be chosen for the new princess. According to the media the nation is holding its breath in a lather of excitement over the matter (although the furore has not yet reached this neck-of-the-woods) and the bookmakers are doing a brisk trade in wagers; the current name favourites being "Victoria-Anne" and "Margaret". No doubt, at the end of the day the name chosen will reflect a completely personal preference of the royal couple in keeping with propriety and palace protocol; and may even be a partial tribute to some illustrious ancestor, but it will not be any more than that. This stimulates, I suppose, the age-old question asked by Shakespeare, "What's in a name? That which we call a rose By any other name would smell as sweet" (Romeo & Juliet II ii). Shakespeare asks a very pertinent question, does he not? and certainly nothing much has changed since he penned these words. There is, perhaps, even less in a name, nowadays. Whether a boy is called John, or Robert, or William, or Thomas seems fairly academic, but I suppose such names are, at least, quite harmless. There are, however, countless numbers of children who have been saddled with some fancy or flamboyant name and they have to cringe their way through school and through life with it. I heard from Bro. Carlton Melling of a girl in a family called Clutterbuck who was given the Christian name "Buttercup", and I certainly worked beside a man who, all his life, hated his Christian name: "Jellicoe" (presumably after the First World War Admiral) and who was called 'jelly' all through school. Parents should be more thoughtful. It seems, however that some new babies are being given the names of current 'pop-singers' and so parents, apparently, are still taking liberties with their offspring. Accordingly, I suppose the name ultimately chosen for the royal princess will not mean a great deal, one way or another. What's in a name.?

### Meaningful Names

Nevertheless, in some other countries things are different, and names have real meaning and are taken seriously. While names are fairly meaningless in Europe they are full of meaning in African and eastern countries and are of great interest to ethnologists. A name to an ethnologist is like a bone to an anatomist and so meaningful were names used by past civilisations, that random names, like old coins, can reveal much of forgotten dynasties. The Bible is a fairly complete record of one of the world's oldest civilisations, and the Hebrews, perhaps more than anyone else were particular

in the manner of giving names. Even their common place-names had meaning and often highlighted some physical peculiarity, e.g. 'Beer' meaning a well (i.e. Beer-sheba): 'Abel' a meadow (as in Abel-mehola): 'Beth' a house, (as in Bethlehem): 'Ramoth' a height (as in Ramoth-Gilead) and so on. Personal names were usually given by the mothers and expressed a hope, a vow, a sentiment or an expression of thanks. Names were personal possessions, rarely hereditary, and often denoted a role or quality to which the owner tried to attain. At the very dawn of time, Eve called her firstborn Cain (acquisition of the Lord). Seth was so-named because he was 'a replacement for Abel'. Phinehas' wife called her son "Ichabod" because 'God's glory had left Israel'. Israel meant 'a prince'; Jacob 'a supplanter'; Dan 'a judge'; Essau 'hairy'; Edom 'red'; Zechariah 'God has remembered'; Malachi 'messenger'; Nabal 'a fool'; Joseph 'God may add another child'; Micah 'who is Like Jehovah?'; Judah 'praised' and multitudes of other examples could be added. Naomi said. "Call me not Naomi (kindness of God) but call me Marah (bitterness) (Ruth 1:20). This style of appellation continued throughout Jewish history into New Testament times and we find Jesus saying to Simon (Andrew's brother), "Thou art Simon the son of Jona; thou shalt be called Cephas which is by interpretation, A stone." (John 1:42).

Occasionally names given at birth were changed in later life to conform to some new role, new relationship, or new hope. Benoni (son of my sorrow) was renamed Benjamin (son of my right hand). Abram (exalted father) was changed to Abraham (father of a multitude); Jacob was renamed Israel by the angel with whom he wrestled and there are other examples: one of which, I suppose might be Saul becoming Paul, the apostle.

#### ABOVE ALL OTHERS

When we consider that the angels have names, and that God has given names to the very stars, we can rightly conclude that names are important. We can say, "Yes" to Shakespeare: there is something in a name. Even God, when asked, gave Himself a name. When Moses, surrounded as he was by nations with gods which had names, asked God by what name he would identify Him when called upon, answered that He was "THE I AM" (always the present tense as being eternal). Moses had agreed (reluctantly) to rescue the Israelites from bondage in Egypt, and Moses anticipated that the Israelites would ask him the name of the god vouchsafing such rescue. "**And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM, and thus shalt thou say unto the Children Of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you. Furthermore, thus shalt thou say unto the Children Of Israel, The Lord God of your Fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob hath sent me (Moses) unto you. This is my name for ever: and this is My memorial unto all generations.**" God's name is thereafter, and throughout the Bible a matter of great solemnity, dignity and gravity: to such a degree that devout men were reluctant even to mention it, and used a substitute. God's name is alternately described as **blesed** (Dan 2:20); **glorious** (Is. 63:14); **great** (Ps. 99:3); **strong** (Pr. 18:10); **fearful** (Deut. 28:58); **excellent** (Ps. 8:1); **hallowed** (Matt. 6:9); **everlasting** (Is. 63:16); **worthy of all praise** (Ps. 113:3) and **never to be taken in vain** (Ex. 20:7). It is sad to relate that today, when God's name is raised in the world at large, it is but to take it in vain or to have it blasphemed.

When we come into the N.T. we find that, while God's name in no way stands diminished, He (God) has delegated all authority in heaven and earth to His only Son, Christ Jesus. This is, of course, a very sweeping and far-reaching claim to make, but Christ Himself (after His resurrection) said, "**All authority hath been given unto Me both in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all nations.**" (Matt. 28:18). God, in response to the obedience of His Son, hath given Him A NAME which is above every other name. Paul says, "**Wherefore God hath highly exalted Him and hath given Him a name which is above every other name, that at the**

name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in the earth, and things under the earth.” (Phil. 2:9,10). Thus Joseph and Mary, when their child was born, were spared the responsibility of forming a name for their offspring. The angel Gabriel came all the way from God’s presence to say, **“Thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins.”** ‘Jesus’ was thus the God-given name of our Lord, denoting His all-prevailing function as **Saviour of men**. He was also called God’s ‘Anointed’ (‘Christ’ in the Greek; ‘Messiah’ in the Hebrew) and so is referred to as ‘Jesus The Christ’ or ‘Christ Jesus.’ The term ‘God’s Anointed’ refers, not so much to His role as Saviour, but to His **kingly** authority and mediatorial position as ‘Servant of the Lord.’

Such is the importance of this of this God-ordained name, that **all that we say and all that we do must be in His name** — **“And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks unto God and the Father by Him”** (Col. 3:17). When the police bang on a door and shout, **“Open up in the name of the law”** we understand them to be claiming to carry the whole weight and authority of the law behind them. Likewise, all that we say and do must **‘be in His name’** and carry His authority or sanction. Our very salvation is irrevocably linked with Christ’s name and Paul limits those who will be saved to those **who call upon His name** (Rom. 10:13) and Peter said, **“neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven, given amongst men, whereby we must be saved.”** (Acts 4:12). Jesus instructed that after the apostles had been endued with the Holy Spirit they should preach the gospel **in His name** amongst all nations. The apostles duly complied with these directions and commanded their hearers to **“Repent and be baptised every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins.”** Later, when Paul came across the disciples who knew only John’s baptism, he explained to them that Christ’s baptism had superseded John’s, **“And when they heard this they were baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus.”** (Acts 19:5). Yes, there is something in a name.

#### A GOOD NAME

Solomon had a fair bit to say about names and (in Pr.22:1) suggests that **“A good name is rather to be chosen than riches, and loving favour than silver and gold.”** It is not to be supposed that Solomon meant that any particular name could be chosen because it was good, but rather that a name is ‘good’ because the owner of it is good. It was character and reputation that Solomon had in view, not any intrinsic value in any name. Given the choice between riches and a good name (reputation) one is to seek the good name: and to be held in ‘loving favour’ (high esteem) is much better, says Solomon, than silver and gold. We should so live that we give ourselves a ‘good name.’ I suppose some men inherit a name to be lived up to: while others have to live it down. There is still no love lost between Clan MacDonald and the Campbells and I suppose there are Campbells who live in the shadow of past treachery. Likewise very few little girls, nowadays, seem to be called Jezebel or little boys, Judas, whereas Mary and Martha are quite common. Names represent something to every one of us, and there are names we associate with good remembrances and bad ones, and a person who has been nasty to us puts us against the name they bear, perhaps for ever. The name of Adolf Hitler is still loathed by millions, as is Joseph Stalin by the Russians. In the business world there are some firms with a ‘good name’ for quality and integrity and some we would not trust. Barlow Clowes International is a name unlikely to be forgotten by all those who have lost their life-savings. The names themselves have no inherent virtue; our actions alone provide the virtue or lack of it. Shakespeare said (comparing the names of Brutus and Caesar) that when **written** one name is as fair as the other, when **spoken** one sounded as good as the other; when **weighed** one was as heavy as the other; and when **conjured** with, Brutus would start a spirit as well as Caesar (Julius Caesar I iii) but the difference lay, of course, in the

person. Some names are certainly names to conjure with. After the Philistine princes had departed **“David behaved himself more wisely than all the servants of Saul: so that his name was much set by.”** (1 Sam. 18:30). And so David acquired (by his behaviour and wisdom) a name to set much by: or a name to conjure with (as Shakespeare put it).

Cornelius had a very good name even before he encountered the gospel but had an even better one after he had obeyed the gospel; for from that time **his name** had been entered in the Lamb’s Book Of Life. Yes, there is something in a name.

#### A NAME TO LIVE BY

David’s name was a name much set by, by the Jews, yet David called Christ his ‘Lord.’ Christ’s name is one we not only let by, but one we must live by. God, through Nathan, once reminded David of his humble beginnings, that God had raised him from the sheepcote (and sheep watching) to be the great ruler over all Israel **“and made him (David) a great name, like unto the name of the great men that are in the earth”** (2 Sam. 7:9). Christ had even more humble beginnings, being born in a manger, but yet was exalted to much greater heights, and given a much greater name than David. **“Wherefore God hath highly exalted Him (Christ) and given him a name which is above every name. That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow (of things in heaven, and things in the earth, and things under the earth) and that every tongue should confess that Jesus is Lord, to the Glory of God the Father.”** (Phil. 2:9).

What, then, are the lessons we can derive from these things? Well, as earthly creatures we should bow the knee, and confess with the lips, the NAME which God has bestowed upon His Son Christ Jesus (and this is much easier to do today than it was in Roman times). Solomon exhorts us to pursue a good name as individuals, and to so live that we not only adorn our names; but so that men can not blaspheme the **worthy name** by which we are called. We have a name to live up to. Christ set the standard. He ‘went everywhere doing good’ and taught us that we ought to do likewise. No one could rightly point the finger at Jesus, either when He lived on earth or since, and we must try to be more and more like unto Him. Having taken the name of Christ upon ourselves we must strive to live up to it, and walk worthy of it. May God (who deems names important) help us all that **“Whatsoever we do in word, or in deed, we shall do in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks unto God and the Father by Him.”** (Col. 3:17). Yes, there is something in a name; especially in the name of God’s only Son.

There is a Name I love to hear,  
I ought to tell its worth,  
It sounds like music in mine ear,  
The sweetest name on earth.

EDITOR.

## GLEANINGS

*“Let her glean even among the sheaves.” Ruth 2:15*

**WE QUOTE — ALEXANDER MACLAREN**

**“Behold, the lion of the tribe of Juda . . . and I beheld, and, lo, a Lamb.”**

Nothing is so terrible as the wrath of gentle love and patience. No wonder that the rebels against the long-suffering, meek Christ, when they see Him coming in the clouds of heaven, call despairingly on rocks and hills to crush them, if thereby they may be hid from the **“wrath of the Lamb.”** Divine love is not incapable of anger. The Lamb of God is the Lion of Judah. Let us not trifle with His power to smite and rend. The Lion of the tribe of Juda is the lamb of God. Let us trust and take refuge in His power to heal and save.”

**HE IS PRECIOUS**

“For you therefore which believe is the preciousness.”

“If we can climb the heights, and plumb the depths, and encompass the vastness of the things which constitute the preciousness of Christ, then pause and consider and remember this, that all those things are made over to the believer in Christ; they are at his, or her disposal; they are at the disposal of the Church; they belong to the people of God.”

Cambell Morgan.

**SOME FORM OF EVIDENCE OR PROOF**

“A faith not firmly founded upon good evidence deserves not the name of faith, for the basis of all true faith or trust is belief which is the assent of the mind, or understanding, to truth supported by adequate proofs.”

Some things we believe on the evidence of the senses; other things, on the testimony of others; and yet other things, on the evidence of reason; in each case there is, at the bottom of belief, some form of evidence or proof. To seek to make broader and firmer the basis of knowledge upon which our faith rests, is to show respect for our own power to know, and respect for the Creator who honoured us by conferring such noble powers.”

Arthur T. Pierson.

**JUST THINK**

“It takes two things to blow down a tree — a heavy wind outside — and rot and decay within. So it is with man. The winds of adversity may cause him to bend, but if he is strong and vigorous within, he will arise and grow to new heights after the storm passes.”

(*Sunshine Magazine*)

**IN CHRIST WE FIND ONE:**

Whose sympathy is perfect,  
Whose love is fathomless,  
Whose power is omnipotent,  
Whose wisdom is infinite,  
Whose resources are exhaustless,  
Whose riches are unsearchable,  
Whose heart is full of unspeakable love.

C.H.M.

**I HAVE THE PEACE**

A friend said to a young lady who was sick, “You suffer much, I fear.” “Yes,” she said. Then touching her hand she continued, — “But there is no nail here. He had the nails, and I have the peace.” Then she lay her hand on her brow and said, “There are no thorns here. He had the thorns, I have the peace.” Then she touched her side and said, “There is no spear here. He had the spear, I have the peace.”

C.G.

**SLOW TO SPEAK**

“Guard thou thy tongue from ceaseless words, whatever else you do; and ere you speak of anything, be sure you know it’s true. For oftentimes some little word, though said in fun and jest, will fill some tender, loving heart with dire unhappiness.”

Alice M. Barr.

**THE TRUE EVANGEL**

Love is the essential thing in preparing one for being a helper of others. It is not enough for the preacher to declare to all men that God loves them — the preacher must love them too if he would make them believe in the divine love for them. The true evangel is the love of God interpreted in a human life. No other will win men’s confidence and faith. We must show the tenderness of God in our tenderness. We must reveal the compassion of God in our compassion. God so loved that He gave; we must so love as to give.”

J. R. Miller.

Selected by Leonard Morgan.

## IF ANY MAN SPEAKETH (I Peter 4:11)

Human Setups (Matt. 15:13)

A brother has advised me that what I said in the previous issue about the sheep knowing their shepherd relative to the pyramidal hierarchy system, needed some amplification.

Some say that such systems are innocuous being the exercise of liberty in the choice of "methodology." Brother Alf Marsden is to be commended for directing our attention to the need to be acquainted with New Testament principles of church government, in last month's *Scripture Standard*. The system outlined in Ephesians chapter four will work. It is the Holy Spirit's method for developing every one of us to peak efficiency and spirituality.

Human setups are not innocuous. They are spiritually dangerous in that they tend to elevate people. Natural tendency is that the further up the scale a person goes the greater is the temptation to become patronising and then arrogant. This major spiritual disease, this spirit of the antichrist, eats like cancer and spreads like a deadly virus. It spoils spiritual healthiness and destroys everything Christ died for. The spirit of self-assurance so popularly advocated in sociology and the spirit of self-denial exemplified by Jesus are diametrical opposites. One is death and the other is life. They do not and CANNOT mix.

Self-confidence nearly killed Peter. "If all shall be offended in thee, I will never . . ." (Matt. 26:33). Jesus said to him, "I made supplication for thee, that thy faith fail not." (Luke 22:32). Only his confidence in Jesus saved him from what could have been total disaster. "Lord thou knowest all things. THOU knowest . . ." (John 21:17). This lesson (that his confidence should not have been in himself but in Jesus), we are supposed to benefit from: "when once thou hast turned again, establish thy brethren." (Luke 22:32). "Feed my sheep" (John 21:17).

The New testament is replete with teaching on self denial. "If a man . . . hath not . . . his own life also, he CANNOT . . ." (Luke 14:26). "Except ye turn, and become as little children, ye shall IN NO WISE enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. 18:3-4). "Whosoever of you would be chief, shall be everyone's slave (gk doulos)" (Mark 10:44). "If I then your Lord and Master . . . then ye also OUGHT to . . ." (John 13:14). Even the lord's Christ did not exalt himself. He chose to die the utterly debasing death of the vilest criminal and by the "foolishness of this message to save them that believe." (1 Cor. 1:21). Believe in what? In a socially attractive celebrity? Any child of God who has imbibed the spirit of First Corinthians (chapters one and two) will not be tempted or deceived by glamour however subtle. That is why Paul wanted nothing but "Jesus Christ and him crucified" to be known IN (gk en) them (1. Cor. 2.2), to have in them the mind which was also in Christ Jesus (Phil. 2. 1-11). Knowing their shepherd such sheep will recognise his voice. The voice of strangers will have no influence whatsoever. Can this be OVER-stressed? Make sure the sheep know the shepherd.

### THE HOLY KISS Romans 16.16.

It is possible to teach injunctions in such a way that the hearer observes the letter but breaks the spirit. Idi Amin passed a law forbidding females to wear mini-skirts. So, many began wearing long skirts with side slits reaching up to their thighs. Jesus highlighted the hypocrisy of swearing by the temple, to avoid the, (to them,) apparent implications of swearing by the temple gold (Matt., 23. 16-22).

Some commands have no sensible meaning unless performed exactly as outlined. Two examples are the Lord's supper, because "Do THIS in remembrance of me" precludes us from doing something else: and baptism, because only immersion and emergence typify burial and resurrection.

There are also commands that obviously have wider implications than a legalistic interpretation would allow. Jesus told the disciples that they also ought to wash one another's feet. The spirit of love that constrained Jesus to do the menial task of washing even Judas' feet, should be in us constraining us to do foot-washing-type tasks for each other. There is no point in washing thirsty peoples' clean feet, whereas failing to quench their thirst would be in violation of the spirit of Jesus' command.

This type of command has to do with the spirit of how we behave. "Greet one another with a holy kiss" comes into this category. A man who gives someone he secretly hates, a hypocritical "warm" hand-shake is violating this command. Our greetings to one another must be genuine expressions of love for fellow children of God. Nothing less will do.

Turning the other cheek for the second blow, then giving an uppercut after a third blow is not fulfilling the principle Jesus enjoined (Matt. 5.39), whereas allowing someone to cheat you several times without reprisals is, even though the physical cheek is not affected.

Women are not violating Paul's instruction not to adorn themselves with gold (1 Tim. 2.9) by wearing wedding rings, but they would be breaking the spirit of this command by wearing artificial plastic jewellery to glamourise themselves.

Spiritual discernment reveals that behavioural commands such as these should not be applied legalistically. Even so, breaking the principles of such commands must not be shrugged off. The principles must be taught and insisted on, so as to promote our spiritual health.

Alan Ashurst,  
60 Kenwood Road,  
Stretford, Manchester M32 8PT.

## PARABLE OF THE WEEDS

(Read Matthew 13: 24-30; 36-43)

I like illustrations. I'm one of those people who need to have things spelled out clearly before they can make a proper evaluation. This is probably why Jesus spoke in parables, so that those who heard could come to grips with the spiritual implication of the illustrations. And this particular parable is one of Christ's most practical illustrations.

Many who have casually read through the parable of the tares have come to some hasty conclusions. It is often argued that Jesus is teaching here that we must not exercise discipline within the Lord's church. But this is not the case, as can easily be seen when Jesus explains that the field represents the world, not the church.

Jesus points out that after good seed was sown in the field, someone later came by and sowed bad seed (weeds, tares, darnel). In its early stages, this particular weed looks almost like wheat. It requires a keen eye to distinguish the difference from wheat and darnel. And to compound the problem during growth, the wheat and darnel roots would intertwine themselves making it practically impossible to separate them until after harvest. But when the harvest time came, it was much easier to distinguish them. With these thoughts in mind, consider the five main points Jesus teaches in this parable.

1) *There will always be an evil influence in the world.* The devil will ever seek to destroy the faith of God's children. By sowing bad seed among the good (God's children), he endeavours to destroy churches, Christian homes and all other peaceful existence which Christians enjoy. Weeds constitute an easily identifiable representation of the influence that seeks to choke out the fruit of any Christian.

2) *It is often difficult to distinguish Christians from those in the world.* A good man may appear bad in a certain light. It becomes too easy for us to make improper

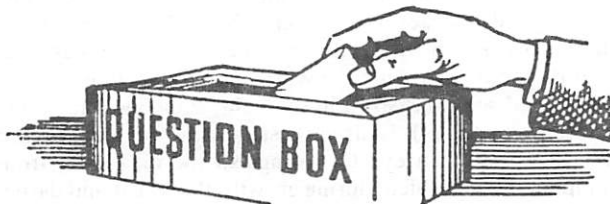
and unfair evaluations of one another when the devil is in the middle trying to divide brethren. And again, a bad man may appear good under certain circumstances. Worldly persons can do noble and benevolent things. Consider all the worthy projects to care for needy children and those who are afflicted with various diseases. Many of those projects are headed by personalities noted for their immorality and worldly involvement. Yet, on the surface, these individuals appear to be saintly. Most of us cannot make a proper evaluation of another without the necessary knowledge to draw a right assessment. Perhaps this is why God asks us not to judge one another.

3) *We mustn't make quick assumptions about each other's motives and actions.* If the reapers in this parable had had their way, they would have tried to tear out the weeds from the wheat. Jesus vividly reminds us that judgment must await the final day of harvest when a separation can be made without harming the good wheat. God will make the final judgment through his Son and the angels. If many Christians would realize this one thing it would relieve us of the great burden we bear for one another in trying to be the watchmen for others. We cannot and must not judge each other. No individual has the right to impune another by a single act or stage in that person's life. We must remember that God sees the entire picture. We only see one frame at a time.

4) *Judgment "will" come in the end.* It is so easy for us to view the vile sinners in life and wonder how they get by with so much vanity and accumulation. This is what the devil wants. He expects bitterness to be present when we see the unrighteous prosper. Too many of us are thinking that the sinner is escaping the consequences of his loose living. Not so! God will rectify all the injustices perpetrated on his little ones. We must learn to exercise patience as we wait on the Lord.

5) *God is the final judge.* We must leave the burning to God. Casting the weeds into the fiery furnace is not our responsibility. In spite of this, we seek to "get even" or "justify a wrong" or "burn someone" because of what they have said or done to us or those we love. Not only will God judge the unrighteous, but he will glorify the faithful so that they will "shine like the sun in the kingdom of their father." Distinguishing new planted sprouts of wheat from little weed sprouts requires an expertise that mortals simply lack. With this in mind, let us grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ — in spite of the weeds around us!

S.C. Goad.




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Conducted by  
Alf Marsden

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**“When we read Romans chapter 7 it would seem that the Apostle Paul had a dual personality. Is this true of all Christians?”**

Paul introduces his main argument in this section of the Scripture by referring to the married state. He reminds his readers that the woman is bound by the law to her husband so long as he lives; if while her husband lives she marries another, then she commits adultery. If, however, her husband dies then she is free from the law that bound her to him, and she is then free to marry another.

He then goes on to contrast the letter of the law with the life in Christ. The Christian, he argues, is freed from the law, the letter of which bound him, and is now ‘married’ to Christ, the law is ‘dead’ so far as the Christian is concerned, so his



'marriage to Christ' becomes valid (Paul does not argue the point here, but it would follow that if a Christian turns again to sin then that would be tantamount to 'spiritual adultery' because it is obvious that Christ, to whom the Christian is 'married,' cannot die). It is at this point that Paul develops his argument concerning the law and sin, which in turn leads to the argument which is the basis of the question.

### The Law and Sin

In order to understand this part of the argument we have to use a little imagination. Take the case of a person whose life is not governed by any written law from any higher authority. That person may lust, as Paul states here, after another man's wife or possessions and may kill in order to satisfy his lust. There is no written law which tells him that his actions are wrong, and so he continues quite happily in them, believing that his behaviour is acceptable; he, in fact, becomes a law unto himself, and sin lies dormant so far as he is concerned.

If, however, a law emerges which condemns covetousness and murder as sinful, then the 'life' of acceptability of his previous actions is shattered; sin which had lain dormant now revives because the awakening of conscience and moral responsibility has come through the law; so, Paul argues, the conduct which had seemed to be 'life' now becomes 'death.' He had been 'dead' before but did not know it; now he has discovered that he was spiritually dead. Paul puts it like this, "But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence" (v18). Concupiscence means 'sexual lust; desire for worldly things,' so what Paul is saying is that the law which said, "thou shalt not covet" made him lust the more because sin took occasion by the commandment and wrought its havoc in him as in so many other people. But haven't we seen on so many occasions when people have been told **not** to do something that they do it the more? It is not the instruction which is wrong; it is sin at work. Oh, the grinding, blinding power of sin.

Paul is at pains to point out that the law was not the vehicle of sin, for he says, "Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good" (v.12). Also in v.14 he says, "For we know that the law is spiritual"; indeed, it must have been, because it was Spirit-caused, and Spirit-given, and like the Holy Spirit; it was given by God Himself. No, it was sin which was the 'great deceiver', just as it had been in the Garden of Eden (Read also 1 Cor. 10: 3ff). What the law did was to reveal to the conscience the exceeding sinfulness of sin; this revelation was seen in the violation of God's law, because it is the excesses of sin which reveal its real nature.

Paul had every reason to bitterly regret the deceit of sin. We can almost hear Satan talking to him before he became a Christian, "Go on, Saul, you are doing God's will; it cannot be wrong to imprison and kill Christians if you are doing God's will". Doesn't he deceive us in the same way? "Go on, Christian, it can't be wrong to take some of your employer's things; after all, you earn his profits for him". So the deceit spreads, and if allowed to continue it results in ruined lives. It starts as nothing; it ends in tragedy. That is the exceeding sinfulness of sin. What happens is that our spiritual perceptions are dulled and blinded by sin; not only so, but the lives of millions of unregenerate people are mortgaged to sin simply because they are blinded by it, as Paul says, "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them" (2 Cor. 4:4). Do we need any more convincing as to the awfulness of sin?

### The Dual Personality

There is a great deal of controversy as to what Paul is describing in verses 14–25 of Romans chapter 7. It is not for me to give a scholarly dissertation on the Greek words which Paul uses because I am not a Greek scholar, but I have unravelled the

meaning of the words to my own satisfaction and understanding, and I pass the thoughts on to you for what they are worth.

When Paul says, "I am carnal, sold under sin" (v.14) he means by 'carnal' that he is 'fleshly', and 'sold under sin' comes from a verb "to sell", and if we look at Matt. 13:46 we shall see what is meant. Jesus there says that the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant man seeking good pearls; He then goes on, "Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it" (Matt. 13: 45, 46). In other words, the deal was closed and there was a state of completion. Therefore, when Paul says "I am sold under sin", he means that sin has closed the deal and now owns its slave. What he seems to be depicting is man in his unregenerate state.

It is both interesting and instructive to notice what Paul wrote to the Church at Corinth. In 1 Cor. 3:1 he says, "And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as spiritual (PNEUMATIKOS), but as unto carnal (SARKIKOS), even as unto babes in Christ". Again in 3:3 he says, "For ye are yet carnal". The word SARKIKOS means, 'one who lives according to the flesh', so what Paul is saying is that those who are yet carnal have given way to the flesh as if they were still unregenerate. We have a picture, then, of so-called regenerated people responding to the world and the flesh in such a manner that Paul has to think of them as still in their unregenerate state, so much so, in fact, that he wants to feed them from the meat of the Word and finds himself unable to do so because they are envious, strife-ridden, divided, bitter, engaging in gross excesses of the flesh, and seemingly caring little for the Lord who had died for them.

#### Comparison

We now have to compare the two Scriptures we have looked at. On the one hand, as we have seen, we have Christians at Corinth who were supposedly regenerated people but yet by fleshly pursuits and worldliness appearing to be **unregenerated**, and in fact stated as such by Paul. On the other hand, we have the Apostle seeming to say that he is split in two; with the mind he serves God, but with the flesh he serves sin; a sort of Jekyll and Hyde character.

We can readily believe that many of the Corinthian Christians were as Paul depicts them, but can we **really** believe that the Apostle who could write to the Christians at Rome "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your spiritual service. And be not conformed to this world", etc., (Rom. 12:1,2), would succumb to his fleshly desires on all occasions, especially if they were in conflict with God's will? No, it is too much to ask. Remember, we are talking about the man who said, "For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Cor. 6:19,20), and also in the same letter, "But I keep under my body and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway" (1 Cor.9:26,27).

#### In Conclusion

My own conclusion is this. In Rom. 7:14ff Paul, as a regenerated man, is recalling his pre-conversion, unregenerated state. The clue which supports this view is in v.14 when he says, "but I am carnal, **sold under sin**", and we have already commented that this phrase would mean, "owned by sin (Satan)", precisely the state we **all** were in before we came to Christ. A point which sometimes escapes us is that though we are sinful men we are not **totally depraved**; the Gentiles were able to do 'by nature' the things contained in the law, even though they did not have the law. Even as sinners, we know with the mind the **good** we **should** do, but we are not able to do that which we know because we are 'held by sin'. What a terrible state the sinner is in! And I believe it is precisely this that Paul is trying to show.

There is just one other point. Christians have said to me, "Well it helps me personally if I can realise that Paul failed in the flesh, just as I do". My answer to that would be that we should think carefully as to whether we are seeing the Apostle as a peg on which to hang our own weaknesses.

(All questions, please, to Alf Marsden, 20 Costessy Way,  
Winstanley, Wigan, WN3 6ES).

## THE HUMAN EYE

Charles Darwin wrote in his book **The Origin of Species**: "To suppose that the eye, with all its inimitable contrivances for adjusting the focus to different distances, for admitting different amounts of light, and for the correction of spherical and chromatic aberration, could have been found by natural selection, seems, I freely confess, absurd in the highest possible degree." Richmond L. Gregory in his book **Eye and Brain** commented: "The problem of how eyes have developed has presented a major challenge to the Darwinian theory of evolution by Natural Selection".

The human eye is an amazing optical instrument. Its major parts are the cornea, aqueous humour, pupil, crystalline lens, vitreous humour, retina and optic nerve. Take the retina, for example. The name comes from an early word meaning 'net' or 'cobweb tunic' from the appearance of its blood vessels. The retina is the innermost layer or coating at the back of the eyeball which is sensitive to light and in which the optic nerve terminates. It has two kinds of light – receptor cells – the rods and the cones – named after their appearance as viewed with a microscope. The plump cones, some seven million of them, are for detailed examination in bright light; the slender rods, almost eighteen times as numerous, are for dim light. These cells actually convert light into electrical pulses which are transmitted through the optic nerve to the brain. Gregory has written: "It is worth trying to imagine the size of the receptors of the human eye. The smallest, one micron, is only about two wavelengths of red light in size. One could not ask for much better than that. Even so, the visual acuity of the hawk is four times better than man."

One scientist has been moved to write: "Despite some short-comings, the eye remains one of the most wondrous creations in nature. The astounding co-ordination of the various parts, the ability of the eye to adjust to the manifold demands of varying light conditions, its capacity to switch focus instantaneously from a book to plane streaking across the sky at supersonic speed – these are reasons enough for man to regard his eyes with an awe bordering on reverence."

"He that formed the eye, shall he not see (Psalm 94:9)?"

Ian S. Davidson.

## A TRIBUTE TO R. B. SCOTT

Time and again I have, in my preaching, referred to the Apostle Paul as "a mighty man of God", and I feel sure that it can also be said of the one who has been loved by so many who have had the privilege of sharing fellowship with him in the work of the gospel.

Only on the other side will it be known the amount of work he has done for the Lord, his work at Kentish Town, his interest in the work of the churches, his work for the "Scripture Standard"; the wonderful hospitality over the years, has been marvellous.

How many lives have been enriched by his life, and ministry, we cannot say, what we can say is that he has left a wonderful example for the churches to follow.

His devotion, humility, love and service for the Lord he loved will surely bring the "Well done thou good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of the Lord."

Patience Strong wrote among other things:—

“and yet I shall not be alone. Some part of you will still remain.”

“As some rare perfume in a vase of clay,

Pervades it with a fragrance not its own,

So when Thou dwellest in a mortal soul,

All heaven's own sweetness seems around it thrown.”

“Long Long may the heart with such memories be filled,

Like the vase in which roses have once been distilled;

You may break, you may shatter the vase as you will,

But the scent of the roses will cling round it still.”

Samuel Rutherford said:— “They lose nothing who gain Christ”.

May the fragrance of R. B. Scott's life be a source of rich blessing and deep inspiration to all those who loved him.

May I close with the poet Cowper's “ideal preacher”:

“Would I describe a preacher . . .

I would express him simple, grave, sincere,

In doctrine uncorrupt, in language plain,

And plain in manner, decent, solemn, chaste,

And natural in gesture; much impressed

Himself, as conscious of his awful charge,

And anxious mainly that the flock he feeds

May feel it too; affectionate in look,

And tender in address, as well becomes

A messenger of grace to guilty men.”

Such was brother R. B. Scott.

Leonard Morgan.

## SCRIPTURE READINGS

Oct. 2 Eccl. 11:9 to 12:8 1 John 2: 7-17

Oct. 9 Deut. 6: 1-15 1 John 2: 18-29

Oct. 16 Prov. 28: 1-14 1 John 3: 1-10

Oct. 23 Gen. 4: 1-15 1 John 3: 11-24

Oct. 30 Deut. 18: 9-22 1 John 4: 1-12

No book of the Bible was ever written in a vacuum. Every one was penned by a real person living in the real world. To overlook this simple fact can lead to weird and wonderful interpretations of Scripture.

The author of this epistle is the apostle John. He wrote much later than the other New Testament writers and by the time he put calamus to papyrus things had changed. As one commentator has said: “Men were no longer interested in such questions as whether they needed to be circumcised; or to what extent their consciences need be troubled by distinc-

tions between clean and unclean meats; or whether they were to place the authority of James and Peter above that of Paul; or what was the real position to be assigned to the gift of tongues; or whether the dead in Christ were to lose any of the advantages which would be granted at his second return to the living. All such questions had received their solution in the epistles of Paul.”

John was responding to a great danger in the early church and this danger came from a people known as the Gnostics. I believe that John (who probably lived to well over ninety) was spared by almighty God to deal the death-blow to the gnostic philosophy. The hour needed a special man and the apostle John was that man.

Tradition suggests that John spent his final days in Ephesus. Now Ephesus was the home of one Cerinthus, a Jew who had studied in Alexandria and who is credited with being the original prop-

agator of the theory which, as Carl Ketherside has said, "was destined eventually to divide almost every congregation in the Greek world." Cerinthus basically taught that God was exalted above all contact with the world of nature and sense and that the world was created by angels. It was from one of those angels that the Jews received their imperfect Law. He also taught that Jesus, the offspring of Joseph and Mary, received Christ at his baptism as a divine power revealing the unknown Father. This Christ left Jesus before the suffering and the crucifixion. (Incidentally, there is a legend about John's leaving the public baths at Ephesus in precipitate haste when he heard on one occasion that Cerinthus had entered. "Let us flee", he said, "lest the baths fall in while Cerinthus, the enemy of the truth, is within.")

Cerinthus and other Gnostics divided humanity into three classes – the Pneumatics, the Psychics and the Hylics. The Pneumatics were the elect, who by means of esoteric knowledge (gnosis) could be reunited to the Pleroma. The Psychics were those who could attain an intermediate state of salvation in terms of creation. The Hylics were basically material and so incapable of development. "There was," as one writer has put it, "a complete antithesis between the spiritual and the material. Jesus was a spirit sent by God to impart spiritual knowledge to the Pneumatics. This spiritual knowledge was contained in various of Jesus' secret sayings, the communication and interpretation of which were part of the process of initiation." Such beliefs inevitably led to elitism and pride. Contempt for and hatred of the common man were part and parcel of their religion. In other words, Gnosticism killed love. Robert Law wrote: "The system was loveless to the core". Ignatius said of Gnostics: "They give no heed to love, caring not for the widows, the orphan, the afflicted, neither for those who are in bonds, neither for the hungry, nor the thirsty . . . there

can be no fellowship where there is an intellectual elite.

These few remarks, I trust, will be helpful background material to John's epistles. I wish to point out that much more is being written about Gnosticism to-day than there ever was. A rich source is the "gnostic" library found in 1945 at Nag Hammadi in Egypt and which was recently featured in a Channel 4 series of programmes. Prof. T. McL. Wilson, with whom I correspond, has worked for years in translating the Nag Hammadi scrolls. They are written in Coptic, which only few can read. Prof. Wilson is one of these few.

So let us now turn to the words of John in his first epistle. Please note immediately the frequency with which he uses the word "know". For example, "But you have an anointing from the Holy One and all of you **know** the truth. I do not write to you because you do not **know** the truth, but because you do **know** it and because no lie comes from the truth" (2:20-21, N.I.V.). (Incidentally, "truth" is another of John's favourite words.) To John, the saints of God were the real "knowing ones".

John called these false teachers anti-christ (2:18, 22, 4:3). An interesting statement of his is: "They went out from us, but they did not really belong to us, for if they had belonged to us, they would have remained with us, but their going showed that none of them belonged to us" (2:19, N.I.V.). This shows that Gnostics were separatists and schismatics.

The Gnostics believed that the spirit in man was good, and the body was evil. "Let each go its own way," they said, "and let each act according to its own nature. Let the spirit reach out for goodness and let the body sin to its heart's content." These statements were anathema to John. For example, he wrote: "Little children, let no man deceive you: He that does righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous. He

who commits sin is of the devil; for the devil sins from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil" (3: 7-8).

The Gnostics denied that God had come in the flesh (4: 2-3). What John wrote in the first epistle endorsed the great statement in his Gospel record: "And the Word (Logos) was made manifest, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth (John 1:14). (Dear reader, study all you can about the Logos and see why John used this term to such outstanding effect.)

The Gnostics destroyed fellowship, as I have mentioned. again and again in this epistle John emphasises the love Christians should have one toward another. For example, "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is God; and everyone that loves is born of God and knows God. He that loves not knows not God; for God is love... Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. No man has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwells in us, and His love is perfected in us" (4: 7-12).

One of the great statements by John was made in this epistle: "You are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world" (4:4). When the going gets tough, all Christians can take great comfort from these words. I am so glad that the Spirit of Christ dwells in me to help me every step of the way, every minute of the day. Jesus Himself called Him "another Comforter" (John 14:16). Note the word "fort" in the title. A fort is a place of strength. The spirit who resides in every saint can give the needed strength to overcome the weaknesses of the flesh. Satan may rule the world (mankind, in alienation from and opposition to God), but Jesus rules my heart. The Son of Righteousness is now my Master, Lord and King. I owe complete allegiance to

Him. He is my everything and He is my all. Satan has had it as far as I am concerned. Satan has had it as far as John has revealed: "And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever" (Revelation 20:10). I am with the victor. Dear reader, whom do you serve?

Ian S. Davidson, Motherwell.

## NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

**Kirkcaldy:** The church here announces with great joy the addition of two members to the family. On 15th July, Wayne Campbell, fiance of sister Diane Moyes, obeyed the gospel and put his Lord on in baptism. On 31st July Martina Millar answered the gospel call and was immersed into her Lord. We solicit your prayers for these 'babes in Christ' as they set out on their Christian journey.

T. Steedman (Sec.)

**Kentish Town, London:** On July 17th the church rejoiced to witness the baptism into Christ of Jonathan Lankshear. He has been studying with us for some time and we do pray that God will greatly bless him on his Christian journey. We greatly enjoyed the fellowship of John Partington (Hindley) last Sunday and he gave us two excellent messages from God's word (a really good plain gospel address in the evening). Some visitors showed interest and the seed was sown. I hope (health permitting) to act as Secretary (with help of sister Vera Humphrey): certainly for the time being.

Dorothy Proud (Sec.)

**Stretford, Manchester:** After a discussion with Brother Russell Howard from Ohio USA, here helping us in a gospel campaign, Robin Barry, the 17 years old son of Arthur and Sandy Barry decided to become a christian and was baptised into Christ on Tuesday the 2nd of August, 1988 at Hindley, Wigan.

We are grateful to the generous hospitality and fellowship of the brethren at Argyle Street in this occasion of re-joining.

Please pray with us that the Lord will bless Robin with continued growth in His service.

Allan Ashurst.

**Kitwe, Zambia:** In continuing expansion away from the Copperbelt there have been 56 baptisms in more rural or "bush" areas of Zambia. 3 baptisms were as a direct result of the radio ministry which is heard throughout Zambia in African languages.

A survey in 1988 has shown that Churches of Christ continue to grow in numbers of congregations and active membership in Zambia. There are 262 congregations with 8177 active baptized believers.

We have been in Zambia since 1971 and witnessed much of this growth.

There are five congregations in Zambia with a 100+ membership. For example, **Kamuchanga Church of Christ, Mufulira** on the Zambian Copperbelt has a membership of 120.

**Helping the starving in Zambia:** With help from a Church of Christ in Ethiopia, the church of Christ in **Kaoma** has its own famine relief programme in Zambia's Western Province. Ethiopia has been a famine area itself and this assistance from one African congregation to another is to be commended.

Angela Woodhall,  
P.O. Box 22297,  
Kitwe, Zambia.

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#### CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Brother and sister John B. Wilson, formerly of 24 Owendale Avenue, Bellshill have moved to:

39 Moraypark, Terrace,  
Culloden, INVERNESS  
IV1 2RG  
Tel: (0463) 792 671

**Haddington:** Sister Jean Watt has moved, with husband Bill, to Glasgow. They came to East Lothian some six years ago from the Portknockie area, and we are very sad to lose them in the fellowship here. However, we wish them both well for the future and our loss is another's gain. To mark the occasion, a small gift was handed over to them last Wednesday evening, after tea and refreshments. Jean and Bill's new address is 21 Hilton Park, Bishopbriggs, Glasgow, G64 3NL. Telephone: 041-772-9477.

Ruth Nisbet, Secretary.

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#### CHURCH SECRETARY

Kentish Town, London, Secretary, to whom all communications should be sent, is:

Mrs. Dorothy Proud,  
58 Littlebrook Gardens,  
Cheshunt, Herts.  
EN8 8QH

Tel: (0992) 28142

## COMING EVENTS

### SOCIAL

The Annual Social of the Church at Newtongrange will, God willing, take place at the Meeting-house on Saturday, 15th October, at 4 p.m. Chairman: Joe Currie Speakers: John Kneller (Tranent) Ian Davidson (Motherwell). A warm welcome to all. Join us if you possibly can.

### ANNIVERSARY MEETING

**Kentish Town, London.** We hope, God willing, to hold our Anniversary Meeting on Saturday, 1st October. Afternoon Session 3 p.m. Tea 5 p.m. Evening Meeting 6.30 p.m. Brother Allan Ashurst will serve the church over the week-end and we hope that as many as possible will join us for a time of Praise, Thanksgiving and encouragement.

**TRACT**

**“What The Artist Left Out”**

In response to my appeal for some money to re-publish the above tract, (as mentioned in last month’s issue of ‘The Scripture Standard’) I have had two responses so far and the fund stands at £110. This is very encouraging and it may well be that if other churches and individuals give the matter further consideration, they will agree that it will be money well spent (and printing costs are rising all the time). Many brethren agree that it is an excellent tract, and there are not many good ones about. Indeed brother Frank McLure, who hands them out on the streets of Vancouver reckons it is accepted best of any. Samples of the tract will be sent on request to those not already acquainted with it. If everybody gave just a little we could perhaps afford to publish 40,000 copies. No preacher can cover as much ground for as little outlay. I shall be happy to administer the fund and report progress.

Editor.

**CHANGED STANDARDS**

A man must spend his life, not hoard it. The whole gamut of the world’s standards must be changed. The questions are not, “How much can I get?” but “How much can I give?” Not, “What is

the safe thing to do?” but “What is the right thing to do?” Not “What is the minimum permissible in the way of work?” but “What is the maximum possible?” The Christian must realise that he is given life, not to keep for himself, but to spend it for others; not to husband its flame, but to burn himself out for Christ and for men.

William Barclay  
*in The Daily Study Bible.*

**A PRAYER**

This prayer was composed by Dr. Temple, Rector of Glasgow Academy from 1899 to 1932, and every boy in the school received a copy:

Oh God, give me clean hands, clean words and clean thoughts.

Help me to stand for the hard right against the easy wrong.

Save me from habits that harm.

Teach me to work as hard and play as fair in thy sight alone as if all the world saw.

Forgive me when I am unkind, and help me to forgive those who are unkind to me.

Keep me ready to help others at some cost to myself.

Send me chances to do a little good every day, and so grow more like Christ.

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