

The SCRIPTURE STANDARD

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

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REPENTANCE IS

All that glitters is not gold. Similarly all regret is not necessarily repentance. Many changes of heart are due entirely to motives of self-interest. Even Dick Whittington, of nursery-rhyme fame, turned back only for completely selfish reasons. Mrs. Thatcher, our tough, brilliant but unpopular Prime Minister is constantly being pressed by the Opposition (and some of her colleagues) to make a 'U-turn' in her present economic and monetary policies. The chances are that if, and when, she does make a U-turn she will take great care to disguise the fact. Politicians of all shades of colour are constantly changing course but the trick is to conceal the fact. To change course, it appears, is tantamount to an admission of failure or to a confession of gross incompetence. I suppose that it is for this reason that people in all walks of life whether politicians, medical practitioners, scientists, theologians etc. are reluctant to announce that they have made a complete turn-around, and now believe the opposite to what they believed before. This calls for a certain type of courage which most of us have in short supply. No-one likes to make a climb-down in the full glare of the public eye, and the higher the pedestal the more difficult it is to descend from it. If Mrs. Thatcher decides to make a U-turn in her monetary policies it is unlikely that she will announce the fact, but perhaps I do her an injustice.

A moment's reflection will convince us that most of our changes of mind are based upon self-interest. Similarly much of the heartache and regret which besets mankind is self-centred and has little to do with sorrow for sin. Self-pity was never remotely akin to repentance and we should never confuse the two. Even where there is real sorrow for sin, and true Godly sorrow; this is not repentance but only something which *leads to repentance*. Repentance is not regret, and is not sorrow for sin: it is A CHANGE OF MIND. Clearly it does not refer to any-old-kind of change of mind, but a change of mind that whereas we walked contrary to God, from henceforth we would turn, do a U-turn, and thereafter seek to walk in harmony with God. Repentance refers to the resolve to change. For instance Judas was overcome with sorrow and remorse for his part in the betrayal and death of Jesus, but his sorrow did not lead him to repentance — rather it led him to suicide. Paul draws a valuable distinction for us between regret and repentance in II Cor.7:8 where he says, in reference to his 1st epistle, "For though I made you sorry with a letter, I do not repent (regret R.V.), though I did repent: for I perceive that the same epistle

hath made you sorry, though it were but for a season. Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a Godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing. For Godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation, not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death." We see then that Paul sent an epistle to Corinth; after he sent it he regretted sending it; but later this regret vanished when he heard that the epistle had been received in the proper spirit and had made the Corinthians truly sorry for what had passed. But mainly he was pleased because their sorrow was of a Godly nature and had *led them to repentance*. As he says, 'Godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation: but the sorrow of this world leadeth unto death.' The sorrow and regret of Judas, and the world generally, leadeth not unto repentance but unto death. Thus repentance is not the sorrow and regret *which leads us to a change of will, attitude or volition, but is the actual change*.

Similarly we sometimes confuse repentance with *the consequences* of repentance. Repentance leads to a reformed life, if repentance is indeed present, but the reformed life is but the consequence of repentance. The Philippian jailer (Acts 16:33) washed the stripes of Paul and Silas and this is truly referred to as *an evidence* of his repentance. Later, in Acts 26:20, Paul states that he declared to the Gentiles that "they should repent and turn to God, doing works worthy of repentance." Likewise (in Matt.3:7) John the Baptist, when he saw the many Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, asked them to "Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance," or good works as evidence of their professed repentance. 'Repentance,' then, is neither Godly sorrow, nor is it good works but it lies exactly between the two. Godly sorrow leads us to A CHANGE OF MIND and good works is the eventual outcome and benefit of that change of mind. As previously indicated the CHANGE OF MIND must relate to God and relate to moving from a worse position to a better. Lancelot Oliver once suggested that a good way of remembering this distinction is to regard Godly sorrow as the *roots* of a tree, Repentance as the *trunk* of the tree, and good works as the *branches* and fruit of the tree.

Repentance is a change of mind which leads to a change of action, but not just a change of action. It must of necessity relate to a change of action *for the better*, and not just for the better but towards a better relationship between man and his Maker. Any disbeliever or agnostic could obviously have a change of mind, and could resolve to improve upon his life but this would not, or would not necessarily, be repentance. Repentance can only be directed towards God and comes only as a result of preaching. Jesus predicted that, "The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, beyond, a greater than Jonas is here." (Matt.12:41). God expected the men of Nineveh to repent *at the preaching of Jonah* (which places some heavy responsibility upon the preacher) and they did. Jesus commissioned his apostles finally by saying, "that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name, among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." (Luke 24:47). And so repentance must be brought about by *the preaching* of the gospel of Christ. The apostle Peter having preached, and his message having received a proper response from the hearers, commanded that the people "Repent and be baptised." Three thousand were baptised the same day and this surely indicates that as these people had had little time to reform their lives the term 'Repentance' referred to *a resolve to change*. Is it proper for us to send candidates (for baptism) away to reform their lives before they come seeking baptism — as John the Baptist seems to have done? The only thing which seemed to 'hinder' the Ethiopian eunuch from being baptised was the necessity to affirm that he believed with all his heart in the Lord Jesus Christ. He certainly didn't have much time to put his life in order. And so

Repentance emerges from the preaching of the gospel, and any change which emerges from Repentance must be for the better, and must relate to our new relationship with God. Just as Faith is based upon facts and that which is true, Repentance is based upon deeds and that which is right or wrong. Faith involves a change from ignorance (or error) to enlightenment, and Repentance involves a change from evil to goodness. Thus repentance is *for sinners*. Did not Jesus say, I came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance." Repentance in sinners is a disposition to forsake their sins and to serve God, or as the writer to the Hebrews puts it 'repentance from dead works to serve the true and living God.'

Importance

It must be scarcely necessary to comment on the importance of such a resolve. Surely it must constitute the most vitally important decision that any man, or woman, can make. Indeed Jesus, commenting upon the news brought to him regarding the slain Galilaeans, and those eighteen persons killed when the tower of Siloam fell, said, ". . . Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." (Luke 13:5). Many lessons are extracted from the parable of the Prodigal Son but most of them hinge upon the son 'Coming to himself' and RESOLVING to return to his father. Paul, in Rom. 2:4 referring to God's goodness, forbearance and long-suffering states that these are designed to lead men to repentance, but those of hard and impenitent hearts who fail to recognise that "the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance" are, in fact, treasuring up against themselves disaster on God's day of wrath and righteous judgement. Indeed it is for this cause, says Peter, that our Lord tarries in heaven for he says, "The Lord is not slack concerning His promise (to return) as some men count slackness: but is long-suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish but that *all should come to repentance*." (II Peter 3:9). Thus the importance is clear, if we repent not we shall perish. If salvation is union and harmony with God then a change of will is evidently necessary. Thus the scriptures require from us only that which is vitally needful, i.e. to REPENT and TURN. — Editor.

THREE COMMENDABLE VIRTUES

When we speak of 'commendable', we mean, of course, something which is worthy of our consideration, something to be cherished, something to be preserved, something to strive for. There are many other virtues but I would like to introduce, for consideration, the virtues of FAITH, COURAGE, and CONFIDENCE. Do we, at present, possess such virtues? We shall not know, really until we are put to the test and in any case it will be other people who will see in us such virtues, or see the absence of them.

The Old Testament abounds with characters, both men and women, in whom such virtues were plain to see. We might think, first of all, of faithful Abraham. In Gen. 22:1-3) we read of his testing time and of how he met the challenge with 'flying colours'. He was asked, of God, to sacrifice his son, his only son, the son given by long-awaited promise. Did any single person ever demonstrate such faith, courage and confidence in his God? Think of how he coped with his son's terrible question, "But where is the sacrifice..." and note the complete confidence in the reply, "My son, God will provide the sacrifice." Then there was Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego who went through unswervingly with the ordeal laid before them with the words, "God shall deliver us out of thine hand." (Dan. 3:6-11). Think also of that wonderful man Daniel who, disregarding the men who were scheming his violent death continued in his prayers to God, in full view of his enemies, "praying as

aforetime", and prepared himself to take 'head on' the deadly and horrible consequences. Talk about faith, courage and confidence? In I Sam. 17:32 we are confronted, as Goliath was, with the little shepherd boy David. He came out to fight when all the usual men of valour were searching for some place to hide. His counsel to Israel (referring to Goliath) was, "Let no man's heart fail because of him..." The secret of David's success was not the sling and the stone but the virtues of faith, courage and confidence. His confidence was not mis-placed.

In the New Testament too there are many instances recorded of men and women who displayed great quantities of these three virtues. None of the threats or actions of some of the despotic rulers of that time could possibly have caused these courageous people to have doubted to prevailing power and ability of their God. What a marvellous example they set to their fellow contemporaries and to us today.

We, as followers of Christ, should try and not let the side down in this but should try and emulate the worthies of the bible. We see also, however, in the bible, the results of human weakness in times of trial and adversity and we are perhaps disgusted at what we read. May we be just as disgusted with ourselves when we allow ourselves to fail and to be intimidated by the forces of evil. Let us be strong and of good courage. Let us have the confidence which rings out in the voice of Paul when he says, "For I know in whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day." (2 Tim.1:12). Many may claim faith in Jesus but fail in the time of testing and have not the courage to DO what is expected of them, and do not appear to have the confidence in the things promised. Our heart and minds must be free of all doubts or hesitation and for inspiration we need only look back at the valiant souls of bye-gone days and take courage. All kinds of difficult situations have to be met each day; all kinds of decisions have to be made and very often unpleasant tasks have to be performed. Let us try and meet them in a manner worthy of our profession and of our Lord Jesus.

How great is my faith? How strong is my courage? How complete is my confidence? Ponder, if you will those three wonderful virtues and perhaps re-appraise their value. If as a Christian, or a non-Christian, you have as yet failed to fully appreciate them, or failed sadly to implement them, then try again, and again. FAITH. COURAGE. CONFIDENCE.

THOMAS W. HARTLE,
Cape Town.

GLEANINGS

"Let her glean even among the sheaves." Ruth 2:15

HIS GIFT OF GIFTS

"FOR GO SO LOVED the world that HE GAVE HIS ONLY BEGOTTEN SON, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

What a wonderful thing! Think of it! The Eternal, Omniscient, Omnipresent, Infallible, and Almighty Creator, not merely moved with a passing feeling of pity and compassion for His erring creatures, but loving with the intensity of the Divine nature those who were in rebellion against Him.

Not God's power, not His intelligence, but His LOVE conceived and carried out the plan of man's salvation. LOVE invoked the aid of all God's attributes in the scheme of redemption:

*Love first contrived the way to save rebellious man,
And all the steps that love displays which drew the wondrous plan.*

God commendeth His own love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us.

“He GAVE His only begotten Son.” What a gift! The only begotten of the Father, the effulgence of His glory, the express image of His person, the one who was equal in nature, majesty, glory and power with Himself He gave; not of constraint, but of choice; not reluctantly, as of necessity, but freely, gladly He yielded the most precious of His possessions. So great God’s love for man that He spared not His Son.

*What will He not bestow?
Who freely gave this mighty gift unbought,
Unmerited, unheeded, and unsought;
What will He not bestow?*

Love always gives; it finds its outlet in sacrifice. Love gives its best, so God gave His only Son.

*His gift of gifts,
All other gifts in one.*

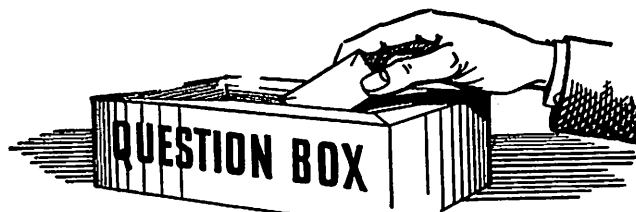
LOVED THE WORLD. A globe encircling, age-enduring love, no one overlooked, no time unprovided for.

*Its streams the whole creation reach,
So plenteous is the store;
Enough for all, enough for each,
Enough for evermore.*

No human being ever loved the race; all human love is in some degree sectional. As a rule the Jew loved the Jew, the Samaritan loved the Samaritan, the British loves the British, the Chinese love the Chinese. But God loved the world. Even the Apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ, who so long enjoyed the closest intimacy with Him, and were personally taught by Him, did not fully learn this lesson, and Peter needed a special revelation from God before he clearly understood that Christ died for the world.

God’s love is an ocean that no human sounding-line has ever fathomed, though thousands and tens of thousands have lived and died rejoicing in the blessedness of that love, measureless as immensity, vast as eternity. Not until we stand in the presence of the King and see Him face to face shall we be able to gauge His love for us; not until that day shall the finite mind accurately grasp the height, depth, length, breadth, and intensity of Infinite Love.

*Could you with ink the ocean fill,
Were every blade of grass a quill,
Were the whole world of parchment made,
And every man a scribe by trade:
To write the love of God above
Would drain the ocean dry,
Nor could the scroll contain the whole,
Though stretched from sky to sky.”*



Conducted by
Alf Marsden

"It is said that the baptismal water may be poured if there is not enough water for immersion. Furthermore, it is argued that the three thousand converts on the day of Pentecost could not have been immersed because there would not have been enough water in Jerusalem. Would you please comment?"

In order to get the background to this question I think I had better quote the substance of the letter I received: "In a book, 'This is the Faith' by Francis J. Ripley (priest of the Catholic Missionary Society), I read the following: 'The Didache or the Teaching of the Twelve Apostles, a document which dates from the first century, clearly says that the baptismal water may be poured when there is not enough water for immersion.' So it is certain that throughout the history of the Church, baptism by pouring has been recognised as valid . . . Another paragraph reads 'As St. Thomas implies, it is most improbable that the three thousand converts baptised by St. Peter on the first Pentecost were immersed; if only because there would not be enough water in Jerusalem at that time. Nor is it likely that the Gentiles baptised in the home of Cornelius, or the gaoler in prison at Philippi were plunged in the water for the purpose.' I would be grateful to hear any comments you have on the above paragraphs."

In order to answer this question I think we shall need to look initially at the Apostles; a group of people called the Apostolic Fathers; and the origin of the Didache.

Apostle in the New Testament

The word APOSTOLOS literally means 'one sent forth.' It is used of the Lord Himself. In Hebrews we read, "Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus" (Heb. 3:1). You will no doubt recall that in the Lord's prayer as recorded by John, Jesus said, "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent" (John 17:3). Jesus was sent by God. He is our great Apostle and High Priest.

The word also refers to the twelve chosen by the Lord for special training, and if we read Luke 6:13-16 we find the chosen ones named. Further on in Luke's gospel we read of the twelve being sent by the Lord to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick (Luke 9:2). Later on in verse 10 of the same chapter we read, "And the apostles, when they were returned, told him all that they had done." So the twelve disciples chosen by the Lord became the Twelve Apostles and the requirements to belong to that select number were set out by Peter before Matthias was chosen to replace the defective Judas Iscariot.

Paul himself, although he had seen the Lord (see 1 Cor. 9:1), could not be numbered with the original Twelve because he had not been with Jesus all the time of His earthly ministry. Paul was commissioned directly, by the Lord Himself, to carry the Gospel to the Gentiles.

The word has a wider reference. If we read the first letter of Paul to Corinth we find there Paul admitting to more than the Twelve. When he chronicles the appearances of the risen Lord in 1 Cor. 15 he says in verse 5, 'and that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve'. Later in verse 7, 'After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles'.

In Romans 16:7 we read of Andronicus and Junias who, as Paul says, 'are of note among the apostles'. In Acts chapter 14 we read of Paul and Barnabas both going into the synagogue at Iconium, and in verse 4 the scripture says, 'But the multitude of the city was divided: and part held with the Jews, and part with the apostles'. So if Paul and Barnabas went in together, and they are referred to as apostles, then obviously Barnabas was an apostle.

That there were false apostles who posed as the apostles of Christ, cannot be doubted. In 2 Cor. 11:12, 13 we read, "But what I do, that I will do, that I may cut off occasion from them which desire occasion; that wherein they glory, they may be found even as we. For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ".

I have gone to some lengths in this section so that the reader may understand that when he reads about apostles he is not necessarily reading about the original Twelve. I consider this to be extremely important, because those who were styled apostles in the postapostolic era said things which are not necessarily in accordance with the truths as first preached to the Jews and Gentiles by the original apostles who were commissioned by the Lord.

Apostolic Fathers and the Didache.

The Apostolic Fathers was a term used to denote a group of Greek Christian writers. They would be, according to history, of the second or third generation after the original apostles. They were no doubt responsible for recording the progress of the early Church, and of trying to elicit the Canon of Scriptures which could be the one weapon against deviation. The predominantly Greek-speaking church based on Alexandria was now being challenged by Carthage and Rome as to what should be included in the Canon. Rome claimed the martyrdom of Peter and Paul in the city, and so began the cult of the martyr-Apostles with the consequent apostolic succession and authority.

To understand the separate theological outlooks that developed in these great cities is a major study which cannot be gone into here, but undoubtedly the Church was being confronted with new situations and tests, and it seems quite evident to me that the writers who championed the cause of each tradition would produce conflicting ideas in trying to achieve uniformity for their own particular traditions.

The Didache, or Teaching of the Apostles, was probably composed towards the end of the second century, and was first published in 1883. It is said *not* to be a product of the Apostolic Fathers, and includes letters by such people as Clement of Rome, Ignatius of Antioch, Polycarp of Smyrna, and others. It is part of a Greek treatise called the Apostolic Constitution which purports to record the injunctions given by the Apostles of Christ through the medium of Clement of Rome. The Didache is based on the seventh book of this Constitution and purports to set out comprehensive rules for Christian life. Scholars claim that the Didache reflects the liturgy and order of a church possibly in Egypt, but more probably in Syria. It is a rather enigmatic document probably composed by wandering prophets, the bonafides of whom are rather uncertain. It has a rather enigmatic description of baptism and the eucharist, being at variance with more original documents and certainly with the Bible as we now have it. It is said to have dropped out of use except in isolated Egyptian communities.

The main point to remember is that the Didache, as seen by most scholars, is not an original document containing the Teachings of the Twelve Apostles, and that its teaching would seem not to be in line with what we can learn from our New Testament today. I suppose it is a natural thing for any of us to seek out documentary evidence which seems to support our own particular tradition and order. I do not say that the writer of the book mentioned by the questioner has set out to do that, but it is still a natural tendency for anyone.

The Apostolic Teaching

The message of the Apostles concerning baptism is both positive and unequivocal. In his letter to Rome Paul stated, "But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness" (Rom. 6:17). Evidently, there were Christians in Rome who has obeyed the 'form' of the teaching; what they had obeyed, of course, was the gospel, and the form of the gospel message was in the form of the expiatory sacrifice of Christ; death, burial, and resurrection. Well might Paul say in the same letter, "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptised into Jesus Christ, were baptised into his death. Therefore, we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection" (Rom. 6:3-5). Paul would obviously include himself in the subject 'we' because he had undergone the same experience (see Acts 22:16). The teaching is emphasised by Paul in his letter to the Colossians, "Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead" (Col. 2:12). In baptism there is a burial and a resurrection; this is the 'form' of the teaching which believers were obedient to.

I think the apostolic teaching makes it quite clear that in the early days of the Church there were no 'modes' of baptism, as many people say today. The argument is settled scripturally by Paul in his letter to the church at Ephesus, "One Lord, one faith, one baptism" (Eph. 4:5). The 'one baptism' is immersion in water, and puts the believer into Christ. In the apostolic teaching there were no modes of sprinkling and pouring; these were introduced at a later date, when the Church went through periods of departure and apostasy after the perfection of the apostolic era. If the Great Commission is still in force today (Matt. 28:19) which it undoubtedly is, then immersion in water is still in force today. Jesus commanded the apostoles to teach and baptise (immerse) men; he teaches and commands us to do the same today.

As for there not being enough water in Jerusalem to immerse the three thousand, then this seems to me to be a ludicrous argument. Concerning the gospel preached by Peter on the Day of Pentecost, Acts 2 simply states that three thousand were immersed *on the same day*. As the gospel was preached in Jerusalem on that day, the assumption is that the three thousand were actually immersed in the environs of the city where the gospel was preached, but Acts 2 is silent as to the precise location where the immersions took place. The really important point so far as I am concerned is that the Holy Spirit says that *three thousand people were immersed on that day*. There the matter should rest. But doesn't it seem strange to you that Philip could find enough water *in the desert* to immerse the eunuch, and yet people argue that there might not have been enough water in the vicinity of Jerusalem to immerse the believers there? Why are some people not content with the simplicity of the Word.

I think we must understand that the Church has passed from the perfection of the apostolic era, through departure and apostasy, then reformation and restoration. Many unhelpful things occurred in the periods of departure and apostasy which have left their mark in the present day, but it is up to all Christians to engage themselves in the active restoration of the ancient order; only then, when we have returned to the pristine purity of the apostolic era, will the world see the splendour of that Church for which the Lord agonised at Calvary.

All questions please to Alf Marsden, 377 Billinge Road, Highfield, Wigan, Lancs.

BREAKING THE BREAD

by James D. Orten

Christians generally recognise the importance of symbols in their service to God. The Jewish Passover supper (Ex. 12) was a historical symbol of the Hebrews' deliverance from Egypt, and a prefigurative symbol of the deliverance from sin brought to all men by Jesus' death on the cross. Paul declares that baptism is symbolic of Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection (Rom. 6:4). The Lord's supper is also a symbolic observance.

Of the bread He used in the Lord's supper Jesus said, "Take, eat; This is my body." (Matt. 26:26). He did not mean, as the Catholics say, that the loaf in His hand had become "transubstantiated" into His literal body. That was not possible because his physical body was alive and well at the time these words were spoken. Rather he meant that the loaf, because it had been blessed and sanctified for that particular purpose, had become a sacred symbol of His body, to be recognised and treated as such by all Christians from that time forward. In a similar way He taught that the fruit of the vine represented His blood. When Christians break the bread and drink of the cup, those too are spiritually symbolic acts. They represent partaking of Jesus' body and blood, without which we have no spiritual life (Jno. 6:53).

One of the few major differences regarding the Lord's supper, among those churches that hold to the biblical pattern of using one loaf and one cup in the communion, concerns breaking the loaf. Some Christians believe that the brother who serves at the Lord's table performs a symbolic act for all the congregation by breaking the loaf into two pieces before it is passed around and broken by each Christian. Others believe the loaf should be served whole with each communicant breaking only his portion. There are a number of churches in Britain, America, Africa, and perhaps other places that practice both ways. This question is not an issue, of course, among the churches that have adopted the use of individual cups and many loaves. The symbolism of sharing in one loaf that represents the unity of Christians in the Lord's one body was destroyed immediately when those man-made practices were introduced.

Should the loaf used in the Lord's supper be broken in two pieces by the brother who presides at the Lord's table; or should it be served unbroken to the congregation with each Christian breaking his portion from the previously whole loaf? This article will summarize the arguments and examine the issues on each side of this question in an effort to help Christians be scripturally informed and thus draw closer to our Lord's original practice.

There are generally two arguments given for breaking the bread before it is broken by the congregation. They are:

1. The bible says Jesus took bread and "broke it" (Matt. 26:26). The brother who serves at the Lord's table should follow Jesus' example.

2. The bread must be broken to represent the broken body of Jesus. Paul quoted Jesus as saying, "Take, eat; this is my body which is broken for you." (I Cor. 11:24).

The arguments usually made for serving the unbroken loaf to the congregation are:

1. Jesus broke the loaf to partake of it himself, and as an example to the disciples as explained by his command, "This do . . ." (I Cor. 11:24) which means "Do as I have done."
2. The loaf must remain whole as a symbol of Jesus' body because the scriptures said that "a bone of him shall not be broken" (Jno. 19:36), and to fit with the passover lamb which had to be eaten whole (Ex. 12:46).
3. The symbolism in breaking the bread is in each Christian breaking the bread, not in an act done by one member for all (I Cor. 10:17).

Let us now reflect on these arguments.

First, those Christians who say that the Lord "took bread and broke it" are absolutely right. The bible so states, and if it means that Jesus symbolically broke the loaf for the disciples, then that should settle the matter. But the question is not did Jesus brake bread (because all Christians believe he did), but rather how did he brake it, and what did he brake it for?

Perhaps some light can be cast on these questions by noticing carefully the wording of the scriptures. When the bible says "Jesus took bread and blessed it, and brake it," the "it" is always in italics. This means that the word it was not in the original text, but was supplied by the translators to make the passage read smoothly. Several translations (the Emphatic Diaglott is one) read simply that Jesus took bread, blessed it, and "broke." The addition of a two-letter word may sound like a small change, and it is, but it is enough to shift the emphasis off of Jesus' participation with the disciples and make it appear that he did something to the loaf for the benefit of the disciples. Jesus broke bread, but so did all the disciples.

We should be able to get a clear picture of what Jesus did by observing what the disciples did. It seems clear that the Lord's command, "This do . . ." meant for the disciples to follow the example had had just set. If Jesus merely broke the loaf as a symbolic act, the disciples, in following his example would each have broken it again and the loaf would have come back to Jesus in fourteen pieces with no one having eaten. Yet, we know that is not what happened. Jesus said, "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come." (I Cor. 11:26).

There is another record of Jesus breaking bread with some disciples in which our Lord's actions appear identical to those in the Lord's supper. Only the purpose of His breaking was different. I refer to the incident described in Luke 24, after the resurrection, when Jesus walked unrecognised with two disciples from Jerusalem to Emmaus. When the trio reached Emmaus the disciples begged Jesus to spend the night with them. The Lord agreed and the bible says (verse 30) that when they sat down to eat Jesus "took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them." Notice that the wording is almost identical to the description of Jesus' actions in the Lord's supper. Yet, there appears no doubt that Jesus broke here to eat with His disciples for he was simply preparing to eat a meal with them.

That Jesus broke bread in order to eat with the disciples is also suggested by what he said about the cup. "But I say unto you, that I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in My father's kingdom." (Matt. 26:29). The phrase "will not drink henceforth" means "will not

drink again." He would not have said "I will not drink again," if he had not drunk the first time; and it is not likely that he would have partaken of the cup without having partaken of the bread.

The Jewish Passover supper was a historical type of the Lord's supper, and the Passover lamb was a prefigurative representation of Jesus. Paul said (I Cor. 5:7) "For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us." The Hebrews were specifically instructed by Moses (Ex. 12:46) not to break a bone of the Passover lamb in the preparation and eating of it. John said the fact that the soldiers did not break the legs of Jesus, as they did those of the thieves who were crucified with Him, was a fulfillment of the Old Testament scriptures that said "a bone of him shall not be broken" (Jno. 19:36). Thus to break the communion loaf in the middle is symbolically wrong. But what did Paul mean when he said "this is my body which is broken for you?" The clearest explanation is suggested by several translations, and in agreement with the parallel passage of Luke 22:19, which makes the word "broken" to mean "sacrificed" or "given." Jesus' body was not broken in two for us, because it was not broken in two at all; but it was given or sacrificed for us.

Paul discusses one symbolic meaning of Christians partaking of the loaf and cup in I Cor. 10:16-17. Speaking of both aspects of the communion, he uses the three phases "we bless," "we brake," and "we partake." The "we" refers to all Christians. Notice that the "we" that partakes is the same "we" that blesses and brakes. No one would think that the brother at the table could do their partaking for them; and surely no one would think that his prayer means that they do not also need to pray in their own minds. By the same token, why should we think the brother at the table can break bread for us? There is indeed a symbolism in breaking the bread, but it is in each Christian breaking of the loaf and eating. Paul says it means we are all one in Christ.

The thoughts presented here are not intended to question the sincerity of those who practice breaking the loaf before it is served. I know that a number of devoted Christians see that as an appropriate practice. I am firmly convinced, however, that the weight of scriptural evidence is toward serving the loaf unbroken with each Christian breaking only his own portion.

— 511 Davis Dr.
Brentwood, Tenn. 37027

(Brother Orten presents his views in a reasonable manner but doubtless there will be brethren who may not share his conclusions. I shall be obliged if brethren will not write to me on the matter but write, perhaps, to brother Orten, or better still write a small article on the subject. Thank You.)

Editor.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

October 5: Eccl. 11,9 to 12,9; I John 2,7-17.

October 12: Deut. 6,1-15; I John 2,18-29.

October 19: Prov. 28,1-14; I John 3,1-10.

October 25: Gen. 4,1-15; I John 3,11-24.

Fellowship

The Greek word "Koinonia" is variously translated in the New Testament as fellowship, communication, communion, contribution, distribution. The basic thought is of course "sharing." Hence the opening thought in the Apostle John's letter is his sharing with us all the experience of fellowship with Jesus. In his gospel we meet and learn to know Jesus because he writes the story

of that most wonderful life. That life is the life of God — eternal life! Word of life! expression of thought of "THE FATHER" in human form! "the fulness of the Godhead bodily" (Col. 1,19; 2,9). It is so wonderful that we look upon God when we see Jesus, and John's emphasis is upon this fact that the revelation made to him personally is ours through his message. As he had the priceless privilege of "handling" Jesus, we too may have "communion" with him and thus communion with Jesus Himself and the Father. Observe this is not something we can keep to ourselves as individuals, it must be shared or it is inconsistent with the commandment "love one another." The cup and the loaf are shared ("common participation in" I Cor. 10,19 R.V. margin). The revelation of the life is completed by the other three gospels equally with John's of course. However it is essential that we understand that "God is light." The communion we share demands our living in that light although we do sin. The acknowledgement of our sinfulness ensures our forgiveness because "the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart" (Psa. 51,17). Our complete submission brings cleansing through the complete obedience of the LIFE, the blood of Jesus Christ His Son. The light we share is the truth revealed to us and we must walk in it, which means giving obedience to the commandments of Jesus and following His example.

Love

The letter we are reading has been called "The Epistle of Love" very fittingly. As the second chapter opens up, this is the subject. We cannot but be struck by the contrast between light and darkness — between the love of God and sin which He hates. We are faced with what appears on the surface to be contradictory statements. We are sinners, yet if we are to know God we must be righteous. If we say we have no sin we make God a liar but if we do not keep His commandments we cannot say we

know Him, and the love of God cannot be "perfected" (brought to maturity) in us. What John is indeed pressing home is the lesson so obvious and yet so difficult to practise, that practice must match profession. Thus he follows up with a very practical demand for obedience to the command of love with its outcome forbidding hatred of fellow men. It is wonderful to experience the new relationship of love within the Christian community but the attitude towards those outside who persecute, ignore or mock is another matter most intimately connected. The light of truth cannot tolerate the darkness of evil disposition towards others. Jesus made this plain in saying "If you love those who love you what thank have you?" Love demands universal application. In drawing a picture of the judgement Jesus shows that kindness exercised towards our fellows is kindness to Him (Matt. 25,31). It may be those immediately in view when John wrote were being tempted to dislike or feel hatred of their heathen neighbours. There are some things however which we must not love. They are the material things which can become our idols though legitimate for their use. The right use of sexual powers, the right and pleasurable use of eyesight, the pride in cleanliness, dress, correct behaviour are all in keeping with the worship of God — the kingdom of God and His righteousness, but they can be an obsession which separates us from God, just so easily by reason of our weak human nature. "For Thou, Who knowest, Lord, how soon our weak heart clings, hast given us joys, tender and true, yet all with wings, so that we seem gleaming on high, diviner things." (356 Christian Hymnary). It is our disposition towards earthly blessings which John is here dealing with, not the things themselves but just the same self-denial must be exercised in the limits we impose upon ourselves. We should bear in mind what Jesus said about eunuchs (Matt. 19,11 & 12) as a guide in all three matters (2,15-17).

Anti-Christ

I suppose enough has been written on this subject already, and I would not dare to claim to know more or better than those learned scholars who have exercised their minds on it. I humbly suggest however that the Roman Catholic apostasy appears to fit what John has here stated and what the apostle Paul wrote to the Thessalonians in his second letter (2,1-12). We view an enormous world-wide power claiming to be THE CHURCH with a HEAD who has a measure of infallibility, and rules through his priesthood every member of that church. In some obvious ways the organisation contradicts divine teaching as exhibited in the New Testament to which it claims infallible interpretation. That signs of it were already working through false teachers in the church, we cannot doubt. Men who took and claimed authority took away the priesthood of all believers and instituted a system of professional priesthood in its place, and dominated political governments to the extent that they were able to drive underground those who continued the simplicity of the true faith and practice as revealed by the Holy Spirit through the apostles. The extent to which goodness and virtue remained in the apostate body, it maintains its position in the minds of men and women — as it does today, and excites our sympathy where unselfish and charitable works are organised and supported. The counterfeit however is the more dangerous the nearer it appears to the true. The reformation which has in considerable measure brought down the false claims of THE CHURCH seems to be in danger of repeating the apostasy. It requires a supreme humility to "maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph. 4,3).

God's children

There is a sense in which all creatures are God's children because He created them, but the relationship in that case has no intimacy. John does not have

that in mind at all. He is thinking of the close and loving relationship which exists in an ideal human family. Father in that case is the most responsible member of a close-knit unit, and it is his place to love dearly all the members in particular of course his wife who shares the responsibility. Each child is entitled to the same loving care and as the children grow older the relationship becomes closer and more intimate. The children will ultimately be like their parents. If the parents are worthy the children will share the honour in which the parents were held. It will be their highest privilege. How much greater and more wonderful is the privilege we share as Christians with our heavenly Father and with our elder brother — the first-born among many children into heaven itself for that is the destiny of God's children. Our highest ambition now is to bear the Saviour's likeness. "Behold the amazing gift of love, the Father hath bestowed on us, the sinful sons of men, to call us sons of God" Scottish Psalter 1781.

R. B. Scott

DOES END JUSTIFY MEANS?

When scriptural justification cannot be found for innovative practices among the churches, many zealous and well-intentioned brethren point to the apparent good being accomplished and insist that this justifies the practices.

Look at the good it does

Let us assure our readers before going any further that we rejoice in any good that may be done, even when we voice disapproval of the methods being used. Paul's example along this line is clear. He rejoiced that Christ was preached even though he disapproved of the envy and strife with which some preached Christ (Phil. 1:15-18). In the same way, we rejoice when someone obeys the gospel even though we question some of the tactics used to bring him to that decision.

But the real question is this: Is scriptural authority determined by our evaluation of the good being accomplished or by the teaching of God's word? Can we, in our zeal to raise attendance and win souls, set aside and disregard what God has said in the scriptures? Does the end justify the means?

The Bible answers with a resounding "NO". (1) CONSIDER SAUL. His purpose in sparing the best of the sheep and oxen was a noble purpose. He was going to use them to sacrifice to the Lord (I Samuel 15:15). "Look at how much good I am going to do," Saul may have said. But Samuel's words speak powerfully in our day as they did in Saul's: "*Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams*" (I Sam. 15:22). God is more concerned with our obedience than He is with our accomplishments.

(2) CONSIDER DAVID. David's purposes were noble as he sought to bring the ark to Jerusalem, but placing the ark on a new cart was an act of disobedience. "Look at how much good I'm going to do," David could have said. God, however, would not allow such a disregard for His word, no matter how noble the purpose might have been. Uzzah's death resulted. Later David, recalling the incident, said: "*The Lord our God made a breach upon us, for that we sought him not after the due order* (1 Chronicles 15:33).

(3) CONSIDER MOSES. Water poured from the rock that Moses had smitten with his rod — sufficient water for all the people and their flocks. "Look at how much good I've done," Moses might have said. But because Moses disobeyed God and failed to sanctify God before the people, he was not allowed to enter the promised land

(Num. 20:12). His accomplishments did not justify his methods.

(4) CONSIDER THE APOSTLES. Some accused the apostles of teaching that we may "*do evil, that good may come,*" but Paul called those accusations slanderous (Rom. 3:8). The apostles did not teach that the end justifies the means.

W. J. HALL

EVANGELISTIC REPORT FROM ZAMBIA

Around the Zambian Copperbelt

There have been week long *church leadership courses* in the Copperbelt settlements of Kabwe, Kitwe and Chingola. The themes were Stewardship (Kabwe), Personal Evangelism (Kitwe) and The Work of an Evangelist (Chingola). The Bible teaching at two of the three courses was in the Bemba language. People came from twelve congregations scattered in northern and central Zambia in order to hear the Bible teaching. In Chingola the eldership did an excellent job in organising residential camp meeting facilities.

Radio and TV broadcasting by Churches of Christ continues with attempts made to record programmes every week at the Radio Zambia studio. The theft of the Woodhall's private recording machine has been a bad blow to both quantity and quality programming.

Baptisms. Two young men were baptised at Wusakile. 25 baptisms at Kamfinsa. Eleven baptisms at Chingola on one day and several others individually 8 recently. Also baptisms at Mufulira, Salisbury, Kamatipa, Chambeshi and Itimpi.

New Congregations and Preaching Points. Masala (Ndola), Kalulushi and several in Kamfinsa area.

Church Buildings. Plans are going ahead to erect church buildings at Ndola Road (Mufulira), Chimwemwe (Kitwe) and Mikonfwa (Luangshya). Finances

are a constraint but the Zambia Christians are learning practical lessons on stewardship.

Christian Cassettes. Kitwe Central congregation continues to experience revival with additional preaching and prayer meetings. People are coming even from other Copperbelt towns for the Bible preaching. The congregation's Christian Cassette Library is helping with personal evangelism and teaching. Also there are Christian cassette libraries in Mufulira and Chingola.

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

LIVING EPISTLES

Four preachers were discussing the merits of various translations of the Bible. One liked the King James version for the beauty and simplicity of its language. Another the Revised Version, because of its accuracy to the Hebrew and Greek. Another Moffatt's, because of its up-to-date vocabulary.

The fourth preacher remained silent. When asked to express his opinion he replied: "I like my mother's translation best." The others were surprised, not knowing his mother had translated the Bible. "Oh yes she did," he said. "She translated it into everyday life, and it was the most convincing translation I ever read."

Religious Digest

THE ANSWER

Nations are puzzled, laden with fear;
All seems just darkness, year after year;
Planning and scheming don't seem to bring
Peace and contentment, joy bells that ring;
Millions are asking "What's it about?"
There is an answer —

GOD IS LEFT OUT.

Tempers are fraying, quarrels abound;
Many are saying solutions they've found;

Then like a bubble they burst in the air,
Bringing depression, waves of despair;
Courage is failing in hearts that were stout;

Here is the reason —

GOD IS LEFT OUT.

People are needing assurance and peace;
Hearts that are broken daily increase;
Many are straying deep into sin;
For some there is fighting and striving within:

This is the answer, proclaim with a shout;

"This is your trouble —

GOD IS LEFT OUT!"

(Selected)

A CODE FOR FAMILY LIVING

These truths we will remember

1. God made us a family.
2. God gave the True standards for family love, and loyalty.
3. God made us dependent on one another.
4. God wants us to be the greatest possible help to each other.

These should be our aims

1. To be the kind of family God wants us to be.
2. To understand and love one another.
3. To make amends for any unfairness or wrong to the other.
4. To forgive one another gladly.

This shall be our purpose

To serve God and His Kingdom. On Him we depend for every grace, and to Him we pledge our first and highest loyalty.

Woodstock (S.A.) Church Bulletin

COMING EVENTS

The church at Tranent intend, God willing, to hold a week-end MISSION on Sept. 26th, 27th and 28th, 1980, in the church Meeting-house, with brother JOHN DODSLEY doing the preaching.

Meetings will commence at 7.30 p.m. except for the 27th when it will begin at 6 p.m. We look forward to your support.

J. Colgan

"BEGINNING IN JERUSALEM"

A German girl prayed for many years that she might be sent to a foreign field as a missionary. One morning it seemed as if new thoughts ran through her mind, like this:

"Where were you born?" "In Germany."

"Where are you now?" "In America."

"Who lives in the room next to yours?"

"A Swedish girl."

"Is she a Christian?" "No."

"Who lives in the flat above?" "A Jewish family."

"Christians?" "No."

"Who lives next door?" "Italians."

"Christians?" "No."

"Have you ever done any missionary work in your neighbourhood?" And she was obliged, with shame, to answer "No."

SOMEONE IN YOUR SHOES!

There are little eyes upon you,
And they're watching night and day;
There are little ears that quickly
Take in every word you say;
There are little hands all eager
To do everything you do,
And a little boy who's dreaming
Of the day he'll be like you.
You're the little fellow's idol,
You're the wisest of the wise:
In his little mind about you
No suspicions ever rise.

He believes in you devoutly,
Holds that all you say and do,
He will say and do in your way,
When he's grown up, just like you.
There's a wide-eyed little fellow,
Who believes you're always right;
And his ears are always open
And we watches day and night.
YOU are setting an example,
Every day, in all you do,
For a little boy who's waiting
To grow up to be like YOU.

Selected (Cape Town "Bulletin")

Better to remain silent and be thought
a fool than to speak and remove all
doubt. — Abraham Lincoln.

Men who have much to say use the
fewest words. H. W. Shaw

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