

The SCRIPTURE STANDARD

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

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NO FAVOURITISM

WE remember our earliest days of education, some 50 years ago, in what was then known as "elementary school." We had a headmaster who was a kind but firm disciplinarian. We would call him today "one of the old school." The dear old man is still living, and must be some 95 years old. At his school his own son and daughter were being educated. Naturally we took for granted that he would show a certain amount of what we termed 'favouritism' to his own children, and would not treat them with the same severity and punishment for any wrong-doing as he did the other children (those were the days of "stick" or "cane!") We would grant that it was natural that the head should show preferential treatment toward his own.

But not a bit of it! Indeed, the head seemed to err on the other side, for he exercised discipline upon his son and daughter even more firmly than upon the rest of us. The standards he set for the school must be maintained and even exceeded by his own children. He did not expect from other children what he did not demand from his own.

We see the same attitude from time to time today. We know a businessman whose son is following his father in the business, but who is treated in the same way as and has no other privileges than any other employees in the business. We remember that when our present Queen sent her eldest son Charles, Prince of Wales to schools in Gordonstoun and at Treetops in Australia it was on the understanding that he be subject to the same rigorous treatment as every other member of the schools.

God sent His Son

In Matthew 21:33-44 we have what we name "The Parable of the Wicked Husbandmen" told by Jesus to the religious leaders of His time. It is worth our while to read it. The owner of a vineyard had left it in charge of his tenants (husbandmen). From time to time he sent servants to collect the fruits of the vineyard. But the tenants had been unworthy of their trust and responsibility: they knew that they were not producing the fruit their Lord had a right to expect. So they ill-treated the servants, the messengers, stoning some and killing others. Finally the master sent his son, although knowing the fearful peril he would be in, and the awful consequences that might follow. Yet the Lord did not hesitate, nor the son draw back from visiting his father's estate. On at least two occasions in the past four years the Queen of this country has been thought to be in danger if she should visit certain of her domains. Parliament has been concerned and only after the most elaborate preparations and assurances have the governing powers allowed the visits to take place — only when the Queen's safety could be guaranteed almost beyond a peradventure. Yet in this parable we read of no special precautions being taken for the safety of the Lord's son, no preferential treatment being given over the treatment of the Lord's servants.

We know how the son was treated — he was killed by those who should have brought forth the fruits. The meaning of the parable is too clear for any exposition to be needed. God sent to His people first His servants, messengers, the prophets: we read in Old Testament and New how they were treated. It is summed up in

the words of Jesus (Matthew 23:34-36) only a day or so after uttering the parable of the wicked husbandmen: beyond question an exposition of the parable that needs no enlarging upon.

Hebrews 1:1-3 tells us that, while in time past God sent His servants the prophets to His people, now He sends to them and to us not a servant but a Son. This Son was "in the beginning the Word, who was with God and was God." The Word became flesh, and men know Him as Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God. Though Son of God, God and men gave Him no "preferential treatment." To accomplish the will of God He used no powers or authority that are not available to us — a holy life and the power of love. He condemned sin not by His miraculous power but in the flesh — as a man. None of his miracles was wrought to serve Himself. There was no temptation or suffering we face that He did not undergo. It could not be said of Him that He does not understand, never having known "a fallen world like this," for "though He was a Son he yet learned obedience by what He suffered" and was "perfected through suffering" (Heb. 5:8; 2:10).

The Humility of God

It is not so fashionable now to attempt to teach manliness, goodness, courtesy, determination and courage through books. We rather take pride in doing the opposite, for many of our books, if they are written with any purpose at all, set themselves to glorify filth, lust, violence, barbarousness and aggressiveness. The quotation "Lives of good men all remain us we can make our lives sublime," if repeated at all is uttered mostly in ridicule. But we remember titles of biographies of great men which summed up the lives of those men. Such a book was "From Log Cabin to White House," the life of President of the United States James A. Garfield, a member of the Disciples of Christ in the last century, who was assassinated while still President. "From Log Cabin to White House" in its very title showed the rise of Garfield from the humblest beginnings to the highest position in his nation.

The writers of the life of Jesus Christ (if we can term the books of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John "lives" or biographies) used no such titles for their books. For their aim was exactly the opposite to that of the authors we have mentioned: not to set out the rise of Jesus from a stable in Bethlehem to His ascension back to the glory of His Father "which He had before the world was," but His utter humility in the Incarnation, the Word made flesh. The coming of Christ into the world and to His own was the exact reverse of the rise from insignificance to fame. We remember hearing our late Bro. Fred Day telling of an incident in Birmingham. He said he was waiting for a tram on a hot summer day, and noticed the tram-lines were covered by thousands of ants scurrying to and fro. He could not help but think of their fate when the tram came along and crushed them. He realised his helplessness to do anything to warn or save the ants. The only way it could be done was that he himself became an ant, that he might be able to communicate with them to save them. And then the thought struck him: "For me to become an ant, after being man, would be not nearly so great a humiliation as Christ undertook in becoming man." "Who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross" (Phil. 2:6-8 R.S.V.).

So the life of Christ on earth, and His ministry, is not from the meanest, humblest, poorest to the highest and most glorious, but from the unutterably glorious to the equally unutterable meanness and shame and de-gradation.

God at our disposal

As recorded in Acts 2:23 Peter spoke some remarkable words on that great day of Pentecost. We used to sing in a hymn in the "old" hymn book, "Jesus was born to die." We take it for granted that suffering and death were His predetermined, predestined fate. Thus, men reason, everything that was done to Him that caused Him suffering and resulted in His crucifixion was by the will of His Father, and whoever did despite to Him, whether ignoring Him or, like Judas, betraying Him, was doing God's will. Hence, if man thus does the will of God, why God's punishment? Where is the sin? Judas was merely an instrument used by God to bring about His predetermined purposes. But Peter does not say any such thing. He says that Jesus Christ came into the world not to suffer and die by the will of God, but by the will of men. Peter says, not that Christ was crucified" by the definite plan and foreknowledge of God" but that He was "delivered," given to men, set amongst them. Do you recall a very similar statement Jesus Himself made when at one of the great crises of His life, when "He set his face to go to Jerusalem"? He warned His apostles, "Let these words sink

into your ears: for the Son of man is to be delivered into the hands of men" (Luke 9:44). It is as though in sending His Son, with the Son's willing obedience, into the world, God says to men, "Here is my Son, my beloved, to do with as you wish, to accept or reject, to love or hate, to ill-treat or to cherish, to scoff at or to confess, even to kill. The choice is yours."

God at our disposal! It is impossible to speak higher things of the Son than the scriptures do. Words are insufficient to express His station and glory. He is the one "through whom and by whom all things were created," the revelation of the glory of God, who could say "He who has seen me has seen the Father," King of kings and Lord of lords, He to whom all authority in heaven and earth has been given, whose words shall judge the world. Yet in His days on earth He stood humbly among men pleading "Come to me" and left it to men's choice whether they came or not; He, as the result of their choice, cried, "You will not come to me that you might have life." He could have compelled men to yield to Him, yet used no compulsion but the drawing power of love and sacrifice. He accepted their choice, cried, "You will not come to me that you might have life." He could have compelled men to yield to Him, yet used no compulsion but the drawing power of love and sacrifice. He accepted their choice, whether they received Him or rejected Him. God does not violate the gift He has made to men — freedom of choice, even on eternal matters, such as salvation. He leaves it to us. We can choose or reject even God Himself.

But the results of the choice will abide through eternity. Sometimes we hear the sentimental statement that "God is too loving and kind to send anyone to hell, or eternal punishment. At the end all will be saved. No-one could be happy in heaven while a soul is suffering torment in hell." No, God does not send anyone to hell: a man sends himself, it is the result of his own choice. The Bible, Old Testament and New, is full of the patience and love of God, pleading, urging men to return to Him, constantly seeking them in spite of themselves. But this will not ever be. Many regard the Old Testament as the book of the wrath and judgment of God, and the New Testament as the book of the love and salvation of God. Yet in the New Testament we have clearer and sterner warnings of the wrath and judgment of the living God than we have in the Old. God willing, it is our purpose in our next article to write of these things, drawing attention to what the word of God says concerning what shall befall those who do not willingly acknowledge or confess Jesus Christ to the glory of God the Father.

EDITOR.

LOVE IN PROPER PROSPECTIVE

ONE of the key words in the Bible is love. It is greater than faith or hope (1 Cor. 13: 13), and is the bond of perfectness (Col. 3: 14).

Knowledge, faith, benevolence and sacrifice are nothing without love (1. Cor. 13: 1-3). Everything that we are to do toward God or man is fulfilled in love. We can truthfully say that love is the greatest principle that the world has ever known. Yet, many have misconceptions and warped ideas as to the real meaning of Bible love.

False Notions

Some think that love will not allow rebuke and chastisement. Preachers are often accused of lacking love because they rebuke and reprove. If preachers or anybody else lack love they are nothing, but rebuke and reproof do not necessarily manifest it. Such kind of preaching is done most of the time because of a love for souls and the truth of God. One way God shows his love is by chastening (Heb. 12: 6), and parents do the same (Prov. 13: 25). True love necessitates chastisement. It will not compromise truth or overlook wrong. The flatterer and the compromiser are the ones who lack love. They are mostly interested in themselves.

Some think that love will not permit hate for anything. "If one hates, he doesn't love" expresses the attitude. But the Bible teaches we are to hate certain things. The Psalmist said, "I hate every false way" (Ps. 119: 104). Christ hates iniquity (Heb. 1: 9) and false doctrine (Rev. 2: 15). Solomon said of God, "These six things doth the Lord hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him" (Prov. 6: 16). Yet, God is love (1. Jn. 4: 8). Hence, we are to hate what we are to hate and to love what we are to love.

Others think that love will nullify obedience. "If we love God with all our hearts, he will overlook a lack of strict obedience to his will" is the idea of some. But strict obedience is how we show our love. John wrote, "But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected . . ." (1. Jn. 2:5). Genuine love produces obedience. One who will not obey does not love as he ought to love. Some just see one side of God. They forget that God is a God of severity as well as a God of goodness.

True Meaning of Love

"Love can be known only from the action it prompts" says Vine. God showed his love by giving his Son (Jn. 3:16) and we in like-manner manifest our love by action. John wrote, "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and truth" (1. Jn. 3:18).

Vine further says, "Christian love has God for its primary object, and expresses itself first of all in implicit obedience to His commandments . . . Christian love, whether exercised toward the brethren, or toward men generally, is not an impulse from the feelings, it does not always run with the natural inclinations, nor does it spend itself only upon those for whom some affinity is discovered. Love seeks the opportunity to do good to "all men and especially toward them that are of the household of the faith" (Gal. 6:10).

Our first and primary duty is to love God. ". . . Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind" (Mt. 22:37). Jesus said "this is the first and great commandment." I believe it is greater than the second, "thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," because if we love God we will love our neighbour, but on the other hand, we can love our neighbour without loving God. As already stated, love for God is shown by "implicit obedience to His commandments."

Love for our neighbour is shown by treating him properly (that is, we will not cheat him, covet his possessions, deliberately misrepresent him, lie about him, try to smear his name, etc.) and love seeks his benefit, whether it be physical or spiritual.

Our enemy is to be blessed, done good to and prayed for (Mt. 5:44; Rom. 12:20-21). Our brother is to be shown kind affection and preferred (Rom. 12:10). The indigent are to be helped (Lk. 10:25-37). To the lost, whether it be an alien or a brother, we manifest our love by trying to save them. In these ways we seek the welfare of all.

1. Cor. 13:4-7 shows how love truly works. Henry Drummond wrote concerning this passage, "The Spectrum of Love has nine ingredients: Patience, Kindness, Generosity, Humility, Courtesy, Unselfishness, Good Temper, Guilelessness, Sincerity." These are the traits of love. If we lack any one of these traits we lack that much being a lovely character.

From the preceding we see, therefore, that love is not an insipid, weak, apathetic sort of thing that stands for nothing and opposes nothing, but rather is something that has principle, courage and justice.

Misplaced Love

Perhaps we could say that everybody loves, but not everybody loves the right things. There are too many who love the things of this earth.

Many love themselves. "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves . . ." (2 Tim. 3:1-2). This kind of people is selfish and self-pleasing. They love their own selves too much to deny themselves and follow Christ.

Many are lovers of pleasure. ". . . lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God (2 Tim. 3:4). Jesus said pleasures would choke out the word (Lk. 8:14). I take this to mean excessive pleasures or sinful pleasures. Myriads of people have turned their back upon God because of a pleasure craze.

The world is full of those who love money. "For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows" (1. Tim. 6:10). A love for money caused the rich ruler to turn away from Christ (Mt. 19:16-22), caused the rich fool to think all was well (Lk. 12:16-21) and caused Ananias and Sapphira to lie to God (Acts 5:11). A love for money has caused murder, divorce, perjury, robbery, war and numerous other things. Many spend nearly every moment figuring out some way to make more money. God is left out.

Like Demas, we have those who love the world (2. Tim. 4:10). John says, "Love not the world" and gives as a reason, "the world passeth away, and the

lust thereof . . ." (1. Jn. 2: 15-17). The world has nothing good to offer for eternity, but if we love God and do His will, we will abide forever. There is no future in loving the world.

Some love preeminence. This was Diotrefes' trouble. He "loveth to have the preeminence" (3 Jn. 9). The Pharisees were the same way. They loved the chief seats in the synagogue (Mt. 23: 6).

The praise of men is loved by not a few. The chief rulers "loved the praise of men more than the praise of God" (Jn. 12: 43). Love of praise causes elders and preachers to compromise the truth and become men-pleasers. Such cannot be the servants of Christ (Gal. 1: 10).

Conclusion

Love is indispensable and eternal. It is the Christian's badge of discipleship. Jesus said, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (Jn. 13:35). Let us cultivate this fruit of the Spirit more—W. E. WARNOCK: "Truth," June 1966.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

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- 7—Deut. 24:14 to 25:3
- 14—Psalm 116
- 21—Deut. 19:14-21
- 28—Genesis 1:1-25
- 2 Cor. 11:16-33
- 2 Cor. 12
- 2 Cor. 13
- 1 John 1:1 to 2:6

"THE THORN IN THE FLESH"

(2 Cor. 12:7)

IN the concluding readings from this letter, we have the "boasting" of the apostle Paul, which seems almost out of harmony with the humble tenor of his letters. We have to realise this is made necessary by the false teaching which had been brought to Corinth in the meantime by those who were both jealous of and hostile to Paul. We understand that while the church at Jerusalem as such recognised and approved of the work among the Gentiles, a stubborn minority, mentioned as having gone to Antioch in Syria much earlier on, were still visiting among the churches established by Paul with the same pernicious and divisive teaching (Acts 15:1). The letter to the Galatians provides instruction about this. They claimed the authority of the other apostles plausibly but falsely (Acts 15:24), and their chief weapon was to belittle Paul. They apparently found congenial soil for their evil seed in the Corinthian garden. Perhaps indeed some there resented the rebukes for their sin which Paul administered in the first letter, and it not only took the visit of Titus to bring them to their senses but this further letter and the presence of the apostle himself.

The false teachers had relied upon their own claims for authority, and did so boastfully. Their insinuations had to be confronted with the plain truth, and the doubts they had raised about the

character and apostleship of Paul made a very frank defence an essential part of that truth. The urgency of the need is pressing upon Paul's mind and his anxiety to get everything straightened out before he arrives in person (12:21).

We feel thankful that the apostle was led to write of his trials, bringing home to us so vividly and in so few words the greatness of the sacrifice he made for His Saviour—and ours. When we consider his subsequent sufferings, shipwreck and imprisonments, the picture is still more moving. And all this he regards as "our light affliction"! and can say "I take pleasure" in it (4:17 & 12:10). No wonder then that his work was greatly blessed of God. However, the greatest honours bestowed upon him were "visions and revelations of the Lord." The Corinthians knew enough of the power of the Holy Spirit, as manifested by him, to have no doubt of his heavenly calling, and enough of his life and work to be sure that the gospel he preached was not of man but of God. Hence his statements respecting the revelations strengthened his claim for himself and the truth.

Great honours promote pride in human beings, and Paul recognised the need which "Satan's messenger" fulfilled, of his not being "exalted overmuch." Many are the suggestions which have been made as to what this affliction was. The word rendered "thorn" (margin "Or, stake") is not used otherwise in the New Testament, and could mean either the very severe impalement, or a not so severe but perhaps just as grievous irritation or annoyance. That Satan is allowed to afflict mankind is clear from the case of Job, and Jesus spoke of his "binding" a woman (Luke 13:16) almost as though all affliction might be Satan's work (under God's sovereignty of course). We understand that sin is at the root of all suffering, and Satan is the originator of sin.

We will look at some of the suggestions. First there is the possibility of temptation to impurity. We think this has only to be mentioned to be put aside. It is clear from 1 Cor. 7:7 that Paul had no such difficulty, and he would hardly say "It is good for them if they abide as I" otherwise (verse 8). Many have thought of recurring pains "in ear or head"—and certainly, headache is a crippling affliction. Epileptic fits have been mentioned, and these troubles might be indicated by such passages as 1 Cor. 2:3; 2 Cor. 10:10; Gal. 4:13 & 14; 6,17. If, however the term "flesh" does mean an actual physical infirmity, the most likely surely is a defect of eyesight, always present but recurring more severely at times. We can understand that the brightness of the light, greater than the eastern midday sunlight, which struck down Paul on the road to Damascus could have had further effects than the three days of blindness which immediately followed. This infirmity of the flesh seems to be indicated in the account of Paul's experience when among the Galatian Christians. It prevented his journeying further at the time and instead of exciting contempt it produced such sympathy that they would have made personal sacrifices to relieve him—eyes being actually mentioned. There is also at the conclusion of the same letter (6:11) the fact of large letters which a short-sighted man would have to use—and probably only the concluding words would be written by him. We mention also that Tertius wrote the Roman letter for him, and that to Colosse includes the

salutation (only the salutation apparently) "with my own hand." The remaining point is in Acts 23:1-5 where it may be supposed that Paul did not see the set-up of the court clearly.

However the term "flesh" does not necessarily mean the physical body, as we learn from Romans 7 & 8:1-13 and Gal. 5:19-21 so that the last of the suggestions might be right—namely that Paul had an infirmity of temper. His "breathing out threatening and slaughter certainly indicates a man of very strong feelings, and the energy he put into his advocacy of his new faith says the same. He spoke hastily when before the council (Acts 23:1-5). He feared being too severe when facing his traducers in Corinth. (2 Cor. 12:21), and was very severe in his denunciation of Elymas (Acts 13:10). The intensity of his love for his brethren may well have been matched by an intensity of hatred for evil and evil-doers, sometimes manifested by outbreaks of temper. Luther thought Paul might have been troubled by "blasphemous and unbelieving thoughts" but this we are sure is quite out of the question.

Whatever handicaps we Christians may have, Paul's example of humble acceptance and triumphant faith is our guide. R. B. SCOTT.

"SCRIPTURE READINGS," page 80, column 2, line 8.

Please read "Hence he (Paul) made every effort to remove all possible justification for hostility towards himself, because that meant hostility to the truth"

THE LAW OF LIBERTY

WHERE there is no law, there can be no freedom. Freedom is found only within the framework of law, but the law to which we are subject is the perfect law of liberty, in which we are permitted to live.

This chapter is closely connected with the preceding one, the apostle having said, "So then brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free," immediately adds, "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." Thus we are admonished to hold fast our Christian profession, which brings spiritual liberty as contrasted with the law of Judaism which brings spiritual bondage.

This freedom which we have in Christ is often abused and misunderstood. This freedom comes to the obedient ones through faith which worketh by love. God does not acknowledge faith which is not active. Faith working by love produces obedience to the will of God by which we obtain this freedom.

In Christ we are free to serve one another, but we must not use our freedom as an occasion to the flesh. The law respecting our duty to one another is fulfilled in one word, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."

Holding fast our freedom in Christ we are to walk in the Spirit. When we are walking in this manner we will not bite and devour one another. If we walk in the Spirit we know that the carnal mind is crucified and we are controlled by the spiritual mind.

To hold fast our freedom we are to abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul. These are called works of the flesh and are easily observed. They are:

adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like.

In Christ we are free to exercise ourselves under his will manifesting the fruit of the Spirit which is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, against which there is no law.

In Christ we are free to walk in the light, consistently, and with caution, avoiding those who would hinder our continued obedience to the truth. In this manner we do now rejoice in this freedom.

In Christ we are free to live in the Spirit now. In this manner do we hold fast our freedom. Therefore we do now live in the Spirit, anticipating not the cessation of life, but eternal prolongation of life in the Spirit by the omnipotent power of our God.

Let us stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, submitting ourselves to the will of God and enriching the lives of those whom we meet daily. For this precious liberty Christ died and rose again, that through this free access of obedience to the Father we might live both now and forever.

THE WHEAT AND THE TARES

IN Matthew 13:24-30 Jesus gives us the parable of the wheat and the tares. Read this. Some misinterpret this parable, and we notice in Matthew 13:36, that Jesus' disciples did not have a clear understanding of it. They asked Jesus to explain it to them, and in verses 37-43 we have Jesus' explanation.

In verse 37 Jesus said, "He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man." Jesus is saying that He is the Sower, the Redeemer, the Saviour, the Holy One of God. He is the one who does the planting, the sowing. Only that which is planted by the heavenly Father through Christ is pleasing to Him (Matt. 15:13).

In verse 38 Jesus says, "the field is the world." The field referred to in the parable is not the church (as some seem to think) but the world. Some brethren who are looking for excuses or "a way out" of church discipline try very hard to make the "field" the church. We cannot interpret this parable out of context, or in such a way that it contradicts other plain passages of Scripture relating to church discipline (2 Thess. 3:6, 14, 15; Rom. 16:17-18).

Again in verse 38 Jesus says, "the good seed are the sons of the kingdom; and the tares are the sons of the evil one." The good seed are Christians; the tares are the wicked, the children of the devil (John 8:44).

In verse 39 Jesus says, "and the enemy that sowed them is the devil." The sons of the devil are sowed by Satan himself. We are to resist Satan and his servants (Jas. 4:7) and to stand against him (Eph. 6:11). Make no mistake, he is after us (1 Pet. 5:8). If the devil cannot keep us out of the church, he will do all he can to make us useless *in* the church. How? By making us spiritually ignorant and self-satisfied. By our following after Scriptures. By creating strife and divi-

the teachings of men rather than the sion among one another, refusing to have love and regard for one another. By our being dogmatic about our opinions, regarding them as matters of doctrine.

In verse 39 again Jesus says, "and the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are angels." The harvest is the judgment day—the end of the dispensation of the gospel of Christ. We will be judged in that day by the things we have done (2 Cor. 5:10). We will be judged by Jesus' words (John 12:48). The angels will be the reapers. They will work God's vengeance on those who have disobeyed God (2 Thess. 1:7-9).

Verse 40. "As therefore the tares are gathered up and burned with fire; so shall it be in the end of the world." We see that the sons of the devil are going to receive punishment and eternal damnation in the end of the world (Rev. 20:10, 14, 15; 21:8). The time for repentance will be over, and God will judge the world in righteousness (Acts 17:30-31).

Jesus speaks further concerning the judgment in verses 41-42. "The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that cause stumbling, and them that do iniquity, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire; there shall be the weeping and gnashing of teeth." Jesus is showing us that there is going to be a great separation, and dividing of good from evil, and that only suffering and punishment await those who are servants of sin.

Verses 40-42 of this parable tells us that the tares are going to be separated and burned with fire. Who would want to admit that they were tares? Here again is the old argument of trying to make the field the church.

In verse 43, Jesus tells what awaits those who have followed Him faithfully. "Then shall the righteous shine as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. This is what we must all strive for, to dwell in the eternal kingdom with God the Father, and His Son, Christ Jesus. Let us, each one, resolve to live closer

to God, to follow in Jesus' footsteps, to do more, and to work harder for the cause of Christ, and to rightly divide His Word. Certainly there could be no greater joy awaiting us, than to, "shine forth as the sun" in God's heavenly city.—Larry Devore: "Truth," May, 1966.

'MAKING MELODY IN YOUR HEART'

(Ephesians 5:19)

LAST summer my wife and I and our brother-in-law and family decided to worship with a congregation of brethren in Chicago, Illinois, some fifty miles from our home in Hobart, Indiana. We had arranged to have a picnic in one of the neighbouring parks, and thence to visit the huge O'Hare International Airport situated several miles from downtown Chicago.

We arrived at the Stoney Island Avenue Church of Christ in sufficient time to participate in the worship and we all received a friendly Christian greeting on entering the house of worship. Taking our seats, the singing soon followed. The song leader ascended a small flight of stairs to the speaker's platform and proceeded to lead the singing. At the same time a sister stood before us on our side of the assembly room, and immediately started translating the words of the song into sign language. This was accomplished by the use of her fingers, hands and arms. I became aware that we had deaf and dumb in our midst. It was heart-warming to us to see these brethren making melody in their hearts to the Lord by the means of sign language.

Later on in the worship another brother brought forth the message; the sister who had been leading the deaf and dumb was replaced by a brother who conveyed the proclaimed word of truth to these afflicted brethren. There is no question that the brother and sister were

well qualified for the work they had taken up. I thought how wonderful it was that there were such citizens in the Kingdom of the Lord who took it upon themselves to learn the sign language, so that they could be a blessing to the deaf and dumb, who dwell in a world without sound.

After worship I introduced myself to these brethren and praised them for the work they were doing at that place. This will always be an outstanding experience in our lives. To me it was the most outstanding lesson presented in making melody in your heart without the use of instruments of music such as the organ etc.

My wife and I have visited many congregations of the Lord's people in different States of our country when we have been on vacations, but this was our first experience of this kind. Surely the deaf and the dumb have been able to hear with the "hearing of understanding" and have been able to speak with the dexterity of their hands.

I wish to thank Brother Melling for the opportunity to relate this incident to the readers of the "Scripture Standard" and I trust it will be of some benefit to all who read it.

May we all be ever mindful of Him, in whom we live, move, and have our being, and to His Son, the Author and Finisher of our Faith.

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Hobart, Indiana.

THE BIBLE AND YOUTH

THE Bible teaches that children are a blessing from God. "Lo, sons are an heritage from the Lord; the fruit of the womb a reward. Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the sons of one's youth. Happy is the man who has his quiver full of them." (Ps. 127:3-4). In the New Testament the desire of the Lord is that "the younger women marry, bear children, rule the household, give no occasion to the adversary for reviling." (1 Tim. 5:14). There is something wrong with a woman who prefers a poodle dog to a little child.

By bringing children into the world,

the parents are automatically under obligations to God and the children. Let us note briefly what they are.

The child must be taught the Word of God. Timothy was told to abide in the things he had "learned and hast been assured of knowing of whom thou hast learned them; and that from a babe thou hast known the sacred writings which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." (2 Tim. 3:14-15). The faith that was in Timothy dwelt first in his grandmother Lois and in his mother Eunice. (2 Tim. 1:5). From a babe they

had taught him the Scriptures and instilled faith into his mind. This faith, however, first resided in their minds.

If someone should steal material possessions from a child, all would agree that a grave injustice was done. But, if parents fail to teach their children the way of the Lord, they have robbed them, they have done them a grave injustice and made them paupers indeed! "And ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but nurture them in the chastening and admonition of the Lord." (Eph. 6:4). "Fathers, provoke not your children, that they be not discouraged." (Col. 3:21). Parents may train their children by teaching and by setting a Christian example before them.

If someone fed poison to your child, possibly the child would die, and you would expend all efforts to see that that individual was brought to justice. But parents, are you not just as careless when you allow your child to see and read filth that will poison his mind?

Discipline must be exercised to uphold the authority of the home. "He who spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is diligent to discipline him." (Prov. 13:24). "Discipline your son while there is hope; do not set your heart on his destruction." (Prov. 19:18). "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." (Prov. 22:6). "Folly is bound up in the heart of the child, but the rod of discipline drives it far from him." (Prov. 22:15). "Do not withhold discipline from a child; if you beat him with the rod he will not die." (Prov. 23:13). "If you beat him with the rod you will save him from sheol." (Prov. 23:14). "Discipline your son and he will give you rest; he will give you delight in your heart." (Prov. 29:17).

Parents must live the principles of Christianity before their children. Can parents expect their children to follow the teaching of the New Testament and only seldom see some of its principles in action? Will your child know that assembling together with the saints is a command and must be obeyed, if by your action you repeatedly forsake the assembly?

Will children learn to pray, to give, to sing, if only seldom they see their parents do these? If a parent holds a critical, unco-operative, stubborn spirit, will not the child be disposed to do the same? Children had rather see a sermon than hear one. If your training is to have the desired effect, you must live the principles you teach.

Children must obey their parents in the Lord. (Eph. 6:1-3). "Children obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing in the Lord." "A wise son heareth his father's instruction, but a scoffer does not listen to re-buke." (Prov. 13:1). "A foolish son is

a grief to his father and bitterness to her that bare him." (Prov. 17:25). "Even a child makes himself known by his acts, whether what he does is pure and right." (Prov. 20:11).

In conclusion, let the young take heed to David's admonition, "Wherewith shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to thy word. With my whole heart have I sought thee; Oh let me not wander from thy commandments. Thy word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against thee, (Ps. 119:11).

How does it go at your house?—"Brakpan Church Bulletin" (South Africa).

JUDGE: LAWS OF MOSES BETTER

The law is becoming so complex that it would be better to repeal the lot and go back to the Ten Commandments, said Mr. Justice Stable at Shropshire Quarter Sessions yesterday.

He told 21 new magistrates who had just been sworn in that the law was under review to keep pace with modern times.

"I think we should do much better if we repealed the whole of the criminal legislation and went back to the Ten Commandments, perhaps slightly enlarged to deal with modern situations, such as motor cars and so on," he said. —"Guardian," September 16th, 1965.

CORRESPONDENCE

CAN YOU HELP?

THE church which meets in Oxford Street, Loughborough is engaged in making an extension to the meeting-house. This is an absolute necessity because up to this time there have been no inside toilet facilities. The extension is in order to provide such and to have one additional room for office and Bible School work. It had been our hope to meet the entire cost of this building out of our own resources, but it becomes increasingly clear that despite much voluntary work by our own members, we face a heavy financial burden. To date we have found about £400 ourselves, but shortly must meet bills which amount to about £300. If any churches or individuals can assist in any way—either by loan or gift—we shall be glad to hear from them. Every donation or loan will be gratefully acknowledged by Edmund Hill, 221 Derby Road, Loughborough, Leics.

Only one man is being employed in this work—Bro. Ken Faulks, of Ilkeston, and he is working sacrificially, at a much lower rate of pay than he could find in his trade as bricklayer. Apart from the roofing, which is a specialist job, and some specialist joinery, all the other work is being done by members of the church. We mention this to indicate that we are putting into this not only our own financial resources, but as much manual effort as we can. We would beseech all saints to remember the work of the Lord here in their prayers. Yours for the church, Edmund Hill, Peter Hill, Tom Stones, Barrie Sharpe, A. E. Winstanley.

Dear Bro. Editor,—On reading the article by Bro. Baines entitled "Reunion and Regeneration" I was struck by one or two points which seem to me to be not quite clear. Our brother asks what the apostle meant when he exhorted the Corinthian brethren to "all speak the same things." Well, he is probably right when he says that this does not mean a parrot-like expression of words, but the important thing to remember here is that there *was* division in the church, because they were not all speaking the same things; so whatever "all speaking the same things" means it is obviously important that we should do it if we are to have unity.

Now how can the Body of Christ, the Church, speak the same things? We are directed to 1 Cor. 12 which, it is said, teaches us about "unity in diversity." Here, of course, Paul uses the metaphor of the body with its members to illustrate the function of the spiritual body, the church, with its members. The point I want to make is this: the members of a body are diverse in *appearance only*. If we accept the fact that the body is functionally harmonious as a whole; for if the body is functionally harmonious as a whole then it is quite evident that the functions of the members cannot be diverse, because we understand that a change in a member would produce a corresponding change in the body. We can say, then, that if the Church of Christ is to function harmoniously, all of its members, though diverse in appearance, must be *doing* those things which will produce harmony within the church; and if they do work in harmony, then it is quite evident that they are doing those things as dictated by the Head, Christ Himself. Is it lawful then for the members to deliberately diversify the unity of the body? Apparently not, because Paul teaches that "God has so adjusted the body, giving the greater honour to the inferior part, *that there may be no discord in the body*, but that the members may have the same care for one another" (1 Cor. 12:24, 25).

If our brother is right when he says that we should seek unity through fellowship then my understanding of the Bible has been quite mistaken. I have always understood that I came into the fellowship of the body when I was united with Christ, and not *vice versa*. It is quite possible that we now have fellowship with those who *think* differently from us, but I suggest that when those different thoughts are translated into different *actions* it is then that the harmony of the body is disrupted and the body itself is torn from within. Is this not seen in the self-inflicted wounds of so-called Christendom? Does our brother really believe that a fellowship based on contrary practices can produce the unity he speaks of? Do we not yet understand that the Church of Christ must speak with a united voice, and that we must have done with this pseudo-unity which is killing us from within? It is high time that the brethren in the United Kingdom came down off the fence and stood firm, so that the Church of Christ in this part of the world at least might not become a sect within the sects.

ALF MARSDEN.

Dear Bro. Editor,—I would like to express my thanks to the brethren who have been kind enough to express appreciation of my articles on "The things most surely believed amongst us," I appreciate the letters sent to the "Standard" and also those who have expressed their appreciation personally.

In regard to the good brother, who signs himself T.H.B. I can assure him that what has been his unfortunate experience in young men not being given the chance to defend the faith, it has not been the writer's in the Yorkshire and Midland areas. The churches there are well blessed in having young men who are not only willing and eager to learn but are showing aptitude that equips them to be able to defend the faith.

My own heart has been gladdened to see capable and faithful young men coming forward eagerly to learn and train for service, and what is more important developing the Christian graces that are of such import in all forms of Christian service.

I appreciate that much of what I have written is not new to our older brethren, but felt it would be of great value to these young men. It was the desire of these young men that prompted me to put in writing what I have already preached, that they may have a written record for their future guidance.

It is an unfortunate tendency of human nature for succeeding generations to be satisfied with a slightly less high standard than their predecessors. That is where, in Christianity, decline

and apostasy sets in. Hence, as far as Christian principles of faith are concerned it is necessary to continually reiterate them that there be no falling away, it is in this spirit that these articles were written. We again express our pleasure that the readers have found them of profit.

H. BAINES.

NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

Ilkeston.—The Church here had the services of Bro. A. E. Winstanley in a "Campaign for Christ" from April 9th to 21st. Much preparation was put in by a band of workers distributing handbills and tracts, and giving personal invitations. The campaign theme, "Vital Questions," was ably dealt with by Bro. Winstanley who laboured unceasingly in the gospel.

Meetings were held each night except Tuesdays and Fridays. "Herald of Truth" films were shown on Saturday evenings after the gospel service and also on Thursdays. Our grateful thanks are due to Bro. Donald Hardy for the showing of these films. The meetings were well attended, a good number of non-members from other churches in Ilkeston being present.

The 86th anniversary services were held on June 4th and 5th, speaker A. E. Winstanley. On Saturday, June 4th about 90 enjoyed tea, including many from sister churches. On Lord's Day, Bro. Winstanley addressed four meetings including one at the Old People's home, Kirk Hallam.

Helpful times were experienced at all the meetings. The church thanks Bro. Winstanley for his faithful and loyal services. F.G.

Wallacestone.—We had the privilege and pleasure of the services of Bro. James Orten, evangelist from Nashville, Tennessee, on the 26th and 27th June. We first came into contact with Bro. Orten when he spent six months on the field in Nyasaland. He served the church well on both days, exhorting the brethren on Lord's day morning and delivering forceful messages on Lord's day and Monday evening. Bro. Orten and ourselves have been mutually benefited and encouraged to hold fast the original plea of churches of Christ, and to practise only that for which we have a "Thus saith the Lord."

We feel sure that those churches which Bro. Orten will be able to visit during his stay will be similarly uplifted, and we pray that God will abundantly bless him in the ministry of His word.

With great joy we report an addition to the church. On Saturday, June 19th, Joseph Malcolm, aged 40, youngest son of Bro. Joseph Malcolm, sen., whose decease was intimated last month, accepted Jesus as his Lord and was immersed by Bro. John Baird. After our brother's immersion, as there were only brethren present, Bro. Gerry Fox exhorted them to make their calling and election sure. This decision will no doubt be a source of comfort and consolation to Sis. Malcolm in her loss as well as being an encouragement to the church. James Grant.

Wigan (Scholes).—From Saturday, June 11th to Lord's Day, June 19th a nine-days' gospel campaign was conducted by Bro. David Dougall, evangelist from the Slamannan district. Before and during the campaign several thousand tracts, handbills and invitations were distributed throughout the densely populated district. Although very few responded to the invitations, we gratefully record that several friends from religious denominations gathered with us to hear the gospel faithfully preached. We are deeply grateful especially for the splendid support we received from brethren in the district churches.

Bro. Dougall presented the pure word of God in holding forth the love and justice of God in the gospel; in teaching the church; and in making known the gospel in simple manner in the Lord's Day school and in house meetings.

We rejoice that Sister Dorothy Armstrong, baptised many years ago at Rodney Street, Wigan, responded to the appeal of the gospel and was restored to the church. We rejoice further in that a few weeks before this gospel campaign a dear young soul, Carol Ashurst, daughter of Allan and Gretchen, was added to the church in baptism, and that Sis. Barbara Clayton took up membership with the church at Scholes.

We are praying, working and hoping that abundant reaping will follow the preparation of the soil and the sowing of the seed of the word of God.

We were additionally gladdened on Lord's Day, July 3rd, to welcome back among us Sis. Gladys Hilton, after 13 years' residence in Massachusetts, U.S., and who is again permanently residing in this country.

Bro. James Orten, from Nashville, Tennessee, worshipped with us on Lord's Day, July 10th. Bro. Orten was on a brief visit to churches in England and Scotland. He gave a splendid exhortation to the church, and we were enriched by his fellowship. We pray God's blessing upon him in this ministry, and upon his brethren who made the visit possible.

COMING EVENTS

Summer Lane (Birmingham).—We extend to all brethren and friends a very warm invitation to our **101st Anniversary**, Saturday, August 27th, 1966.

Tea will be served from 4 p.m. and the meeting commence at 8 o'clock. Speaker: Bro. Philip Partington (Ince).

Lord's Day, August 28th. Morning 10.30; Evening 6.30. Speaker: Bro. C. Melling (Wigan).

CHURCH OF CHRIST

Albert Street, Newtown, Wigan

We cordially invite all members of Churches of Christ to the

AUTUMN RALLY

Saturday, September 10th, 1966

These meetings are designed to elicit fraternal relations which will give mountain-top experiences and glorious fellowship, to make progress in the work of the Master.

3 p.m. JOHN DODSLEY (Kirkby-in-Ashfield): "What it means to be a Christian." Discussion.

4 p.m. ERIC WINTER (Cleveleys): "The Purpose of the Church." Discussion.

5 p.m. TEA.

6.30 p.m. PUBLIC MEETING, with hymn-singing arranged by Jack Parker.

Preacher: JOHN M. WOOD
(Dunfermline)

We give a warm welcome and will endeavour to provide hospitality for those desiring to stay the weekend. Please write: Walter Smith, 262 Scot Lane, Newtown, Wigan, Lancs.

Morley: Annual Autumn Rally, October 1st and 2nd, 1966. Speaker Bro. A. Gardiner (Edinburgh). President Bro. H. Baines (Aylesbury).

Saturday, October 1st:—

Tea 4.15 p.m.

Meeting 6.15 p.m.

Sunday, October 2nd:—

Breaking of bread 2.30 p.m.

Gospel service 6.0 p.m.

Please help us by your prayers and presence.
M. Gaunt.

Kentish Town: Ninety-fifth anniversary of opening Hope Chapel will, God permitting, will be held on Saturday, October 1st, 3 and 6 p.m. Brother David Dougall is to be with us from 1st to 11th.

MY DAILY PRAYER

Give me grace, Oh Lord, to open my mouth for the dumb;

Give me strength to protect the innocent;

Give me power to defend the cause of right against might,

The weak against the strong,

The poor against the powerful;

Give me wisdom to instruct the ignorant,

To comfort the sorrowful,

To counsel the doubtful;

Let me labour all my days,

And so cast my vote, my voice, and my influence,

For Christ on the Cross.

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