

# The SCRIPTURE STANDARD

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

Vol. 68 No. 3

MARCH, 2001

## THE BROTHERHOOD OF CHRIST

THE friendship of Damon and Pythias (more properly Phintias) is an early Classical parallel with that of David and Jonathan. The friends were followers of the Greek philosopher Pythagoras. When Pythias was condemned to death for plotting against the life of Dionysius, ruler of Syracuse, he begged leave to return home to set his affairs in order. Damon offered himself as a hostage, pledging to die in his stead if Pythias failed to return by the date set for the execution.

On his way back Pythias was delayed when his horse was killed and he could find no other means of transport. On his arrival he found Damon at the place of execution, and rushed to embrace him. Dionysius was so moved by the close friendship between the two that he pardoned Pythias, freed Damon, and asked to be admitted as a third member of so remarkable a brotherhood.

Apart from being pleased at the happy ending of this incident it is always thrilling to read of such faithfulness and love between friends. Little wonder indeed that the ruler of Syracuse asked to be counted as a friend and be part of such a brotherhood. One's mind instinctively goes to the scriptures and thoughts come flooding in when one thinks of Ruth and Naomi ("for whither thou goest, I will go") and David and Jonathan (each loved the other as his own soul). One ponders if a third party can be successfully grafted into such a friendship without impairing it. When one reads of Jonathan one can be excused for longing for just such a friend. There arise such friendships from time to time, exclusive and sometimes quite unique.

### THE BROTHERHOOD OF CHRIST

Again, one thinks of surely the most remarkable brotherhood the world has ever known *the brotherhood of Christ*. Exclusive and yet the most inclusive. Unique and yet the most far reaching and all encompassing. Jesus set the very highest standard. He was a faithful friend to us all - faithful even to death on the cross. He is a loving friend to us all - His love being measured again by the fact that He was prepared to die for us and indeed did die. Such was the strength of the friendship between Damon and Pythias that Damon presented himself at the place of the execution at the appointed time, and would have died in place of his friend. Jesus however died for enemies. Our Lord knew well that men could become inseparable friends and would be prepared to die for one another. Paul also comments on the possibility in Rom. 5:6-10 "For when we are yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a

righteous man will one die; yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commandeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners Christ died for us." Wretched humanity though we be yet Jesus shunned the very nature of angels that He might become one of us and sojourn amongst us and thus lay a real and proper foundation for such a brotherhood. He is our friend but more; He is *our brother*. The writer to the Hebrews enthuses over the matter in chapter 2 "But we see Jesus who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour: that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man" (v. 9). "For both He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren" (v. 11): "For verily He took not on Him the nature of angels: but He took on Him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren that He might be a faithful and merciful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted. He is able to succour them that are tempted" (v. 16, 6:18).

#### I CALL YOU FRIENDS (John 15:15)

A SCHOOLBOY once defined friendship thus, "A friend is someone who knows all about you and still likes you." William Barclay in 'Marching Orders' quotes a reference of C.F. Andrews about true friendship. In the 1914-18 war there were two men who were close friends. One was left wounded in 'No-man's land' between the trenches. His friend waited until darkness came, and then at the peril of his life crawled out to help him. The first words of the wounded man were, "I knew you would come." Real friendships endure over the years. Some however suffer shipwreck. 'Friendship' is akin to 'Fellowship' but they are not truly synonymous. John Wesley said, "Is your heart as my heart? Then give me your hand!" This is fellowship. There is also an affinity between 'friendship' and 'brotherly love' but there is a difference. Solomon (in Pro, 18:24) said, "A man that hath friends must show himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother." Solomon could hardly conceive a friend who could stick *closer than a brother* and yet the first murder was committed not amongst sworn enemies but when Cain *slew his brother* Abel. Such is the paradox of 'brotherly' love. Some families have brothers who are ever at one another's throat. Ye the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David (although not brothers) and Jonathan loved David "as his own soul." It is extremely sad to see former *friends* drift apart or part asunder. It is possibly even more sad to see *members of the same family* become estranged. There are specially strong ties amongst children of the same family which gradually dissolve as those children become adults and move their separate ways - some prosper more than others, and envy works great havoc. Sometimes the rift is based on some extremely trivial matter such as a chance remark at a wedding, or a funeral, (which is sometimes the only time family members meet). Some undiplomatic remark is seized upon as being a snub or insult, and the barriers go up. I have a little experience in these things in that my only brother, in the flesh, is someone I have not seen, or heard from during the last forty-five years or so. How sad, is it not, to see formerly happy families eventually estranged and bitter - and in extreme cases feuding and fighting.

But how much more sad is it to see members of *the Lord's family* at odds with one another. *Our numbers are surely too small* for any of us to be able to afford

'withdrawing our membership' because we have been personally insulted, maligned, snubbed, slighted, ignored, or whatever the charge might be. If the house was burning down would we refuse to work the pump with someone with whom 'we were not on speaking terms?' Surely those who say "I am leaving the Church" because of some trivial (and probably imagined) slight must have forgotten that Christ paid for the Church in blood - His own. The devil must rejoice at such situations - indeed the devil engineers such situations. Surely we must all pull together and resist the common foe - the Devil and his angels. It is said that during the height of one of his naval battles, Nelson learned that two of his officers were at enmity and not on speaking terms. He called them up on deck, face to face, and made them shake hands. As they did so, he pointed to the French ships and said, "*There is the enemy, gentlemen.*"

### "LOVE THE BROTHERHOOD" (1 Peter 2:17)

Jesus said, "***By this shall men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another.***" Nevertheless there was oftentimes friction amongst even the Lord's disciples. On one occasion did not Jesus overhear their 'strife' and 'disputations' concerning who amongst them should be the greatest in the kingdom of God. On another occasion James and John were brought by their mother with the same request to Jesus. i.e. to be given the highest position in the kingdom of heaven, and this caused great indignation amongst the other disciples (and their mothers no doubt) but Jesus taught the then surprising lesson that the greatest in the kingdom *are the truly servile*. Jesus also taught another pleasantly surprising lesson when He dissuaded them from the obvious desire to be called 'Rabbi.' "***But be ye not called Rabbi, for One is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren.***" This is the extent of the great and grand honour which God has conferred upon the disciples of Christ - to call them sons and for them to be 'brethren.' He could have regarded us a 'comrades' or 'associates': or 'companions': or 'colleagues': or 'partners': or 'allies': or 'members': or 'participants': or 'assistants': or 'compatriots': but No! He calls us 'sons' and we are 'brethren'. Firstly and foremostly we are 'brethren' in the household of God - and by virtue of the fact we also may describe ourselves by these other terms. i.e. 'associates': 'members': 'fellows': 'colleagues': 'partners' etc., etc. But we be brethren, and many centuries ago, "***Abraham said unto Lot. Let there be no strife, I pray thee, Between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen, for we be brethren.***" Surely this should be the aim and attitude of us all. Let there be no strife between us - for we are brethren. Solomon, (in Proverbs 6:19) catalogues six (indeed seven) things that God abhors, and the seventh and last is "***he that soweth discord among brethren.***"

### "A NEW COMMANDMENT"

We are all engaged on our journey through life. We all seek the destination set before us - the heavenly city: the New Jerusalem. None of us any better than the other. We have all had our sins forgiven - we are all abject sinners saved by the grace of a pardoning God. Our aim should be not only to reach the destination ourselves, but to do our utmost to help all others to get there. Those who stumble should be given a helping hand to get back on the road again. Those who collapse completely should perhaps be carried by the strong. There certainly should be goodwill and a spirit of 'give-and-take' whereby we are prepared to overlook the things in others which may annoy and offend us. Not easy perhaps, but the standard at which we aim. It certainly is not the time to wound and to maim one another by the wayside. When Joseph sent his brethren on their homeward journey his parting words to them were, "***And see that ye fall not out by***

the way." He doubtless remembered that these same brethren had once sold him into slavery (as an alternative to killing him altogether) and that certain of them had the propensity to be quite vicious. The envy they had had of him could quite easily be directed at one another. Joseph's words can just as appropriately be directed at each of us today: "See that ye fall not out by the way". Let us endeavour to avoid the 'wars and fightings' mentioned by James (4:1) knowing that the desires and motives which inspire such contentions are only evil. **"A brother that is offended is harder to be won than a strong city; and their contentions are like the bars of a castle"**. So said Solomon (Pro. 18:19), but Jesus said to his disciples **"A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another"**. This 'new commandment' was not 'new' inasmuch as love between man had been commanded before, but it was 'new' in the sense that never before had love been made the thing by which a body of people would be distinguished from all others. The love of Christ's disciples for one another was to be the *badge* of their discipleship. The Jew was known by his external rites, by his peculiarity of dress, military men by their uniforms and insignia - indeed each society of men, even today, wish to be recognised by some token (perhaps even just a special neck-tie) but Jesus said His disciples would be known not by these (nor even by the distinctions of wealth, fame or learning) but by the evidence and *the standard* of love that they had *for one another*. **"By this shall men know that ye are My disciples"**. John, many years later, had much to say on brotherly love and the 'new' commandment and said **"And this commandment have we from Him, that he who loveth God love his brother also"**. (1 John 4:21). All the New Testament epistles give similar exhortations. The apostle Peter makes many references to the outworking of the 'new' commandment of which the following is a good example, **"Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one to another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous"** (1 Peter 3:8). The writer to the Hebrews says, **"Let brotherly love continue"**. Paul rejoiced that he did not have to exhort the brethren at Thessalonica as touching brotherly love because they knew about it and did it to **"all the brethren which are in all Macedonia"** but he did exhort them to increase it **"more and more"** (1 Thess. 4:9).

#### LET BROTHERLY LOVE CONTINUE

Was it Dr. Johnson who said that friendships, like fences had to be kept in good repair?

May it be as the year 2001 unfolds we will keep our friendship with Christ in good order. **"Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you,"** said Jesus (John 15:14). Conversely, friendship with the world is enmity with God. May it be that we shall strive to be worthy of the great brotherhood of Christ of which we are members. May we succeed in trying to emulate our Lord in His faithfulness to His friends and loyalty to His purpose and may we capture a little of His matchless love. The writer to the Hebrews exhorts us to **"Let brotherly love continue. Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares. Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them: and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in body."** (Heb. 13:1-3). In the same chapter at verse 5 the same writer reminds us that we have a friend who, unlike some earthly friends, will never forsake us or let us down. He says, **"Let your conversation be without covetousness: and be content with such things as ye have: for He hath**

said, **I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee**". A friend who will never forsake us is a friend indeed and Jesus is one who sticketh closer than a brother. The apostle Peter adds to this already happy situation the great and grand assurance that **God careth for us** and we can confidently cast all our cares upon Him. (1 Peter 5:7).

Shall we than, during the coming months, try to let brotherly love continue and abound, forgetting not to entertain strangers, remembering them that are in bonds and them that suffer affliction and adversity.

Within the brotherhood of man shall we try to enhance and enlarge this 'remarkable brotherhood' - the brotherhood of Christ.

EDITOR.

## PREACHING "OUT OF SEASON"

All who endeavour to win souls are distressed by the religious disinterest of our generation. The majority seem to be concerned only with the world and temporal things. They want to eat, drink and play while giving no thought to judgement and eternity.

This condition is not new. It existed, for example, in ancient Corinth where Paul went preaching. He describes the situation: *"For indeed Jews ask for signs and Greeks search for wisdom; but we preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block, and to Gentiles foolishness"* (1 Cor. 1:22-33).

What did Paul do in Corinth? His approach is surely an example for us.

### NO OTHER INCENTIVES

Paul did not offer other incentives. He might have done so. He had miraculous gifts which announced a great "healing service" or a "Holy Ghost Revival" where signs they were seeking would be performed. Paul was also quite well educated in the wisdom which the Gentiles so highly valued. He could have announced a lecture on "The Judeo-Christian Ethic" or on "The Philosophical Assumption of Moses" and some would have come to hear. Paul might well have defended such an approach on the ground that, once he had them there he could teach them a little about Jesus or, at least enrol them in a correspondence course.

Is this not the justification for many activities in which churches are involved these days? We have seen printed announcements from the Lord's people offering recreation, entertainment, coffee and doughnuts, magic shows, secular music performances and various other treats for those who would attend some gathering. When we ask for spiritual authority for the church's involvement in such things, the answer usually is: "We can make contact in this way and teach them about Jesus."

Paul recalled his work in Corinth in these words: *"For I determined to know nothing among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified"* (1 Cor. 2:2). The Church of our Lord **must** be recognised for its proclamation of Christ crucified, not for its social programmes. Recreation, secular education and entertainment are not part of its assigned work. Involvement in such things not only violates its charter, but also detracts from its sacred and holy mission.

### NO HUMAN ADORNMENT

Paul did not attempt to "dress up" the gospel with his own personality to make it more palatable to secular minded people. Some who will reject the approach already described, yet believe the gospel can be glamourised by human presentation. They want

the most eloquent speakers possible - men with dynamic personalities - men with "charisma." They like to have those to do the preaching whose educational attainments or whose achievements in business or even on the stage will attract even the wordly minded. We once saw a full page advertisement of a campaign featuring a large picture of the speaker and listing in bold type his credentials "Educator, Lecturer, Author, TV Personality, World Traveller and Promoter." We have also heard the suggestion that the gospel can best be preached by a large and well-trained choir.

In contrast Paul wrote: *"And when I came to you, brethren I did come not come with superiority of speech or of wisdom, proclaiming to you the testimony of God ... And I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling. And my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men but in the power of God"* (1 Cor. 2:1, 3-5).

Out there amongst the masses there are still a few who are interested in the simple undisguised "preaching of the cross." These are the only ones who can be saved anyway. Others may be briefly drawn by our devices; they may even be brought into the Church as "wood, hay and stubble" (1 Cor. 3:12), but they will not be saved as long as they disdain the cross. Instead of taxing our ingenuity and exhausting our finances in trying to attract the secular minded, we need to use our resources and opportunities to preach the simple gospel to the largest number of people in the simplest manner possible. In this way we can hope to preach *"to all who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God."* (1 Cor. 1:24).

S. HALL

## IS JESUS IN YOUR RELIGION?

When Jesus walked the earth, one group of people He couldn't get along with were the Pharisees. Now that's quite a paradox. The Pharisees were the "religionists" of the day. They knew the Scriptures, believed in moral purity, believed in an afterlife, believed in angels, and they worshipped God regularly. But Jesus, the Son of God, was left out of the Pharisees' religion. When Jesus came to them, they rejected Him because Jesus didn't fit with their concept of the Messiah.

The Pharisees had everything down so nice and neat in their religion. They had put God in a box. They just knew how God would act and react in every situation. For example, when John healed the blind man in John 9, the Pharisees said Jesus couldn't be God, because He didn't keep the Sabbath. Healing a blind man is work, you're not supposed to work on the Sabbath, therefore Jesus isn't of God. Because of the way the Pharisees were, Jesus wasn't in their religion. They had no room for Him. Their orthodoxy couldn't allow Jesus room. What about us? Does our orthodoxy squeeze Him out? We want to notice three traits of the Pharisees' religion. Because of these three, and many more, Jesus couldn't find room in their religion.

The Pharisees thought they had arrived. They were so satisfied with their religion. They just knew they were the people of God. If you think about it, what can Jesus do for people who feel they have arrived? People who are very self satisfied - what can Jesus do for them? If the Pharisees were anything, they were a contented lot of people.

In John 7:45-49, we read that the officers who had been sent out to take Jesus, were

reporting back to the Pharisees and chief priests. But they didn't have Jesus. When they were asked why they didn't bring Him, the officers replied, ". . . Never man so spake." The officers were so impressed with the words of Jesus, they had forgotten why they were there in the first place.

But notice the Pharisees' reply. "**Are ye also led astray? Hath any of the Rulers believed on Him, or of the Pharisees?**" In other words if we don't believe in Jesus, and we are God's people, and we certainly know that this man can't be of God, how can you fellows believe in Him? Since we have arrived and we don't accept Him, you have to be pretty foolish to accept Him. Can't you see their arrogance? Their mind on the matter was completely closed. They thought they knew it all. No room for the religion of Jesus Christ.

The religion of Christ always leaves room for further growth and development. The true Christian is always in a constant growing life. The moment we say we've arrived, that is the moment we begin to die. In our Christian growth we reach new heights only to press on to newer heights. One way to measure our growth in Christ is to answer this simple question: How do I react to a new thought? It's not so much how we answer the new thought, but how we react to the new thought.

### SELF-RIGHTEOUS

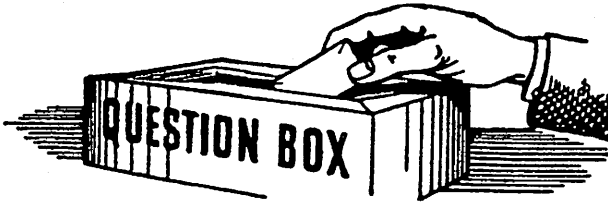
Another reason the Pharisees had no room for Jesus was their self-righteousness. The religion of Jesus Christ is a very humbling religion. From Jesus we learn that we can never save ourselves. In fact, we all deserve death and the wrath of God. But because of God's love and because of the death of Jesus, when I was in the pit of sin and could do nothing to earn or merit my salvation, I can now be saved. Praise God! There can be no glorying on my part, Jesus has done it all!

But the Pharisees because they trusted in themselves that they were righteous, had no room for Jesus.

If they were saving themselves because of their own virtue, they didn't need Jesus. A self-righteous religion, would never include Jesus Christ. But Jesus pronounced a blessing on all those who realize their need; all those who are spiritually poor (Matt 5:3). The spiritually poor realize their spiritual poverty and turn to Jesus for help. Arrogance has no place in the religion of Jesus.

The Pharisees had no room for Jesus because they were concerned with externals. As long as their rituals and outside piety were there, that was just about all there was to their religion. But their religion of Jesus Christ is internal, not external. The outside acts are to be the result of an inward devotion. Among all the sins that Jesus found among men, none aroused his wrath more than the hypocrisy with its shame and pretence of religion. Jesus taught that the greatest commandment of all is love, and that's internal. Jesus told the Pharisees that they were like tombs, outwardly beautiful, but inwardly lifeless. Any religion system that is so concerned with the externals over and above the internal, is a religious system which has no room for Jesus.

Is Jesus in your religion? Or, are you like the proud Pharisee who shut him out? If you think you've arrived, or if you're into self-righteousness, or if your religion consists of externals to a large degree, then most likely you don't have Jesus in your religion. The religion of Jesus is a life flowing from a heart that knows Him, always realizing the need for future growth. Beloved, have we as a brotherhood shut Jesus out? Are we satisfied? Do we have trouble with new thoughts?




---

Conducted by  
Frank Worgan

---

This month I would like us to consider a question that was put to me recently on the fascinating subject of **THE NATURE OF MAN.**

Let me begin by stating that the most complete and plainest - description of the nature of Man is found in 1st Thess. 5:23, where Paul prays,

*"May the God of peace Himself, sanctify you wholly; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ".*

Here, the apostle clearly reveals that man is a triune being, consisting of spirit and soul and body, and even although this is the only verse in the Bible in which the three-fold nature of Man is mentioned, these three elements, body, soul and spirit, are referred to in different combinations in other places, in both the Old and the New Testaments.

1. In the Old Testament, for instance, in his divinely given wisdom, Solomon refers to the *body* and the *spirit*. He states that at death, the *body* returns to the dust of the earth, and the *spirit* goes back to God who gave it, Eccles. 12:7.

Clearly, then, a distinction must be made between the *body* and the *spirit*.

2. In Matt. 10:28, the Lord Jesus himself speaks of those who are able to kill the *body*, but who are unable to kill the *soul*. This statement proves that *body* and the *soul* are also different.

3. Heb. 4:12 states that the Word of God is able to pierce, 'to the *division of soul and spirit*'. This means that the difference between the '*soul*' and the '*spirit*' must be recognized.

We should also recognize that the '*spirit*' referred to here is not the *Holy Spirit*, but the *human spirit*. In Romans 8:16, this distinction is made very clear, when Paul states that "*the Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of God*", and in 1st Cor. 5:4, he even speaks of '*my spirit*'.

And, again, in Heb. 12:23, contrasting the assembly of the Israelites at Mount Sinai with the assembly of the Hebrew Christians at Mount Zion, the writer tells them, "... you have come... to the *spirit of just men* made perfect".

**Look, then, at what we have here.**

Body and spirit	Ecc. 12:7
Body and soul	Matt. 10:28
Soul and spirit	Heb. 4:12

Bear in mind that, in these verses, where these three elements are mentioned they are not being offered as an exposition of Man's nature and should be considered in the context in which we find them. It is in the verse in 1st Thess. 5:23, already mentioned, that we have a definitive statement as to the nature of Man, made by the inspired Apostle.

**Beginning in Genesis.**

Of course, the logical place at which to begin any study of Man is with the familiar



chapter of the book of Genesis, where his creation is recorded.

Genesis 2:7 describes the creation of Man's *physical* being - his body.

God formed or fashioned or moulded, that body out of the ground, and we read that God "*breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and Man became a living being*".

The word '*being*' has been preferred by later translators, rather than the word '*soul*' used in the 'Authorized Version', because the original word '*nephesh*' does not mean '*soul*' in the special *New Testament* sense. In fact, in the Old Testament, where the word '*nephesh*' occurs 745 times, the translators of the Authorized Version have rendered it by at least 30 different words or phrases. So the difference between that Hebrew '*nephesh*' or the Old Testament and the Greek '*psuche*' of the New Testament, is easily recognizable.

Furthermore, we should not suppose that Man was a '*dead soul*', until God breathed into him '*the breath of lives*' - (the word '*life*' is plural in the Hebrew text). It was the entrance of '*the breath of lives*' which actually constituted him '*Man*'. Notice, that the word '*became*' is emphatic. Read the verse in this way;

God '*breathed into his nostrils the breath of lives, and Man came into being - a living soul*'. That phrase, '*a living soul*', is adjectival and describes and defines Man after God breathed life into the form which He had shaped.

*Here we see the difference between Man and the rest of Creation.*

'*Life*' - animal life - is something which Adam shared with every other living creature by God, but the difference between the other creatures and Man - (and the Hebrew word '*adam*' means '*man*') - lies in the fact that God said '*Let us make Man after our own image, after our likeness*' (Gen. 1:26).

Only with reference to Man is this said, and it is this '*likeness to God*' which uniquely constituted Man a rational and moral being, possessing a conscience that enabled him to distinguish between good and evil, right and wrong, obedience and disobedience. It is in this sense that Man is a soul - a Self, having self-awareness and self-consciousness.

Furthermore, not only is he superior to all other living creatures on Earth because he possesses this moral awareness, the gulf between Man and the rest of Creation was further emphasized and endorsed when God assigned to him dominion over all other living creatures (Gen. 1:26). In fact, it is impossible to thoughtfully read the first two chapters of Genesis without recognizing the unbridgeable gulf between Man and the rest of the animal world.

*How, then, do these three constituent parts of Man relate to each other?*

The question is sometimes '*Does the body have a soul?*', but I suggest that it would be truer to say, '*The soul has a body*', because, as I have just stated, the '*soul*' is Man's unique self. It is the part of his being which, because it is rational and moral, determines the actions performed by his body, and which, therefore, renders him personally accountable for what he does. Thus, it is Man's '*soul*' which will ultimately be either saved or lost, depending on his response to the offer of the salvation which was made possible by the coming of the Christ into the world. (See Heb. 10:39, 1st Peter 1:9 and 1:22).

#### 1. **The Body is of the earth and for the earth.**

We might describe the body as '*Earth-conscious*', since it is the physical tool or instrument, by means of which his '*soul*' or '*self*' - by its very nature is invisible - is able to function in a physical world.

Even when the Lord Jesus came into the world, although He existed *'in the beginning with God'*, it was necessary that *'the Word'* should *'become flesh'* and *'tabernacle'* among us, John 1:14. The Lord *needed* a physical body. Without the human form that he took on Himself, (Phil. 2:6-8), it would have been impossible for Him to fulfil the unique purpose for which He came.

He needed a body:-

- 1) to be able to *communicate with mankind* in a personal and unmistakable and uncomplicated manner;
- 2) to *present the 'signs'* which were to be the authentication and endorsement of His Messiah-ship;
- 3) to set the human race *the perfect example of obedience* to the will of the Father;
- 4) and, above all, by means of that perfect life, *to demonstrate His worthiness to become the perfect offering* for the sin of the world.

The Word, *must* become flesh. This was the divine plan, and it is why we find the writer of the Letter to the Hebrews, in ch. 10:5, placing the words of the Psalmist into the Lord's mouth, *'a body hast Thou prepared for me'* (Psa. 40:6-8).

(You will notice, I am sure, that the *'body'* was *prepared* for the *'me'*).

Peter, also, in 2nd Peter 1:14, wrote of *'putting off my tent'*.

Man, therefore, is not merely an animated construction of flesh and bones; he is a soul, a *'self'*, housed in a physical body; and, since his body is designed for earthly life, at death, the body returns to the earth. God told Adam, *"in the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; you are dust, and to the dust you shall return"* (Gen. 3:19).

## 2. At death the believer's soul leaves the body and goes to "be with Christ".

In Phil. 2:20-24, Paul, a prisoner of Rome contemplating the possibility of martyrdom, declares that so far as he is personally concerned, *'to die is gain'*.

Nevertheless, he admits that he faces a dilemma. He recognizes that even though his *personal* desire is to *'depart and be with Christ which is far better'*, the Philippian Christians need his presence.

In a similar strain, he tells the Corinthians, (2nd Cor. 5:1 ff), that even *'if his 'earthly tent', his body, is destroyed, he has a house 'not made with (human) hands, eternal in the heavens', and he longs to 'put on' his heavenly dwelling. He says, "We know that while we are at home in the body, we are away from the Lord". We are of good courage and we would rather be away from the body, and at home with the Lord'*.

## 3. What of the 'spirit' of Man?

There is an interesting statement in the Book of Job, ch. 34:8, which tell us that *"it is the spirit in a man, the breath of the Almighty, that gives him understanding"*.

If we consider the Body to be *Earth-conscious*, and the Soul to be *Self-conscious*, we may think of the spirit as being *'God-conscious'*. In other words, it is that part of Man's nature which enables him to reach out to, and communicate with, God.

It is the *spiritual* dimension in Man's character, and, here again, we see the difference between Man and other creatures.

Only Man says, *"My soul thirsts for God, for the living God"* Psalm 42:2.

Only Man is encouraged to *"seek after Him, in the hope that they might feel after Him and find Him"*, and only Man is given the assurance that *"He is not far from each one of us, for in Him we live and move and have our being"* (Acts 17: 27-28).

According to Eccles. 12:7, at death, *"the spirit returns to God Who gave it"*.

Let me use a simple illustration - the limitations of which I readily recognize!

When I am away from home, I use the telephone as a means of communication with my wife. When I am at home we talk face to face. I do not need the telephone.

In a somewhat similar way, God has endowed us with the ability to contact and communicate with Him, whilst we are here on earth. When we are 'at home with the Lord' we no longer need the telephone!

I conclude with Paul's prayer for the Church in Thessalonica.

*"May the God of peace himself, sanctify you wholly, and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ".*

*(All questions, please to: Frank Worgan, 5 Gryfebank Way,  
Houston, Renfrewshire, Scotland. PA6 7NZ.*

*E-mail: frank-worgan@lineone.net)*

## THE QUALITY AND QUANTITY OF LOVE

One of the greatest needs of this world, in the body of Christ and in the world in general, is more real abiding love; but especially is this needed among those who are the children of God. Peter said: **"Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently; being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever"** (1 Peter 1:22,23).

Paul said, **"Let love be without dissimulation"** (without hypocrisy) (Rom. 12:9). real love, of the quality and quantity set forth in the Bible, is sorely needed among us today.

Most of us have so set our hearts that we can love adorable children, those entirely complimentary to us, and sweet old people. But what about those not altogether lovely, what about those who might disagree with us or those with whom we disagree, or what about those somewhat less than perfect? Are we obligated to love only our friends? There are many who find it absolutely impossible to love any who differ with them in any degree.

People of this nature remind us of Ahab in his relationship with the prophet of God, Micaiah. Micaiah spoke nothing but what the Lord said unto him, yet Ahab said **"I hate him; for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil"** (1 Kings 22:8). Ahab should have loved this man, because he spoke the truth which others would not, or could not speak, Ahab would have profited by giving heed to this man whom he hated. (You may read all of this interesting story in 1 Kings 22). True love is more than just a sweet feeling extended to those who do good unto us: it is a very deep emotion which has quality and quantity, which enables one to love even those who are less than perfect.

In writing to the saints at Corinth, the apostle Paul gave us a passage which beautifully sets forth the quality of love, Paul said, **"Love suffereth long, and is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things,**

**hopeth all things, endureth all things"** (1 Cor. 13:4-7).

Many have never been able to know a quiet, peaceful, and abiding love because they have never been able to rise above their person and their own desires. Those who are selfish and self-centred, those who are envious, proud, ego-centred, those who rejoice in iniquity, and are happy to hear and tell of the iniquity of others, will never know the pure joy of loving their neighbour, or their brother in Christ, as themselves; because they do not possess the qualities out of which true love is made. People not developing these qualities may do a lot of hugging, kissing, and professing love, they may even do a fairly good job of counterfeiting love, but they will never possess real love until they fill their hearts with the qualities of love.

### THE QUANTITY OF LOVE

One of the poets asked, **"How much do I love thee?"** That is the question we consider as we consider the **quantity** of love. As the Holy Spirit moved the apostle Paul to write the fourth chapter of Ephesians, he plainly set before us the quantity of the love demanded of all of us. The entire chapter deals with varying aspects of this subject, but, the opening verses and the closing verses pinpoint the quantity which must characterise our personal love. Paul wrote, **"I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace"** (Eph. 4:1-3).

If we have the love that enables us to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called, we will be willing to condescend to men of low estate, to look on the things of others, rather than on our own things; we will be meek and lowly. Also, we will be willing to suffer long. Often we use the end of our endurance as an excuse to do a thing which is not motivated by love. If we have the quantity of love demanded, we will be willing to forbear one another. To forbear means to put up with. If one is less than perfect we can put up with that one if we have enough love. Paul urged the acceptance of the brother weak in the faith (Rom. 14:1).

There is a lot of difference between one weak, not quite perfected, and one incorrigibly rebellious. We are not dealing with a brother in rebellion to the word of God or God's order. Our question is **"What should be our attitude to toward those not quite lovely, nor quite agreeable, not complimentary to us, those with whom we might become provoked?"** Paul answers this question in the ringing words of eternal truth; **"Let all bitterness, and wrath, and clamour, and evil-speaking, be put away from you, with all malice; And be ye kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you"** (Eph. 4:31,32). If we could all learn to cultivate the kind of love, in the quantity demanded, as required of God, we would not only greatly benefit the house of God generally, we would be personally blessed here and for all eternity.

Because too many of us fail to develop the quality and quantity of love God requires, we are often found biting and devouring one another and consuming one another (Gal. 5:15). Love does not rejoice in seeing iniquity or in telling of iniquity seen, heard or suspected. **"Let us not love in word, neither in tongue: but in deed and truth"** (1 John 3:18).

## SCRIPTURE READINGS

April 1	Isaiah 23	Matthew 11:20-30
April 8	1 Samuel 21:1-9	Matthew 12:1-21
April 15	2 Kings 1	Matthew 12:22-37
April 22	2 Chronicles 9:1-12	Matthew 12:38-50
April 29	Isaiah 6	Matthew 13:1-23

### THE DOOM OF THE LAKESIDE TOWNS

I have stood on the shores of Galilee. As I did so, these words of Jesus on the condemnation of Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum came to mind. The Master compared these cities with the ancient ones of Tyre, Sidon and Sodom. ". . . for if the mighty works, which were done in you (Chorazin and Bethsaida), had been in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes" (11:21). ". . . for if the mighty works, which have been done in you (Capernaum), had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day" (11:23). He spoke also of the day of judgement and how that it would be more tolerable for the ancient cities than for the lakeside towns. Do these words reveal future degrees of punishment?

A lesson from this passage is this: The greater the privilege, the greater the responsibility. Donald A. Hagner has written: "The cities of Galilee were especially privileged. A great light had shone in their midst (cf. 4:15-16), yet they refused to acknowledge that light. They accepted neither the message of the kingdom nor the messenger of the kingdom. They are accordingly more culpable than those who, though very wicked, had less clear evidence of the will of God".

### THE YOKE OF WISDOM

Paul wrote: "But God has chosen

the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God has chosen the weak of the world to confound the things which are mighty . . ." (1 Corinthians 1:27). The ancient world contained many philosophers. Of course, Socrates, Plato and Aristotle pre-dated Jesus Himself. Personally, I think the subject of philosophy is a fascinating one. I have read a great deal about The Story of Philosophy. John Locke especially interests me. He is one of the great empiricists together with George Berkeley, David Hume and Edmund Burke. I could go on and on. However, I endorse the words of John Buchan: "Philosophy was to me an intellectual exercise, like mathematics, not the quest for a faith". True wisdom is, of course, to be found in Jesus. Paul wrote to the Colossians: ". . . in whom (Christ) are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (2:3).

Jesus in this passage (11:25-30) speaks of His yoke of wisdom, which is easy. The intellectual "babes" are praised by Him. In reality, Jesus does not weigh us down with burdens, but lifts us up to greater heights. In Him the soul finds rest. I thank God I have enrolled as a disciple of Him who is "meek and lowly in heart" (29).

### SABBATH CONTROVERSIES

The Pharisees thought they were right about the keeping of the Sabbath, but in fact, they had got it all wrong. They did not like Jesus' criticisms of them on this matter. But all He was doing was clarifying the doctrine for them. After all He had every right to do so, as he Himself was Lord of the Sabbath (12:8). One commentator has written: "The religious restrictions elaborated by human beings into calcified codes often paradoxically fight the purposes of God. It is particularly grievous when insistence on the letter of the law

results in the neglect of genuine human need and thus hinders the expression of love".

I like the fact that Jesus appealed to the Old Testament Scriptures here to justify His position. (The Old Testament Scriptures were always His final court of appeal.) He refers to an incident concerning David, which is found in 1 Samuel 21; and He quotes from the book of Hosea (6:6). It is quite incredible to read that later on the Pharisees planned to kill Him because He had healed a man with a withered hand in the synagogue on the Sabbath day. There is none so blind as he who will not see! Truly, the evil that men plan and do is at times beyond understanding.

#### BEHOLD MY SERVANT

We have in this portion of Scripture (12:15-21) a citation of Isaiah 42:1-4. Some commentators have pointed out that this is the first of the four Isaianic Servant Songs found in chapters 42 to 53. Matthew has already quoted from the fourth Servant Song (8:17). The words recorded here by Matthew certainly speak of Jesus' gentleness and meekness and His mission to the Gentile world. In the meantime, Jesus was pursuing a ministry, which included the avoidance of publicity (16).

#### THE BEELZEBUB CONTROVERSY

There was much demon possession in Jesus' day. The Pharisees charge against Jesus was wicked and preposterous. They claimed He cast out the demons by the prince of the demons - Beelzebub. What a charge! They were guilty of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. Here was a sin beyond the pale as far as Jesus was concerned. "And whosoever speaks a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him,

neither in this world, neither in the world to come" (32). "The signs Jesus did by the Holy Spirit were designed to make believers in Him. A deliberate attempt to frustrate faith by false accusations as to the source of the power would therefore be a sin of the deepest dye. It would amount to malicious conspiracy to deprive men of eternal life because of personal jealousy and hostility . . . To behold the signs done to produce faith, and, against all observation, knowledge, and conscience, assign that power to Satan for the specific purpose of destroying faith is to condemn mankind once and for all to eternal death . . . God has placed this malign act outside the pale of Divine forgiveness. It is beyond the limit set for grace. It is the one crime against Divine majesty that is outside the circle" (W. Carl Ketcherside).

#### THE SIGN OF JONAH

Jonah is one of the great characters of the Old Testament Scriptures. To Jesus, he was a real person. The events surrounding Jonah's life were also factual, as far as Jesus was concerned. Jesus spoke of the sign of the prophet Jonah: "For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the great fish's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth" (12:40). These words, of course, have reference to Jesus' resurrection. Later on He did rise from the dead, just as He had prophesied. It was a wonderful sign. Tragically, many did not believe it then and many do not believe it today.

Jesus went on to say: "The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgement with this generation and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and, behold, a greater than Jonah is here" (41). Initially, Jonah did not want to go to the pagan

Ninevites, but God persuaded him in the end! If these wicked Ninevites repented then we should never give up hope today on Moscow, Beijing or Baghdad. May the gospel of the One, who is greater than Jonah and Solomon, be heard by all the citizens of these great cities. And may they all come to repentance too. "Tis a consummation devoutly to be wish'd."

### PARABLE OF THE SOWER

The focus of this parable is not upon the sower, nor even the seed, but upon the fate of the seed, which is directly dependent upon the kind of soil that received it. The parables of Jesus function in dual manner. "For those who have responded positively to Jesus' proclamation of the kingdom, the parables convey further insight and knowledge, while for those who have rejected Jesus and His message, the parables have the effect of only darkening the subject further. Thus belief and commitment lead to further knowledge; unbelief leads to further ignorance" (Donald A. Hagner).

Jesus explained the parable to His disciples. His words hit home when we consider even our own congregation. I pray that all readers will be "good ground" for the seed and that they will bear much fruit in their humble lives.

IAN S. DAVIDSON,  
Motherwell.

### TEST YOUR BIBLICAL KNOWLEDGE

1. This Syrian heard of Elisha through a captive maid.
2. Which king of Judah went to war as an ally of the king of Israel?
3. This was the city of the Jebusites.
4. What mountain was known as "the mountain of cursing"?
5. How did king Sennacherib die?

6. This man had seven older brothers, yet he became a king.
7. What was the nationality of the one of the ten lepers who thanked Jesus?
8. Name the ship that Paul sailed in from Malta to Rome?
9. Who carried Jesus' cross?
10. He was a false prophet in Cyprus.

## OBITUARY

**Glenrothes:** It is with great sadness we report the passing of sister Elizabeth A. Gilmour, aged 81 years who died suddenly at home on 28th January. She had been in poor health for some years. Brother Roddy Gillies also passed away on Monday 29th January, in Cameron hospital. Roddy was 95 years.

## COMING EVENTS

### PETERHEAD:

#### Special Weekend:

*Dates/Times:*

24th & 25th March.

*Speaker:* John Renwick, (Stirling).

#### Annual Social:

*Dates/Times:*

Saturday 14th April, 3 p.m., 6 p.m.

Sunday, 15th April, 10 a.m.,  
11 a.m., 6 p.m.

*Speakers:* S. Worgan (Livingston)  
and J. Mooney (Livingston)

#### Gospel Campaign:

With Harding Students in June.

17th to 24th June.

(No meeting on 22nd)

*Speaker:* Jack Strachan (East Kilbride)

*A warm welcome awaits all.*

### TRANENT SOCIAL

17th March, 2001

### GLENROTHES MEN'S DAY

3rd February, 2001

**Gospel Mission:**  
 With Harding Students  
 20th to 25th May (7.30 p.m.)  
*Speaker:* Frank Worgan

**BUCKIE**  
**Annual Social:**  
 Saturday 5th May 2001  
 3.00 p.m.

*Speaker:* Bro. M. Heinemeir.

**GHANA APPEAL**  
**GOD'S WORD KNOWS NO**  
**BOUNDARIES**

We are impressed by the report of Brother Joseph Savi in his work for the Lord.

The recent crusade held across the border into Togo resulted in fifteen baptisms. This success was greatly aided by the use of a P.A. System hired at the expense of the local congregations. In this culture the P.A. System is a successful method of spreading the gospel message and greater success is possible. Therefore, it makes sense to purchase a P.A. System, the cost being £993.

And contribution toward this £600 would be greatly appreciated. Remember:- TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE - TODAY IS THE DAY OF SALVATION.

There are also many other needs requiring our support in Ghana at this time and we would be grateful for any donation. Anyone wishing to donate, please make cheques payable to Denyloanhead Church of Christ Ghana Fund and send to Janet W. Macdonald, 12 Charles Drive, Larbert, Falkirk FK5 3HB.

At the close of life the question will be not, how much have you got, but how much have you given; not how much have you won, but how much have you done; not how much have you saved, but how much have you sacrificed; how much have you loved and served, not how much were you honoured.

1. Naaman (2 Kings 5:1-3).
2. Jehoshaphat (1 Kings 22:4).
3. Jerusalem (2 Samuel 5:6).
4. Ebal (Deuteronomy 27:13).
5. He was assassinated by two of his sons (Isaiah 37:37-38).
6. David (1 Samuel 16:10-13).
7. A Samaritan (Luke 17:16).
8. The Castor and Pollux (Acts 28:11).
9. Simon of Cyrene (Mark 15:21).
10. Bar-Jesus (Acts 13:6).

**ANSWERS**

THE SCRIPTURE STANDARD is published monthly.

PRICE PER COPY— POST PAID FOR ONE YEAR

UNITED KINGDOM.....	£9.00	
OVERSEAS BY SURFACE MAIL.....	£10.00	(\$16.00US or \$20.00Can)
OVERSEAS BY AIR MAIL.....	£14.00	(\$22.00US or \$28.00Can)

PLEASE MAKE CHEQUES PAYABLE TO "SCRIPTURE STANDARD"

DISTRIBUTION AGENT & TREASURER:

JOHN K. KNELLER, 4 Glassel Park Road, Longniddry, East Lothian. EH32 0NY.

E-mail: john@kkneller.freereserve.co.uk

Telephone: (01875) 853212 to whom change of address should be sent.

EDITOR: JAMES R. GARDINER, 70 Avon Street, Motherwell, Lanarkshire, Scotland. ML1 3AB. Telephone: (01698) 264064

"The Scripture Standard" is printed for the publishers by

Lothian Printers, 109 High Street, Dunbar, East Lothian. EH42 1ES Tel: (01368) 863785