

# The SCRIPTURE STANDARD

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

---

Vol. 62 No. 8

AUGUST 1993

---

## EVE AND THE BISHOP

A few weeks ago (on 17.6.93) there appeared a large (half page) article in the Glasgow "Evening Times" entitled "The Book That Keeps Women In Chains" written by "The Most Reverend" Richard Holloway, Primus of the Episcopal Church of Scotland, and Bishop of Edinburgh. The article was strongly in favour of women being allowed into the Episcopal Priesthood and was, presumably, intended to influence voting within that church the following day when the General Synod met in Edinburgh, and when I suppose, the Scottish Episcopalians would hopefully follow the example of the Church of England. Leaving aside the question of the Episcopal Priesthood, my purpose is to make a brief comment on some of the very disparaging remarks made about the Bible in the article. Apart from describing the Bible as "**The Book That Keeps Women In Chains**", the Bishop went on to say that (in settling the issue of women in the priesthood) "**The Bible is the big problem**". He also says "**That the Bible is a difficult book to figure out**" and that it sometimes "**gives good advice**" and sometimes gives "**bad advice**". He also informs us that when "**the Bible tells us that the universe was created in seven days, and that a rib was taken from the first man and formed into Eve, the first woman. We know that can't be true ...**" He rightly adds that we must interpret what the Bible says, but, in returning to his theme of women in the priesthood, says "**The big problem for women, when it comes to the Bible, is that it was written at a time when women were treated as property, with no right of their own. Everywhere the bastions of male privilege have crumbled — except in most of the churches. And it is all because of these bits in the Bible that appear to place God on the side of permanent oppression of women. We have to rescue the Bible as well as women from this straight jacket. We have to admit that the Bible contains as much dross as gold, as much out-of-date nonsense as enduring wisdom, and we must find the courage to reject the bits of the Bible that are not of God and commit ourselves passionately to the bits that are**".

The article contained a bit more of the same but enough has, I think, been quoted to show that our occasional criticism of the clergy for the terrible damage they do to the veracity of the Bible, and to the faith that the general public may have in the Bible, is quite justified. Mr. Holloway is, of course, jumping on the popular religious bandwagon of the moment: women in the "ministry".

### THE "BIG PROBLEM"

Clearly there is insufficient space to reply to every point made by the Bishop but some comment is called for, especially with reference to his charge that bad advice, dross, and out-of-date nonsense are characteristic of God's word.

In the first place, the Rev. Holloway is right to say that "The Bible is the big problem" with reference to women priests. Indeed the Bible is just as big a problem in the ordination of men to the priesthood, whether it belongs to the Episcopal Church, the Roman Catholic Church or any other. The N.T. nowhere sanctions the appointment of a priestly class in the Church of Jesus Christ, for the simple reason that there is no room or place for it. **The whole Church (every member: male and female) comprise "A Royal priesthood";** and a priesthood of all believers. In short, the Church does not have a priesthood: it is a priesthood. For that matter, **every member** of the Lord's church is also a minister (servant); a disciple; a saint; a steward; a brother and a sister in the great family of God. The Bible only becomes "a big problem" to us when we want to do something not authorised by the Bible, or something prohibited by the Bible. In the same way I suppose the burglar might regard the police as "a big problem"; the drug barons might find Customs Officers a big problem; the creative accountant might find the Tax Legislation a big problem, and so on. Depending upon our point of view "The Bible is a big problem" on the question of divorce and remarriage; on homosexuality; abortion; euthanasia; and a host of allied subjects; and is certainly a problem to us if we want to "live in sin" or rob, lie or swindle etc. It all depends upon what we want to prove, or do. I'm sure the devil has always found the Bible to be a big problem. Because the Jews found the Bible a big problem they skilfully tried to circumvent its teaching with their own traditions. They may have fooled themselves but they did not hoodwink God, and Jesus was scathing in His complete denunciation of them, and their transparent attempts to thwart the will of God. **"Full well ye reject the commandments of God that ye may keep your own tradition."** (Mark 7:9).

In the second place, it should also be pointed out that the Bible has been the means of the **emancipation of women**, not their oppression. In any truly Christian country, or Christian home, women are never oppressed in any shape or form. In some countries which **do not** recognise the Bible, however, and in many Islamic countries, women are certainly treated as much inferior to men. Christ did not come to bind **anyone** in chains (male or female): indeed He came "to set the prisoner free" and proclaim **liberty** to the captives. The N.T. is "the law of liberty" and women have equal opportunities in serving Christ in the "Christian Ministry". The only limitation is in teaching in the public assembly for the reasons given by Paul (in 1 Tim. 2:12-14). This limitation could hardly be described as "keeping women in chains" and there are limitless opportunities for women to teach privately. Surely no woman, living in a truly Christian environment, could ever describe herself as oppressed by Christ, or bound in chains. Christ's teaching emancipates women, and whatever the criticism the Rev. Holloway may have for the treatment of women under the O.T. he must know that we are now governed by the New.

#### PAUL BELIEVED THE GENESIS ACCOUNT

The Bishop says "that when the Bible tells us that the universe was created in seven days, and that a rib was taken from the first man and formed into Eve, the first woman. We know that can't be true". These words form a very serious charge against the integrity of Moses, of course, but also destroy any confidence we might have in the reliability of the Bible. Moses wrote the first five books of the Bible (The Pentateuch), and in Genesis is quite specific about how the world came into being, and how Eve was made. If some of what he said "**can not be true**" how can we decide what is true? Concerning the origin of Eve, Moses wrote, **"And Adam gave names to all the cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field, but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him. And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof. And the rib, which the Lord had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bone and flesh of**

my flesh, she shall be called Woman because she was taken out of man.” Clearly Moses intended all this to be taken quite literally: (there is no question of figurative or symbolic language) and so, if it “cannot be true”, Moses was the perpetrator of gross falsehood. How then can we believe anything that Moses said.? This accusation against the honesty of Moses is doubly serious as it comes from “a man of the cloth”, but it was never a doubt that the apostle Paul ever shared. The apostle evidently believed every word written by Moses and certainly every syllable of the Genesis account of creation, and the making of Eve. Indeed when the apostle gives his reasons for restricting a woman’s right to teach in the assembly (mentioned earlier) he said **“But I suffer not a woman to teach nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence, for Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression”**. (1 Tim. 2:13). And so Bishop Holloway is out of sorts with Christ’s apostle in this particular matter on (at least) two counts (1) Paul prohibits women teaching in the assembly and enjoins silence whereas the Bishop advocates an opposite view; and (2) Paul evidently believed Moses’ account of creation, the way in which Eve came into being, whereas Mr. Holloway rejects it.

In addition to this, we also read that when the apostle instructed that a man should pray or prophesy with his head uncovered, and that, **conversely**, a woman ought to pray or prophesy with her head covered, the adduced reason that Paul gave was, **“For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man. For the man is not of the woman, but the woman of the man. Neither was man created for the woman: but the woman for the man”** (1 Cor. 11:7-9). What Paul says here is a complete endorsement of what Moses wrote. Man is made in God’s image and glory; woman is made in the glory of man. Woman was made from the man, and Paul even acknowledges **the reason** that Moses gave for the making of Eve: i.e. she was created for the man. Paul, in actual fact, accepted quite literally all that Moses said about the creation and fall of man, including the beguiling of Eve by the serpent (and I feel fairly sure that the Bishop, in his wisdom, would be slow to accept any talk of the devil in the form of a serpent). Paul, in warning the Christians at Corinth against religious pollution, said, **“But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ”**.

Jesus, Himself, made reference to “the making of male and female”. This was occasioned in His discourse on the matter of divorce (viz. **“And He answered and said unto them, HAVE YE NOT READ that He which made them at the beginning made them male and female”**). Obviously Jesus was talking about the Creation (“at the beginning”) and the time when God made male and female. And Jesus asks His audience, “Have ye not read” about it? And **where** would Jesus have expected them to have read about it? Where else but in the writings of Moses, in Genesis. What did Moses say on the matter? That God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam and removed one of his ribs, with which he formed Eve. Surely the Bishop must find it strange that Jesus did not caution His hearers against the acceptance of parts of the Genesis record: e.g. on the grounds that Moses’ account of the making of Eve “could not be true”. Here Jesus evidently **endorses the writings of Moses**: and indeed endorsed the contents of the entire O.T. Personally I cannot understand the Bishop’s difficulty with Eve being made from Adam’s rib. Every day a surgeon can cause “a deep sleep to fall” upon his fellow man, open his flesh and remove parts of his body: even give him a heart transplant. If that’s what the creature can do what can **the Creator** do? and if God can make Adam from the dust why do we doubt that He can make Eve from a rib?

## CONCLUSION

What can we say, in a short conclusion, of the man who earns a good living for upholding God's word, albeit he describes it as containing as much dross as gold, difficult to figure out, sometimes giving bad advice, containing things which "We know can't be true", and much out-of-date nonsense. Jesus and His apostles (and indeed any figure in the O.T.) **never, ever**, uttered one word of criticism of God's Word: rather the reverse. The Bible is "a big problem" to the Bishop because it stands in the way of what he (and many others) call "progress". The Bishop would like to get rid of "the little bits of the Bible that are not of God": what's new: men have been obstructed by awkward "little bits in the Bible" for centuries and have tried to get rid of them. If the Bible is unreliable in parts, who can trust any of it? And **who** is going to decide upon what is false, what is dross, what is bad advice, what is nonsense? Do we all make **our own** decisions, based on our personal likes and dislikes, or will the clergy make these judgements? And if we can't believe in the making of Eve, how can we accept other 'impossibilities' like the virgin birth; Christ walking on water; feeding the 5,000; the resurrection, or a thousand other similar incredible things? And what is to be the basis of belief or disbelief if God's word can not be trusted?

The things written by Moses in Genesis (about the creation of all things in seven days, and the making of Adam and Eve) were not the product of Moses' vivid imagination, but were dictated to Moses by God. Consequently, if we charge Moses with declaring that which is clearly untrue, we are, in reality, pointing that accusation directly at God. After all, God is the Author of His own word. "**Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit**". Moses was one of the holy men "of old time" and so he spake as he was moved by the Spirit of God. Indeed all the inspired writers of the Bible were merely the human instruments through whom God talked by His Spirit, and therefore when the Bishop talks of dross and nonsense, he maligns no less a person than the Holy Spirit of God. I suppose that criticism of the

Bible is par-for-the-course amongst the clergy, but it is small wonder that the general public express little interest in a Book when it is described by the Bishop in this way. Space has more than gone but perhaps more could, and should, be said in support of the reliability of the Bible and that may form a future editorial. Suffice, for the present, to say that more and more do we see the truth of the actor who explained why churches are empty and the theatres are full. And why? Because actors portray fiction as if it were true: whereas the clergy portray the truth as if it were fiction.

EDITOR.

## GLEANINGS

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

## TO THEE

"My heart to Thee I bring,  
The heart I cannot read;  
A faithless, wandering thing,  
An evil heart indeed.  
I bring it, Saviour, now to Thee,  
That fixed and faithful it may be."

F.R.H.

## AN HIGHWAY FOR OUR GOD

"And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein."  
(Isaiah 35:8)

## THE GOSPEL IN PERSON

## THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS LIKE

“THE FIRST parabolic illustration is found in the fourth chapter of this Gospel of Matthew, when Jesus spoke of His disciples as “fishers of men”. . . . The Manifesto is radiant in its wealth of parabolic illustrations. Salt, light, a city on a hill, lamp, bushel, lampstand, house, Gehenna, adversary, judge, officer, prison, throne, footstool, feet, inner chamber, door, moth, rust, thieves, eye, darkness, birds, lilies, oven, mote, beam, dogs, pearls, swine, loaf, stone, fish, serpent, gate, way, sheep, wolves, fruits, grapes, thorns, figs, thistles, tree, fire, rock, floods, winds, sand. There are forty-nine, and these are not all. They are all common things, and familiar to everybody. . . . .

The Manifesto is the ultimate code of laws for the kingdom of God, established upon earth.”

Campbell Morgan.

## AND HE BEGAN AGAIN TO TEACH

“AND he began again to teach by the sea side: and there was gathered unto him a great multitude, so that he entered into a ship, and sat in the sea: and the whole multitude was by the sea on the land.

And he taught them many things by parables, and said unto them in his doctrine . . . .” Mark 4:1-2.

“And when he was alone they that were about him with the twelve asked of him the parable.

And he said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables:

That seeing they may see, and not perceive: and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins should be forgiven them. Mark 4:10-12.

“And with many such parables spake He the word unto them, as they were able to hear it.

But without a parable spake He not unto them: and when they were alone He expounded all things to his disciples”. Mark 4:33-34.

## WHY SPEAKEST THOU UNTO THEM IN PARABLES

“And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow: . . . .” Matt. 13:3.

“And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables?

He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.

For whosoever hath, to him, shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath.

Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand.

And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see and shall not perceive:

For this people’s heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them”. Matt 13:10-15.

## WE QUOTE — CAMPBELL MORGAN

“Therefore speak I to them in parables; because seeing they see not, and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand.” Carefully notice the change. “Seeing they

see not," not that they may not see. "Hearing they hear not, neither do they understand." They are seeing, but they do not see. They are hearing, but they do not understand. Therefore He spoke to them in parables.

#### WHY?

Our Lord then quoted Isaiah, and Matthew writes, "**And unto them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah, which saith; By hearing ye shall hear and shall in no wise understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall in no wise perceive.**" Why?

#### "LEST"

"**For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing and their eyes have they closed; lest haply ...**" Matthew and Mark both use the word "lest," but the word needs a context larger than Mark quotes. The "lest" is the "lest" of their attitude, their hardness, of persistence in unbelief. He was grieved with their hardness of heart, and that was the reason why He adopted the parabolic method. They had hardened their hearts until they had become gross; until they with seeing eyes were nevertheless blind. That was their attitude. They had done this lest they should be drawn back to God, and halted, and be forgiven. They were not aware of that ultimate, but that was their condition."

#### WE QUOTE - J.H. JOWETT

**Except a man be born again he can have no knowledge of the Kingdom; he has no faculty of vision or apprehension, he cannot see the Kingdom of God."**

Now, if that be so, what is the work of the unregenerate judgement when it expresses itself concerning the Kingdom of God? What is the value of the "we know" of the unborn? The Master declares that the unregenerate are stamped by inability to apprehend and appreciate the forces of the Kingdom.

#### THE KINGDOM OF GOD

What authority, then, I ask, shall we place upon their judgement? The man born blind is no authority in the discernment of exquisite colours. The man born deaf is no authority in the discrimination of melodious sounds. The man born without a palate is no authority in matters which demand the exercised powers of an epicure. To receive sensations you require a sense. The forces that create light demand an eye. The forces that create sound demand an ear. The forces that operate in the Kingdom of God demand a regenerated soul. Except a man have eyes he cannot see the kingdom of colour. Except a man have ears he cannot apprehend the kingdom of sound. Except a man be born again he cannot see the Kingdom of God ... The Apostle Paul, a man of no slight intellectual eminence, well disciplined in faculty and broad in culture, emphasised and re-emphasised this inability of the unregenerate man to perceive the Kingdom of God.

**"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed it unto us by his Spirit".** (1 Cor. 2:9)

Selected by Leonard Morgan.

## THE LIFE OF CHRIST (5)

In this part of our series we will deal with the calling of the first disciples. Luke chapter 5, begins with Jesus at the edge of lake Gennesaret. The lake of Gennesaret is the Sea of Tiberias, or the Sea of Chinnereth. These are the three other names given in the Bible to the Sea of Galilee. The Sea of Galilee is 13 miles long by 8 miles wide. It is 696 feet below sea level and is 150 feet deep. The water is clear and sweet with much fish. The climate around the Sea of Galilee is semi-tropical. In the winter the hills are green and during the summer the temperature is about 104 F in the shade. The difference between the sea temperature and the hills around the sea made the area prone to sudden, violent storms, which are mentioned in the Bible. According

to Josephus approximately 40 thousand people lived around the shore of the Sea of Galilee.

At the northern end of the Sea of Galilee there was the city of Bethsaida which was known as the "home of fishing". This was the home of Peter, Andrew and Philip and was well-known for boat-building and fish curing. Fishing was big business in the Sea of Galilee for the salted fish were renowned throughout the Roman Empire, especially those from Tiberias.

Josephus informs us that during the time of Christ there was a fishing fleet of 230 boats on the Sea of Galilee. These would not be small boats because there was an incident mentioned by Josephus when the Romans were pursuing the inhabitants of Magdala; about five thousand people took refuge in the fishing boats. One third of Christ's disciples, Peter, Andrew, James and John were fishermen. It would appear that **the entire ministry of Jesus** was limited to the northern half of the Sea of Galilee.

There was a very important city on the southern shores of the Sea of Galilee: the city of Tiberias. Jesus and His disciples appeared to avoid this city and it may have been due to the fact that Herod Antipas built it over a cemetery and the Jews considered it unclean: but Gentiles were forced to live in this city.

The area around the Sea of Galilee today looks very similar to how it looked in the time of Christ, with the exception of the two cities which are smaller today than in New Testament times.

In Luke chapter 5: verses 1-11, we find the teaching of Christ so popular that large crowds gathered on the shore of the Sea of Galilee to hear Him. There were two boats tied up at the edge of the sea and the fishermen were washing their nets. Jesus went on one of those boats which, the Bible informs us, belonged to Peter and asked him to push the boat out a little from the shore. No doubt the boat was then anchored and this gave Jesus a good pulpit from which to preach. Jesus then "sat down and taught the people out of the boat."

It was the custom in those days for a teacher to sit and teach. This was the way the sermon on the mount was given.

After Jesus had finished teaching He said to Simon, **"put out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch."** Simon replied, **"Master we have laboured all night long, and have caught nothing, but at your word I will let down the nets."** They did so and caught so many fish that their nets were breaking. They signalled to their partners in the other boat so that they would come and help them. They did so filling both boats so that they were almost sinking".

There is a point here that we should not overlook. Peter first explained to Jesus that they had laboured all night. That word "laboured" refers to suffering, weariness and indicates exhausting toil. Peter stood the test, however, for after saying that, and admitting failure in the efforts of an entire night, then says, **"But at your word I will let down the nets".**

Peter must have been impressed by the teaching of Jesus for he was willing to sacrifice his own practised knowledge as a fisherman to the word of Jesus. I think we should note that his faith was not all that strong from what follows, but he was obedient to Jesus.

Peter was not expecting a miracle but at best a few fish. What he did was an act of faith.

This catch of fish was obviously beyond any amount of fish seen or caught in the Sea of Galilee previously. Peter was so absolutely amazed and overawed at this miracle that he felt unworthy to be in the presence of Jesus for we read in verses 8-11.

**"Simon saw what had happened, and fell at Jesus' knees, saying, 'Leave me, Lord, because I am a sinful man.'"**

Jesus said **"Do not be afraid. From now on you shall catch people."** Then they

**brought the boats to the land, left everything and followed him. Peter, Andrew, James and John** were called to become fishers of men. Jesus now had his first four disciples; ready to give up everything and devote themselves entirely to this work.

#### LESSONS FOR US TO LEARN

In this very short passage there are, of course, many lessons for us, but the particular lesson I wish to expand upon now is the verse, **“Follow me and I will make you fishers of men.”** Would I not be correct in saying that the world in which we presently live is like the Sea of Galilee?

Where is a fisherman’s place of work? Is it not the sea? The world is very much like the sea, they have much in common. The sea is restless and so are the people in the world. In the midst of calm, storms blow up without warning. Who would have thought 2 years ago that a country like Bosnia would be the focus of World attention because of all the atrocities taking place there? The wicked are never at peace and neither is the sea.

The Sea of Galilee is dense with fish of many varieties and the world also is densely populated with all kinds of people. Fish are only at home when they are in the water. Ungodly, ‘rebellious’, unholy men feel at home in the world which is filled with the same rebellious features. “Christians” are “not of this world”. The world will be a sea of destruction for those who remain in it. To stay in the world we separate ourselves from God, from His likeness, favour and salvation. It is because of the misery and danger of this state that God sent Jesus into the world with a plan to rescue those who were perishing. He chose disciples and taught them to become **“fishers of men.”** Those who were rescued were, in turn, taught how to become fishers of men.

To become a fisher of men a net must be used. This net is the Gospel message. The gospel net is useless out of the water. The net must be cast into the sea. Jesus made it very clear that only the gospel message will save men.

The Gospel net is an instrument designed for man’s needs. It is tailor-made to man in his fallen state. It reveals all that he needs to know. It informs him of his present state and presents the strongest argument and motive to bring him to salvation.

But the gospel net must be used. It may be perfect but it is useless out of the water, it must be cast into the sea to save men. The gospel must be preached, the word of salvation must be declared.

When did you last cast your net into the sea?

The apostles were called and in this work they laboured and lived and died.

This is the work of every Christian; to preach the gospel to all who surround them. We have a duty to cast the gospel net. To the world it may appear to be foolish but 1900 years has proven it to be the power of God unto salvation.

We must be diligent and constantly casting our gospel net. Diligence and zeal do not necessarily mean we will have success but there is one thing for sure, we will never catch a fish if we don’t go fishing, and this is true also with the gospel. If we are lazy and indifferent to preaching the gospel can we really claim to love God?

We must fish from morning till night for we can never be sure when our net will be needed. We must persevere. Be prepared to fish all night and take nothing.

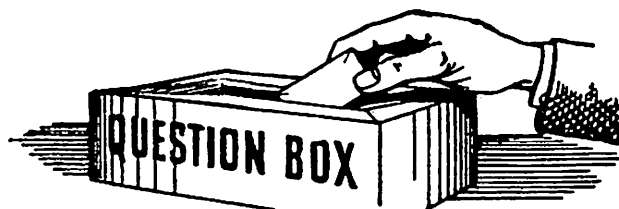
Skill is necessary in fishing. We should endeavour to know the Word of God thoroughly so that we may be workmen that need not to be ashamed because we can rightly divide the Word of Truth.

Every soul is precious to God.

Let us therefore, cheerfully devote ourselves to the work. Christ has saved us and sacrificed His life for us. The very least we can do is to sacrifice our time and comforts for the purpose of promoting the glory of Christ and rescuing the perishing. To be a fisher of men is surely the highest calling on earth. Let’s get busy!

Graeme Pearson, Dunfermlinc.






---

Conducted by  
Alf Marsden

---

**“Will you please explain 1 Pet. 3:15. As an ordinary Christian without any preaching or teaching skills, how do I train to be able to give an answer to anyone who asks of me?”**

1 Peter 3:15 reads, **“But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts; and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear”**. It seems to me that Peter supplies the primary idea which is essential to the ‘real life in Christ’ when he says, **“But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts”**. I am convinced that without doing **that**, the best we as Christians can hope for is some sort of re-vamped ‘old man’, instead of the completely ‘new life in Christ Jesus’. Inherent in the primary idea is the necessity for us to train ourselves to be **godly**. I would go so far as to say that this goes much further than **learning about** God; it must surely mean that **we must live** the Christian life in a practical way. Godly character and conduct are essentials if we are to give an answer of the hope that is within us. The New Testament teaches me that I do not have\*to attend theological seminars in order to do this; I must look at the Scriptures objectively in order to find what I must **do**. Perhaps a good starting point would be to examine some teaching of Paul to Timothy in 1 Tim.4: 7-12.

#### WHAT ANSWER SHALL WE GIVE?

To those who say to us, “Why are you a Christian: what are you hoping for”? I believe we must be able to give a positive answer. For myself, I like to think that **assurance** takes the ‘wishful thinking’ aspect out of hope, and makes what I **believe** into a **reality**. The full assurance of faith means that if I am willing to live my life under the benign rule of God, with Christ in my heart, and guided by the Holy Spirit – both inwardly and through the word – then I do not torment myself by thinking that I **may** get to Heaven; I **know** that I shall be there eventually. You see, even though the Church was gloriously fashioned by Christ, and has a universal communion, salvation comes by the Gospel to **individuals**, not communities, and each individual Christian is responsible for his hopes, doubts, aspirations, faith, and commitment, and it is as individuals that we shall stand before God and give our ultimate answer to Him. During my secular employment I had, on many occasions, to discuss the attributes of training with works managers. I very quickly learned that they weren’t much interested as to how good training would improve our industrial and commercial standing in the world community; they were at the ‘sharp end’ of the production process, and what they invariably asked was, “Well, what are the benefits for **me** and for **this firm**”, and unless they could be convinced of **that**, then there was little hope of a deal. Isn’t this true of our Christian lives? Unless and until I can show people ‘Christ in me’, they are unlikely to be impressed by Church statistics, good though these may be. Therefore, let us see how our lives can be assured by the practical application of God’s word.

#### WORD OR SPEECH

This aspect of Christian life is extremely important, because the value of what we **say** is often a true monitor of what we **think**. In 1 Tim. 4:12 Paul states those areas in life in which we should be examples; firstly, **“be thou an example of the believers, in word”**.

Many times we open our mouths and articulate words without engaging our brains. As Christians we shouldn't do that, because the warnings against it are quite severe and direct (Read James 3 about the misuse of the tongue). Furthermore, in Eph. 4:29 we read, **"Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers"**. In past years, during open discussion and debate, I have heard brethren use words which have edified no one, and rather than **'bringing grace to the hearers'**, they have brought **disgrace** to the Church; as Paul goes on, **"Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice"**. Maybe there have been, and will be, occasions when things need to be said, but there is a correct way of saying them i.e., **in love**, and without bitterness. We must always remember the words of the Lord, **"But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man"** Matt. 15:18. If the heart engenders unwholesome things, then likely as not such things will proceed from the mouth and defile. Yes, my readiness to answer concerning my hope in Christ will be enhanced by the words that I use, and by the spiritual manner in which I use them.

#### CONDUCT OF LIFE

Conduct may be defined as 'ones's actions; the way one acquits oneself'. Christian conduct will testify as to whether the Christian's hope is a **real** hope, or a make-believe hope. Our behavioural patterns reflect our expectations. The true Christian will feel a **need** for Christ no matter what phase of life he may be passing through, whether it be joy or sorrow. Christ will supply our every need, and this means that our expectations will never be frustrated, consequently our behaviour should always be governed by His supply, and since He always seeks our good, our expectations of Him will be consistent with our spiritual appreciation of His ability to supply the motivation for conduct which is Christ-like. You see, real Christian conduct lies not merely in following a set of scriptural rules, but in the abiding presence of Christ in our hearts by faith, and by the guidance and promptings of the Holy Spirit, the soul-searching Guest who will never leave us unless we deliberately dispel Him from our lives. Such is the value of our spiritual inheritance that if our conduct as Christians falls short of that which is expected of us, then this can only be attributed to wilful negligence on our part, and a failure to appreciate the power of the heavenly resources available to us.

When Paul wrote to the saints at Philippi he said, **"And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgement; that ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ"**. Phil. 1:9,10. That's about the essence of it, isn't it?

#### LOVE, FAITH, PURITY

These three great Christian attributes must characterise our lives if we are to have an undying hope, and if we are to give meaningful answers to those who question us regarding that hope. In his first letter to Timothy Paul says, **"Now the end of the commandment is love out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned"**. The God-type of love can only come from a pure heart; a heart that has been cleansed and **kept** clean. Such a love must be given freely and must not offend the conscience of the giver i.e., it must be genuine. In Rom. 12:9 Paul writes, **"Let love be without dissimulation"**. The 'unfeigned' faith must be a faith without hypocrisy, that is, it must not be like that of the scribes and Pharisees. 'Pretended' love is no love at all; it is certainly not the AGAPE love which Paul describes in 1 Cor. 13.

There are those today who are very quick to comment on what they consider to be hypocritical attitudes of some Christians; what these critics fail to see, of course, is the blatant hypocrisy of the comments which they make from time to time. God's revelation in the Bible is no longer relevant, so they say; it is a tissue of lies and contradictions and can be dispensed with entirely. Christ is seen as some sort of radical

pervert who has 'conned' people all down the ages. Marriage is seen as something which can be 'tried' but there must always be a 'quick-release' button so that people can escape from it. Purity has been dispensed with, and any young person who has not been sexually active before leaving school or college is looked upon with pity by some of the sexually-progressive clan. Oh no, these people are not hypocrites, so **they** affirm; they are just 'modern', and their modernity must be embraced by everyone: let's have no more of this 'archaic' stuff, like respecting God and His Christ. Well, the day of exposure is coming.

Dear questioner, if ever there was a time when Christians should be able to give an answer of the hope within them, it is now. The hope we have, though, must be '**an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast**'. We must train ourselves to be godly, and that can come only through the word, and by putting into practice those things that we learn. The conclusion of the whole matter is that **discipline** is the key, both physically and spiritually. May God bless us all in our pursuit of maturity in Christ.

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

## THE DENOMINATIONS

### Churches with Peculiar Doctrines

#### 4. — SWEDENBORGIANISM

EMANUEL SWEDENBORG was born in Stockholm in 1688, his father being a Lutheran Bishop. He received a first-rate education, including the universities of Upsala, Utrecht, Oxford and Paris, and became a learned scientist. In 1745 he turned his attention to theology and claimed to converse with angels, saints and inhabitants of other planets. The results of these visions he set out in an immense work, *Arcana Coelestia*, and in *The True Christian Religion*. He died in 1772 without founding any religious body. Shortly after his death Robert Hindmarsh, a printer of Clerkenwell, and a Methodist, founded the Theosophical Society, and in 1787 came into being the New Jerusalem Church or the New Church, which is not numerous anywhere. *Beliefs.*

The main tenet of Swedenborg is that the Scriptures have a *spiritual* or mystical sense, quite different from their obvious sense. Further, they must be understood by a 'law of correspondence' by which natural things are related to spiritual things, not as analogues, but really and truly. In a large number of books of the Bible no such spiritual sense can be discerned, so ten books of the Old Testament are rejected and in the New Testament only the four Gospels and the Apocalypse are admitted. The real world comprises three regions, the Heavens, the Hells, and the World of Spirits (our world). It is in the last of these that judgment takes place according to character. The Second Coming of Christ took place with the revelations granted in Swedenborg, and thus the Church of the New Jerusalem is now in process of formation. There is no personal Devil but many Devils. The main tenet is the peculiar doctrine of God, though it is by no means new, for it is almost identical with Sabellianism, which arose in Egypt in the third century. God is one in person and essence. There is a Trinity, *but not of persons*, only of attributes. These attributes are Love (the Father), Wisdom (the Son), and the resultant Energy (the Holy Spirit). This Trinity resides in one Person only — Jesus Christ. The distinctions in the Godhead are *modal* and not *personal*. Strictly speaking, the only God is Jesus of Nazareth. What in the third century was known as 'patripassianism' is avoided by declaring that the idea that the Passion of our Lord has anything to do with redemption is a fundamental error of the Old Church.

*Organisation and Practice.*

Government is more or less presbyterian, the country being divided into Provinces with an Annual General Conference in which there is lay representation. But there are three orders of Ministry, Ordaining Ministers (Bishops), Ordained Ministers (who alone administer the Sacraments), and Ordinary Ministers. Lay preaching and conduct of worship is frequent. Morning and Evening Services are liturgical but simple, and there is little ceremonial. Ministers are trained at New Church College, Woodford Green, London, for four or six years, according as to whether a man takes a university degree or not, and Lay Preachers have to pass an examination. There are two types of membership – Senior and Junior. Junior membership is from 14 to 19 years of age and admittance is by Confirmation. Senior membership is open to persons of twenty years of age who sign a Declaration of Faith. Baptism (both adult and infant) is practised by sprinkling and the Lord's Supper is usually celebrated once a quarter. Publications include *The New Church Herald* (weekly), *The New Church Magazine* (quarterly), and *Minutes of General Conference of the New Church*, issued from the Headquarters, 20, Hart Street, London, W.C.1. Several editions of Swedenborg's works are on sale in most bookshops. Few Churches have a greater propaganda set up, and few have made such little progress. Even in America progress has been slow. As with other religions which claim to have a special revelation, it is not easy to argue with Swedenborgians. The revelations of Swedenborg are sacrosanct: his infallibility cannot be questioned.

W. Robinson.

## SCRIPTURE READINGS

Sept. 5	Exodus 3:1-17	Matt. 22:23-46
Sept. 12	Hosea 6	Matt. 23: 1-26
Sept. 19	2 Chron. 24:1-22	Matt. 23:27-39
Sept. 26	Genesis 6	Matt. 24:1-22

### THE SADDUCEES CONFUNDED

Who were the Sadducees? They were so named because they claimed to be descended from Zadok, the high priest at the time of King David and King Solomon. They consisted of the wealthy aristocratic families who controlled the office of the high priest. They rejected belief in angels and the resurrection. Edwin Yamauchi has written: "They were not liberal rationalists, but, rather, they were arch-conservatives, who observed the Law of the Book of Moses (Pentateuch) and who rejected later interpretations of the law, the 'oral law'".

Jesus, in this portion of Scripture (22:23-33), met them on their own ground (the Pentateuch). They tried to entrap the Master in appealing to the practice of levirate marriage amongst the Jews (Deuteronomy 25:5). We read:

"Master, Moses said, If a man die, having no children, his brother shall marry his wife and raise up seed unto his brother. Now there were with us seven brothers: and the first, when he had married a wife, deceased, and, having no issue, left his wife unto his brother: likewise the second also, and the third unto the seventh. And last of all the woman died also. Therefore, in the resurrection whose wife shall she be of the seven? for they all had her" (22:24-28). Jesus' reply is worth a great deal of study. He pointed out that the world beyond is not like the present one. Marriage is no part of it. He went on to quote from the book of Exodus (words uttered at the time God appeared to Moses in the burning bush): "**I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob**" (3:6). These great servants are dead to those on earth, but alive to God in heaven. So the Sadducean case was shattered. As one commentator has put it: "Jesus had done what the wisest Rabbis had never been able to do. Out of Scripture itself he had confuted the Sadducees and had shown them that there is a life

after death which must not be thought of in earthly terms."

### THE GREATEST COMMANDMENT

We read: **"Then one of them, who was a lawyer, asked him a question, tempting him, and saying, What is the great commandment in the law?"** (22:35-36). It is interesting to note that Jesus did not say that He could not single any of them out because they were all equally important. What He did say was this: **"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it. You shall love your neighbour as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets"** (22:37-40).

Undoubtedly, no code of laws, without love, could make any people pure, peaceable and happy. God saw this and taught His own people (the Jews) again and again the need to love Him and one another. Sadly, throughout history, many of them failed miserably to comply with these commandments and suffered the consequences. One would have thought that, by New Testament times, the Jews would have learned the lessons of history and changed accordingly. However, this was not the case, as Jesus discovered.

The scribes and the Pharisees, for example, thought they were living lives well-pleasing to God. The real trouble was that they had heads full of Scripture and hearts empty of Jehovah. To them, true religion was a matter of keeping thousands of legalistic rules and regulations and regarding them as literally matters of life and death and eternal destiny. Love was out the window and hatred, bitterness and animosity abounded. No wonder Jesus went on to denounce them in totally uncompromising terms. My brethren in Christ, the lesson is clear: we cannot love by law, but we can walk in love with no other law but that of love.

### WOES PRONOUNCED UPON HYPOCRISY

Who were the scribes and the Pharisees? The scribes were experts in the study of the law of Moses. They had a threefold function: to preserve the law; to gather around them many pupils to instruct them in the law; to administer the law as judges in the Sanhedrin. The Pharisees ("separated ones") were Jews who exercised the greatest care in matters of ritual purity, in foods-laws, the sabbath law and the like. In the course of their study of the law they built up a body of traditional interpretation and application of the law which in due course tended to assume a validity as sacrosanct as that of the written law itself.

Some people only see a gentle Jesus, meek and mild. Of course, He was all of these, but He was more. The great Anglican writer, John R.W. Stott, once wrote a book called *Christ the Controversialist*, which became a best-seller. In it he wrote: "The title is intended to indicate not that Jesus Christ was a controversial figure, but that He engaged in controversy. Many of His public discourses were debates with the contemporary Palestinian leaders of religion. They did not agree with Him, and He did not agree with them." Certainly, in Matthew ch. 23 He did not mince His words, but gave it to them straight.

Seven times the Master exclaimed: **"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!"** (Remember what a hypocrite is. The word means a stage-player, one who puts on an act.) On each occasion, He went on to justify the use of this title. For example, **"...for you shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for you neither go in yourselves, neither suffer you them that are entering to go in"** (23:15). They really were a disgrace and Jesus knew them for what they were. They could fool the people, but they could not fool the Christ. He said: **"Even so you also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within you are full of hypocrisy and iniquity"** (23:28).

## THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM

The destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in A.D. 70 was one of the most terrible events in history. Indeed Jesus said of it: **"For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be"** (24:21). According to Josephus, one million one hundred thousand Jews were slain and ninety seven thousand were taken captive. It is interesting to note that Flavius Josephus was an eyewitness of all the awful sufferings which befell the people of Jerusalem. To read his graphic account today is to bring tears to one's eyes.

E.M. Zerr has written: "Children were lifted from the ground by the food they held in their mouths. People were beaten who ate their food before the robbers arrived. Those who were suspected of having hidden some food were tortured by having sharp stakes driven up into their lower bowels and the famine consumed whole families. Many died burying others. Some searched the sewers and manure piles for food and ate hay, old shoes and leather. A mother roasted and ate her son; bloodshed was so great as to quench fire in the houses". In other words, suffering, death and destruction were all around and they were clearly prophesied by the Master.

Evidence of the ferocity of the Roman destruction of Jerusalem has been revealed in archaeological excavations. Kathleen Kenyon and Yigael Shiloh discovered debris of destroyed houses and drains clogged with skulls and other human remains. I myself have visited the famous "Burnt House" in the present Jewish Quarter and this building gives clear testimony to the destruction of A.D. 70.

Judaism never recovered after this event. It really was the "end of the world" (24:3), as Jesus said. It is no wonder then that He wept over the city (Luke 19:41) and cried out:

**"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing. Look, your house is left to you desolate"** (23:37-38, N.I.V.).

Ian S. Davidson, Motherwell.

## BRO. MICHAEL MANNION AN APPRECIATION

Michael Mannion was one of God's most dedicated children. A convert from Catholicism, he served his country with distinction before he came into the Lord's Body. It is undoubtedly true to say that he displayed the same loyalty, enthusiasm, and dedication to his Lord and Master, and gave the same sort of distinguished service to his work in the Church. One of the greatest tributes I can pay him is that once he had given himself to the Lord, he never once looked back. He 'ploughed a straight furrow'

Michael had a debilitating heart condition for a good number of years, and this meant that his physical capability was limited to some extent. It was a measure of his courage, however, that even after by-pass surgery he served the church at Albert Street, in a way that was truly amazing. He served as a Deacon, and as Secretary, and whenever he could he gave excellent lessons from the platform. He was a keen Bible student, and whenever you visited him in his home, you always saw his Bible to hand near to the chair in which he used to sit. Consequently, the lessons he gave were always scripturally based, and you knew that he had given great thought to the content. I know that his efforts in the service of the Lord often resulted in him suffering physical pain, but never once did I hear him complain. His dear wife, Lillian, could read these signs well, and she supported him admirably throughout. His Christian character was such that he was loved and respected

among the saints, and held in high esteem by his many friends outside the church.

Michael and Lillian were given to hospitality, and many of us can testify to the warmth of their friendship in the home. I know one particular brother who will miss Michael greatly, Bro. Fred Longden who meets with the church at Kirkby-in-Ashfield. Michael and Lillian would motor over to the Midlands, spend some time with Fred, and then bring him back to their home for a week or two. Theirs was a great Christian friendship, and I know that Fred appreciated them both greatly. But that was Michael; quietly and unobtrusively he got on with the Lord's work in whatever areas of the Kingdom he could operate in.

He was a family man, and his dear wife Lillian, his son David and his family, and the extended family, will miss him tremendously; we can do no better than commend them to the Father, and give practical help whenever we can. The saints at Longshoot will remember with affection his patience, courage, reliability, and faithfulness, and look with confidence to the grand re-union. Heaven's gain is our loss.

With remembrance deep and lasting,  
Alf Marsden.

## OBITUARY

**Newtongrange:** It is with a deep sense of loss that we report the passing from this scene of time of our beloved sister Grace Coventry, (in her 85th year) on 10th June, 1993.

Grace was one of the Lord's workers (doers) and a most faithful member of this assembly. She attended regularly at the Sister's Meeting on Thursdays and the Sunday Services, although her health was such lately that for the last three or four years her attendance could only be spasmodic. We commend all those who mourn her passing, especially her sons, daughters and grandchildren, to the comfort to be found in the Lord.

Brother James Sinclair conducted the funeral services in the Meeting Place and at the Crematorium.

Joe Currie,  
(Sec. & Treasurer).

**Kirkcaldy:** It is with much sadness that we mourn the passing of Bro. Reg Coles. Reg died on Sunday 27th June, 1993 in the Victoria Hospital, Kirkcaldy. He had been admitted two weeks previously with a heart attack.

However, it was a blessing that the week before his death his daughter Catherine and family arrived from Papua, New Guinea to be with him.

We ask that you keep our sister Ruth and her family in your prayers.

**Ruth & Reg Coles:** It was in 1972 that Ruth and Reg. went to Papua, New Guinea to help with the teaching of Jesus' message of love and salvation to the people of that land. In 1974 they started a work in the village of Orouba in the Waria Valley part of the highlands.

They were forced to leave that work in 1986 because of Reg's ill-health. He recovered sufficiently for them to return to Lae two years ago, but a recurrence of ill-health forced a second retirement to their home in Scotland.

Reg Coles, an engineer, and his devoted wife Ruth, a nurse, did not take the easy course of "putting their feet up" to enjoy the well-earned comforts of retirement. Both decided to devote their energies to taking the gospel to far away Papua, New Guinea.

The funeral service was held in the church building at Buckie and was led by Bro. Frank Worgan — It was an uplifting service of thanksgiving. The body was interred at Hillhead Cemetery just outside Portnockie. The service at the graveside was led by Bro. Joe Nisbet.

The church here in Kirkcaldy will miss Reg greatly. Again, please remember Sister Ruth.

"Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord ... that they may rest from their labours for their deeds follow with them." (Rev.14:13).

Ruth Moyes,  
(Secretary).

**Buckie:** It is with great regret that I have to report the passing of our brother William Innes. He was always a regular attendant at our worship services and was always willing to serve in any capacity. Our brother will be greatly missed by all of us. We ask for your prayers on behalf of his wife Nellie and the rest of the family. Brother W. Mair officiated at the service both at his home and at the graveside.

Hunter Pirie,  
(Secretary).

## COMING EVENTS

**Newtongrange:** Annual Social Newtongrange Saturday 9th October, 4 p.m. (A note for your diary: details later).

**Kentish Town:** Anniversary Meeting, Kentish Town, London, 122nd Anniversary. Saturday October 2nd 1993 3.00 p.m. and 6.30 p.m. Tea 4.45 p.m. Speaker: Bro. Geoff Daniell - A warm welcome to all.

### CHANGE OF TELEPHONE NUMBER

Brother Alf Marsden has a new telephone number. The code remains the same: i.e. (0942) but the new number is 207968.

### NIGERIAN APPEAL UPDATE

Thank you very much to everyone who responded to the appeal. The tracts,

books and magazines have all been sent out along with some Bibles. We have been informed by the English Bible Society that it will be possible to send Bibles through the Nigerian Bible Society (previously they were reported to be unreliable but we're now assured that this has changed) and are waiting for a reply from them before sending any others. This would mean a substantial saving on postage for us and more Bibles for them.

Shortly after putting the appeal for funds in the Scripture Standard I received a letter from a brother in Nigeria saying the overseas postage rate and cost of a P.O. Box had gone up by 1000%. As mail is sent to individuals through a P.O. Box it seemed unlikely that ordinary people would be able to afford either a P.O. Box to receive mail or the cost of postage to reply.

Anyone sending to Nigeria may be interested to know that another brother has written saying we can still send to those who receive mail through established institutions e.g. the army, a company, hospital etc., and begs us not to stop sending literature. He says he is always delighted to receive and distribute to others who are in dire need and is a distributor for the World Radio Bible Study. So if you have any further literature for sending out I would be pleased to pass it on.

Margery Purcell,  
3 Dale Avenue,  
Bramhall,  
Stockport, Cheshire SK7 2JP.

---

THE SCRIPTURE STANDARD is published monthly.

PRICE PER YEAR — POST PAID BY SURFACE MAIL

UNITED KINGDOM and COMMONWEALTH .....	£ 7.00
CANADA & U.S.A. ....	\$13.00

AIR MAIL please add £2.00 or \$3.00 to above surface mail rates

PLEASE MAKE CHEQUES PAYABLE TO "THE SCRIPTURE STANDARD"

DISTRIBUTION AGENT & TREASURER:

JOHN K. KNELLER, 4 Glassel Park Road, Longniddry, East Lothian, EH32 0NY  
Telephone: Longniddry (0875) 53212 to whom change of address should be sent.

EDITOR: JAMES R. GARDINER, 87 Main Street, Pathhead, Midlothian,  
Scotland EH37 5PT. Telephone: Ford 320 527

---

"The Scripture Standard" is printed for the publishers by  
Lothian Printers, 109 High Street, Dunbar, East Lothian. EH42 1ES. Tel: (0368) 63785