

The SCRIPTURE STANDARD

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

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THE BIBLE AND THE MODERN WORLD

IV: THE COLOUR PROBLEM (1)

VARIOUS designations are given to this question. Under its extreme form as practised in South Africa it is termed apartheid — separate development of the white and coloured races; in less vicious forms we know it as racism or racialism, or the colour bar.

It is a very emotive subject in which emotions run high. When questions are raised about it one can sense tenseness developing. Consequently truth and reason do not have a fair chance of their voices being heard. Where feelings run deep it is difficult to be calm and objective. The more one is involved in such a matter the harder it is to be factual and concerned only that truth upon the matter shall be made known. It is too often a case of "My mind is made up. Don't confuse me with facts."

Most of us are, consciously, or unconsciously, concerned with this subject. It is a growing matter to be faced, so that now we term it a "problem". Recent events and pronouncements of politicians, and even things now happening are causing increasing controversy upon the subject. In some countries it is far more than a "problem": it is a burning and dangerous issue. If we could analyze our feelings on "colour bar" we should find what we regard as very good reasons for our attitude. We would strenuously oppose any idea that we are prejudiced against coloured people: they are quite all right so long as they keep their distance. We have what we regard as justified fears of their "overwhelming" our country, getting the best of housing or jobs while we take second place; our maternity hospitals being crowded out with coloured women while our own mothers cannot find accommodation; monopolising the public welfare system while we cannot get our rightful needs. All kinds of exaggerated stories go the rounds without any question being asked or any attempt made to establish their truth. So many people want to believe these stories and would not admit their untruth even if this were demonstrated. Unconsciously we set different standards of behaviour for whites and for coloureds. Of course coloured people commit crime of various sorts. But so do whites. It is true to say that, if a

coloured man carries out a dreadful crime it is looked upon as far more revolting simply on the ground of the colour of his skin. In our anger we are far more concerned for vengeful treatment than if the same crime were committed by a white man. The standard of judgement is that the crime was perpetrated by a coloured man. That

accentuates it. In the southern United States coloured men have been lynched for crimes which, when committed by white men — as they are — go without any such mob reaction. But it is cause for thankfulness that usually the laws of the various countries do not act upon such standards.

Background of Colour Bar

The grounds of this prejudice, although unconsciously to us, go deep. The origin and history of colour bar go far back into antiquity. White people and nations have ever regarded coloured people as inferior in every way, and to be treated as inferiors. They, like the Jews, have been regarded as fit objects of suppression and slavery. Thus colour bar was largely involved in slavery. Even now that slavery is unlawful among nations, the stigma of slavery still clings to the coloured peoples who suffered it. Slavery was practised by the white nations in order to retain their privileges and superiority, and to increase their commercial power and profits. Among some it is regarded as a divine law and right that white people are superior and coloured people inferior. The truth is that it is the whites who have had the opportunities to make progress, and have used them, so often ruthlessly, while the coloured nations have never had those opportunities or have been denied them. Our own civilisation took hundreds of years to develop its present status; even then the white nations are not always perfect models to be copied by the coloured nations. The superior civilisation of the whites did not prevent a Hitler arising, whose aim was "Evil, be thou my good", and who annihilated in his twelve years of power 6 million Jews for no other reason than that they were Jews. Let us remember it was the white nations which used the atomic bombs at Hiroshima and Nagasaki to end the Second World War, and which continue even now to develop and perfect even more hideous weapons of destruction.

Prejudice

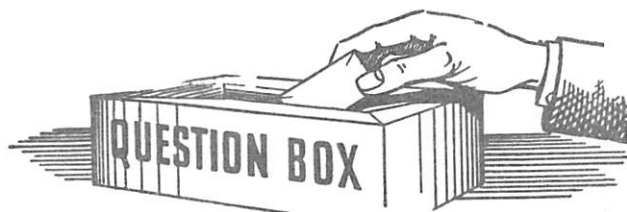
It is disturbing how, even among Christians, these prejudices are held against coloured people among us. We have all heard it, haven't we? — "I'm not against them — but...". And after that "but" follow statements which reveal the half-truths we believe, the prejudices we cherish, although largely without reason or proof. Too often the laws of a country lag behind the desires and requirements of its people; on the other hand sometimes the people can trail behind, through their prejudices, the enlightened legislation produced by its Parliament. This seems so as regards "colour problems". Many people hold forth about immigrants (by which they mean coloured people) monopolizing the benefits of Social Security etc. as though they were filching benefits to which they were not entitled. But these benefits are their rights, conferred upon them (and not at their insistence) by governments of the past and present. Compared with their harsh treatment and poverty often experienced in their own lands is it to be wondered at that so many seize opportunities to better their lot in a land where they enjoy the same privileges and accept the same responsibilities as the natives of that land? Why should it be objected to that because a coloured man gets a job in this country he is taking it from me? That if he buys a decent house he is doing me out of one? Should it not rather be cause for joy and gratitude that, even although it may be "against the grain", these people find in our country that security and independence that they have not enjoyed in their own?

All this seems an idealistic picture, as though we look upon all coloured people as wholly respectable, peace-loving, law-abiding citizens. Of course not all are.

Nor are all whites. But we must not make the mistake of judging the two by different standards. Certainly any judgement must not be based upon the colour of their skin. It is one of the deepest of injustices to do so.

We are aware that we have spent many words upon the moral and political approaches to the subject we are dealing with. We have tried to present the question, but we know that we have left many questions unanswered, and that we have not so far given guidance as to what should be the Christian's attitude towards it. This we shall try to do in our next contribution by pointing out the teaching of scripture upon it.

EDITOR.



Conducted by
James Gardiner

"Jesus said in the sermon on the mount 'Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father who is in heaven is perfect' (Matt. 5:48) What does the word 'perfect' mean?"

LAST month in "Q.B." we discussed the manner in which Jesus was made "*perfect*" through suffering. We all have our own ideas as to what perfection is and so, very often, the use of the words give rise to misunderstanding. Most people use the words as if they meant faultlessness, flawlessness of character *i.e.* moral perfection. When a fault lies at our door we usually retort by saying "Well, I'm not perfect", or "nobody is perfect".

In actual fact the word perfect in the majority of cases, means "complete", "entire". The Greek word is *teleios* which means "*complete or finished (ended)*". Very often the word has no reference to matters of morals at all (Deut. 25:15) The rich young ruler who came running to Jesus to find what he must do to inherit eternal life was a very good man morally: but Jesus said to him "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor." His morals were good, but his goodness was *incomplete*—and we know that he walked away sadly because he was not prepared to extend or *perfect* his goodness. And so the word "perfect" in Matt. 19:21 is the same as that used in Matt. 5:48 (Sermon on the Mount) and means "complete". Good moral standards are very much involved in spiritual completeness, of course, but the word encompasses more than moral matters. Speaking on this much misunderstood word and on Matt. 5:48, R.C. Trench wrote, "The Christian shall be "perfect, yet not in the sense in which some of the sects preach the doctrine of perfection, who, as soon as their words are looked into, are found either to mean nothing which they could not have expressed by a word less liable to misunderstanding, or to mean something which no man in this life shall attain, and which he who affirms he has attained is deceiving himself, or others, or both."

How can we be perfect?

This injunction to perfection on the part of man, given by Jesus, was not a new one. We find God saying to Abraham "Walk before me and be thou perfect". (Gen. 17:1). In Deut 18:13 Israel and the Levites are enjoined thus, "Thou shalt be perfect with the Lord thy God." And there are many similar examples.

It is interesting to note that in the parallel passage in Luke 6:36, Luke does not mention perfection at all, but quotes Jesus as saying, "Be ye therefore merciful (compassionate), as your Father also is merciful."

In what sense then did Jesus mean us to be perfect? I suggest that, as always, the context of the word provides us with the answer. Verses 38-42 of chapter 5 deal with how we ought to receive injury from our fellow men. Verses 43-48 tell us how we ought to deal with those who injure us. It is in this connection that we are to show our spiritual perfection, our completeness, our spiritual maturity. Prior to Christ's sermon the accepted attitude was to love your friends and hate your enemies. Jesus points out that there is no virtue whatsoever in this. Any sinner could do that. Jesus says, rather, "love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you", and spend time in prayer on behalf of those who persecute you and despise you. In this there is virtue. To do this shows a spiritual maturity. Many of us are not "big enough" to do this — we are as yet incomplete (imperfect), we lack the spiritual capacity (v.44). We are not "perfect". To do these things, says Jesus, enables us to manifest that we are indeed children of the Father. After all, God does these things all the time. In this God shows His absolute perfection (completeness). Does not God make the sun to rise on the just and on the unjust, and send His rain upon the evil as well as the good? says Jesus. God is not mean or narrow: He is high minded and completely magnanimous. Jesus says that we ought to try to emulate God in this, so that we may truly be children of our Father in heaven (v.45). If we love those who love us we are no better than the sinners, for even they love those who love them. If we salute our brethren only we are still no better than such as they, for they salute their brethren. If this is as far as our righteousness takes us then we are spiritually poorly off (immature) and we require to strive towards the perfection to be seen in God. The word "therefore" in v.48 confirms the view, I think, that the kind and quality of perfection required of us has direct reference to the contents of verses 43 to 47.

"As your Father is perfect"

God has set the standard in that He continues to love all mankind in spite of their rebellion and the countless times they reject Him and sin against Him. If we are to be truly the sons of God then we must strive to attain to similar heights of spiritual excellence. Some of us respond by saying that such attainments are impossible. It is true that we shall always be aware of our own limitations and weaknesses: surely no man will ever claim to have reached full perfection. Jesus, however, in Matt. 5 as elsewhere, indicates that we should spend our lives in striving towards such a goal. The apostle Paul expresses it thus (in Phil. 3:12-15): "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect; but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended; but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded..."

Perhaps I can sum up by saying that Jesus is teaching that there is no virtue, honour or praise in loving those who love us, being good only to those who are good to us or blessing those who bless us. The men of the world accomplish those things. Our excellency of character must transcend standards that worldly men attain to: thus we must love our enemies, return good for evil, pray for and bless those who would like to injure us. God continually displays such a disposition towards mankind. He does not withhold His benefits (sun and rain) from those who are evil. We ought to emulate God in this. If we do this we shall reflect a spiritual maturity or perfection

(completeness) in keeping with the perfection seen in God the Father. Then shall we truly be sons exhibiting the traits of the Father.

It is said that man cannot attain to so much. But we must realize that God cannot ask for less. If man cannot possess all the traits of God, he can by loving his enemies possess at least *this* virtue in common with God. If he does he is complete, *at least on that score*, and hence as perfect as the Father is in heaven.

(Questions please to James R. Gardiner, 88 Davidson Terrace, Haddington, East Lothian, Scotland.)

SCRIPTURE READINGS

NOVEMBER 1972

5—Daniel 6 Col.3:18 to 4:18
12—Malachi 2:17 to 3:12 Mark 1:1-20
19—Lev. 14:1-20 Mark 1:21-45
26—Psalm 32 Mark 2:1-22

THE SHORTEST GOSPEL

WE have made it a practice to take readings from the "Gospels" at intervals because we regard them as fundamental to our faith, and important in comparison with the other New Testament writings, as giving us the living picture of the Lord Jesus. We read through John's in 1970, Matthew's in 1968, Luke's in 1965/6 and Mark's in 1964. It is a pleasure therefore, as also a duty, to provide for the public readings in Mark this time. If the readings are taken seriously, as they should be by every member of a congregation, they ensure that a thorough knowledge of the passages read in public will be gained. How very important a place it should take in churches pleading for original Christianity!

Interesting Facts

There are only 24 verses in Mark which do not occur in either Matthew or Luke. Some scholars have therefore concluded that both Matthew and Luke have used Mark's gospel as the basis for their own. Some think also that there was an original account of the life of Jesus which all three writers used. These points are of interest, but we believe that holy men of God wrote as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. Divine providence through direct guidance of the original writers

and, indirectly, still through human agency has made the power of God available to us all for our salvation (Rom. 1:16). All four "gospels" are of infinite value; studied together or apart, and *taken to heart*, they bring us near to God.

Some Background

Read Acts 12 and observe that Luke identifies Mary (the occupant or owner of the house in Jerusalem used by the Christians for united prayer) by saying she was the mother of John Mark. Peter's first thought when he realised his release from prison was of this home. Here is the first hint of connection between Mark and Peter. An early Christian writer states that Mark wrote what he received from Peter, and whether this is so or not, we can feel that the writing breathes the vivid straightforward recollection of an eyewitness. It is as though a reporter puts down what he sees. Matthew brings the portrait of One Who fulfils prophecy. Luke makes an orderly record of "the things most surely believed." John presents the Word made flesh for acceptance as Son of God. These witnesses combined give what is needed to convince and convict the sinner, and present him with a Saviour. Jesus said of the brothers of Dives, "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they believe if one rose from the dead" (Luke 16:31). What of the man who hears not the testimony of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, Mark was not Peter's son in the flesh, but Peter surely regarded him with the same or greater affection (1 Peter 5:13).

Characteristics

We cannot read this gospel without being immediately conscience of an abruptness of introduction. We plunge at

once into the dramatic entrance of the Saviour's forerunner. The Jewish nation had become aware of the absence of prophetic word over four centuries. They had come back into their own land with a measure of liberty and by the favour of mightier neighbours, but this had come to an end finally with the domination of mighty worldwide Rome. The Jews hated this but were compelled to accept it. Some rebelled with disastrous results (Acts 5:36 & 37). Herod represented a compromise to keep them quiet, but only the Herodians (Mark 3:6;12:13) regarded this favourably.

Suddenly comes John Baptist. The words of their last recognised prophet of Jehovah are quoted, and this arouses their national and political hopes to fever heat, only to damp them by the call, not to arms, but to repentance. We know the reaction, not from Mark but from John. The whole nation must have been stirred to hear the voice of one recognised at once as a prophet of God (Mark 11:32). But they are warned to expect soon a mightier than John. He worked no miracle (John 11:41) but his words worked in the minds of his people.

It is characteristic of Mark that the introduction of John Baptist takes but seven verses. The baptism of Jesus takes three. The temptation only two. Our readings for this month give us eight vivid pictures of Jesus. They concern His ministry in Galilee and seem to cover only a few days. Probably Jesus had already preached around the Jordan where John preached before Him, and had been there introduced to some of whose call we read here in Mark. Whatever His reception in Jerusalem or elsewhere, in Galilee He became immediately the beloved friend of the people. His call of the disciples, His powerful word to the demons, His healing hands, brought the crowds together so that he sought the quiet places (1:35 & 45). Have we ever realised what this ministry meant to Jesus and His disciples? We sing often "At even 'ere the sun was set", but how many times was the scene repeated, not at even perhaps, but day after day, re-

quiring superhuman patience, endurance and power. No wonder He was asleep in the storm, and had to be awakened (4:36-38)!

R.B. SCOTT

WHAT CHRIST THOUGHT

MY theme is what Christ believed about the Old Testament. No matter what our readers believe regarding Christ as to his being Deity or human or both, he is regarded by all intelligent and informed people as an actual person in history. There are various ideas regarding the Bible, especially the Old Testament. To some, it is merely a compilation of ancient folklore, not actually inspired by God. The assertion is that many of the books included in the Old Testament today were not written at the time by the persons to whom they are attributed now. Some scientists insist they are violently in conflict with geological discoveries. Others, claiming to be Christians, regard them as partially inspired but of little value to religious people now.

The burden of my theme here is to stress the value Christ accorded them in his teachings. What did he believe about them? He accepted the 39 books of the Old Testament as we have them today, without reservation. Christ never attempted to prove the Old Testament true. He considered it as the sun, which shines in its own light, and is its own evidence. If a person will not read the Bible in sincerity, no argument will convince him it is of God. If he will examine it in sincerity, he will not seek any argument in proof. The Old Testament which Christ read, quoted, and believed as the same in Hebrew and Greek we have today preserved by the Jews. Christ called it the scriptures: "Moses and the Prophets" (Luke 16:29-31). He referred to Moses as legislator and writer (John 5:45-47). In the first great conflict with Satan, he connected Moses and the Prophets (Matt. 4:1-11). He connected David's name with Psalm 110 (Matt. 22:44) and the prophecies with Isaiah (Matt. 13:13-15; Mark 7:6,7). He accepted the account of Creation in Genesis as authentic (Matt. 24:37-39). To Jesus, the story of Jonah and

the fish was definite truth—nothing fictitious in any sense (Matt. 12:39,40). There never was a question in the mind of Christ but that the events of creation, as recorded in Genesis, occurred exactly as the record says. For example: Christ accepted the story of the Flood as given in Genesis 6:5-7. He referred to the record of that event in the Gospel of Matthew 24:37-38 in his conversation with his disciples on the attitude of their contemporaries.

FRANK SHEPHERD, Virginia, U.S.A.

THE DEATH OF MRS PRAYER MEETING

MRS Prayer Meeting died at First Neglected Church, on Worldly Avenue. Born many years ago in the midst of great revivals, she was a strong healthy child, fed largely on testimony and Bible study, soon growing into worldwide prominence and was one of the most influential members of the church family.

For the past several years Sister Prayer Meeting has been failing in health, gradually wasting away until rendered helpless by stiffness of knees, coldness of heart, inactivity and weakness of purpose and will-power.

At the last she was but a shadow of her former happy self. Her last whispered words were inquiries concerning the strange absence of her loved ones now busy in the marts of trade and places of worldly amusements.

Experts, including Dr. Works, Dr. Reform and Dr. Joiner, disagreed as to the cause of her fatal illness, administering large doses of organization, socials contests and drives, but to no avail. A post mortem showed that a deficiency of spiritual food coupled with the lack of faith, heartfelt religion and general support, were contributing causes.

Only a few were present at her death, sobbing over memories of her past beauty and power.

In honour of her going, the church doors will be closed on Wednesday nights, save on the third Wednesday of each month, when the ladies Pink Lemonade Society serves refreshments to the men's handball team.

R.L. MCKINLEY

EVERY CHRISTIAN A MISSIONARY

"I feel that we have really limited the effectiveness of the church by our attitudes toward mission work.

Which members of God's kingdom are *not* missionaries? Why sell the church short by giving an arbitrarily selected figure like 200 as the number of missionaries we have in the world? Christians in the armed forces number in the thousands... so why do we not say thousands?

I feel that the word missionary has given us a crutch. Instead of being a kingdom of priests accepting our priestly responsibilities we have turned the gospel message over to a few special missionaries. On one hand we claim that we make no distinction between clergy and laity but on the other hand we actually distinguish and give special titles to our brethren who preach abroad.

I firmly believe that if we called *all of us* missionaries or if we just forgot that name and stuck to Christians, Saints, Priests, Ministers, Slaves, etc. we just might spark a response in the minds and spirits of the thousands who do not feel any personal responsibility to preach the gospel either by word or unique deed."

Comment of a missionary in *Mission Strategy Bulletin* March-April 1972.

WHAT DID JUDAS GET?

Judas got the bag to carry. He got thirty pieces of silver for betraying His Lord. He got his plans carried out for delivering the Lord to the mob.

But that wasn't all. He got sorrow and shame and disappointment. He got suicide: he hanged himself. He got a name that lives on in disgrace. He got his joy and his soul lost. He got his money back. He got his hopes blighted.

DID IT PAY?

"IT is a pastor's duty to feed the sheep rather than to amuse the goats."

"IF your doctrine is too difficult for us, speak it in parables, but do not water down the doctrine,"

WHAT HOUR?

THE subject under consideration here is the hour of the observance of the Lord's Supper. By hour we mean the time of the observance, not the day, as Acts 20:7 settles the day. We will consider the hour acceptable by God for the observance of the Supper.

1 In the absence of a specified hour (time of day), it seems that any hour contained in the twenty-four hours of the first day of each week would and must be acceptable.

2 To bind a specific hour to the exclusion of all others is fallacy, to say the least. We would surely condemn those who partake of the Supper at a different hour of the day. Therefore, we must not bind tradition upon anyone who has different customs in this respect. The hour is purely a matter of expediency that may vary from congregation to congregation.

3 So, we must not become slaves to tradition. We must remind ourselves that we partake of the Lord's Supper on a specified hour because we have by mutual consent agreed upon that hour, not because that hour has been determined by divine revelation. Since the hour is an expedient locally, the time of its observance may be changed by the membership any time.

Conclusion:

The day is Specific (Acts 20:7)
The day specified is the first day of the week (Sunday).

The hour is not specific; therefore the hour is left to the judgment of the local leadership or elders.

GARRETH L. CLAIR

AND THIS IS FAITH

To wait a while within the dark,
To walk alone,
Calm in the faith a star will shine
As other stars have shone;
To know, when sorrow stays our feet,
That we can lean
On Him who gives us strength to walk
Into the storm, serene.

S.L. Armes

PARADOXES IN THE LIFE OF JESUS

He who is the Bread of life began His ministry hungering.
He who gives the Water of life said "I thirst".
He who was weary is our true rest.
He who prayed hears our prayers.
He who wept wipes away all our tears.
He who was led as a lamb to the slaughter is the Good Shepherd.
He who was sold for thirty pieces of silver redeemed the world.
He who died destroyed the power of death.

TO say "religion" is the cure for the ills of the world and to be no more specific is like the doctor who examines the patient who is dying, taking out his prescription book, writing "Medicine" and handing it to the dying man.

READING THE BIBLE

WHO that ever read the tale of the Prodigal Son failed to remember it?

No literature, no book was ever so well-knit as the New Testament, no library richer than the Bible. Fine literature it may be, but this goes for nothing if we do not make it so by fair reading. It is sober fact that not only the church but civilisation is built upon it. "Reading maketh a full man." Shall we be content with a Sunday ration? No feast is richer than the Bible.

(Advert by Book Tokens Ltd)

GOD GIVE ME JOY

God give me joy in the common things;
In the dawn that lures, the eve that sings;
In the new grass sparkling after rain;
In the late wind's wild and weird refrain;
In the springtime's spacious fields of gold;
In the precious light by winter doled.
God give me joy in the love of friends;
In their dear home talk as summer ends;
In the songs of children unrestrained;
In the sober wisdom age has gained.
God give me joy in the tasks that press;
In memories that burn and bless;
In the thought that life has love to spend;
In the faith that God's at journey's end.
God give me hope for each day that springs;
God give me joy in the common things.

THOMAS CARTER CLARK

"PROGRESSIVE CHRISTIANITY"

THE trouble with most of us professing Christians is that we inject into these intensely searching demands of New Testament Christianity a neutralising dose of reserve and our Christianity is thereby a denatured faith. Whilst the average church adherent insists that he does not want this absolute Christianity but something less demanding, non-Christians are saying "We do not want your denatured brand of Christianity."

American Christian

WORSHIPPING GOD IN SPIRIT

IT is significant that all the elements of worship are built upon *living* things. The fruit of the *vine* and the bread of *grain* at the Lord's table; the Temple as *living* individuals renewed by partaking of spiritual life as given through the communion, the sharing; the music of worship performed on the most spiritual of all earthly instruments — *the living human heart*.

J.P. Sanders in *Church Music*

THE "S.S." MEETING AT WIGAN

September 30th.

AT the meeting held at Scholes, Wigan on September 30th it was not found possible to reach agreement on some points relating to the backing of the 'S.S.' However, it was agreed to obtain the co-operation of certain brethren to give any assistance to Bro. C. Melling, editor, which he should need in the meantime, and to meet again for further discussion and decision on November 18th. It was felt that, while there was not a settlement of problems confronting us, the brethren gathered were all concerned for the continuance of the paper on a firm basis. A meeting of supporters such as this was perfectly competent to make decisions and to have them carried out without reference to past or present conditions.

The great difficulty remains the conscientious convictions of brethren differing on some "technical" details and points of policy. Our difficulties, both as a brotherhood and as supporters of a paper, began when certain views were

advanced on the question of committees. We cannot and do not wish to ride roughshod over conscientious convictions, whatever they are, but must take stands on points we regard as principles of New Testament faith and practice. Some differences are bound to remain and a paper might take unpopular positions, but a measure of fellowship is more than possible if the spirit of Christ rules.

Bro. Melling offered his resignation, but a motion to accept it was not even seconded, and it was obvious the brethren wished him to continue. We were left without a decision on this and other points, and we look now for some action on the part of the brethren appointed by the final Resolution. It is not now possible to carry out the proposal in that Resolution to meet again on November 18th as time and place had not been referred to those most concerned, and the Resolution itself was not fully understood by many. There was a somewhat hurried conclusion after tea break, because some had to leave promptly for their long journeys and Lord's Day obligations.

We can at least say with confidence that there was a unanimous determination to continue the paper. It is our hope that any further meeting will bring us to a decision to continue the 'S.S.' and to support the present editor and to get him to withdraw his resignation. If the paper ceased this would be to our real shame and loss.

Time and place of any further meeting will need to be considered, as the church in Scholes feels unable to invite such a further conference on the 'S.S.' under present conditions.

R.B. SCOTT

In view of the above report it is necessary to stress that the proposed meeting for November 18th is postponed. Will brethren who intended to be at this meeting please note: Notice of any rearrangements will be given through the 'S.S.'

"TO keep the fire brightly burning it is as necessary to rake out the ashes as to be continually replenishing the supply of fuel."

J.W. Black.

THREE AVENUES OF KNOWING CHRIST

KNOWING the living Saviour relates to all of life, but three ways can be mentioned here: The first is through forgiveness. Paul asked the question, "Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies; who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised from the dead, who is at the right hand of God, who intercedes for us?" He goes on to explain that nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord (Romans 8:34; 9:1).

Because of the certainty of our sonship in Christ we are able honestly to look at our hatred, gossip, jealousy and pride. All too often we do not feel secure enough to look at the real sins in our lives. We play a game with God and others while we continue to bear our burdens, and try to pay off the intolerable debts that we have incurred against God. The incredible reality of Christ's saving grace should give us the assurance and confidence we need to look honestly at ourselves and cast our anxieties on Him. Repentance and confession demand that we have a living relationship with a Saviour who is actually forgiving and loving us. If he doesn't forgive real sins and bear real burdens every day, the word Saviour is at best referring to a faraway heaven.

Secondly, we draw nearer to our Lord in prayer. It should be affirmed here that we grow to know the nature of our living Lord when we are saturated in His Word, the Bible. Prayer then becomes a response of thanksgiving from those who know what God has done for man. The wonderful gifts of God constantly astound Christians who understand the faith. We are encouraged to ask of the Father, but we know that prayer is more a moving towards God's will than it is trying to force Him to do our will (Romans 8:26-27). Prayer denotes a humble posture of life in the presence of God. Prayer is not an insurance policy for a godless life; it is the total response of our lives to Christ. The seeking, the finding, and the thanksgiving, not the pulling, pushing and appeasing must cha-

racterise the Christian's prayer-life.

Thirdly, we draw near to Christ through the fellowship of the church. The Saviour destroyed all barriers to human fellowship when He purchased the church with His own blood (Ephesians 2:11-19). If Christ is a living Saviour in us, then our lives will reflect His intense concern for men. A living Saviour draws men into the greatest relationship on earth — fellowship in the church. One way the living Saviour loves one man is through another man: "As much as ye did it unto one of the least of these you did it unto me." Christ is not alive in us until we stop regarding others from a human point of view (2 Cor. 5:16). To go on with our same jealousies, prejudices and hate toward men while we sing about the "Fairest Lord Jesus" is a mockery of the risen Saviour.

The living Saviour, then, is no panacea for a cowardly mind. He is the confirmation of God's redemptive work in history. When he is related to our lives he transforms our ideas about all the things and all the people around us. Christians, everywhere come to a better understanding of life in the light of Jesus Christ when they think of Him, as a living, ruling Lord of the universe.

Selected 20th Century Christian.

"FEELING SAVED"

A preacher once told me, "You will know when you are saved, for you will feel the burden of sin lifted". I asked, "How will I feel when I feel that way?" He said, "You will feel like you are saved!"

I asked again, "How does a man feel when he feels that he is saved?" He replied, "It's a feeling no man can describe." "If I can't describe it, and you who are saved can't" I said, "how will I know that I feel like you felt when you had the feeling?" He answered, "You'll feel just like I felt, for I felt all right."

After sixty years' study and observation I still wonder how I should feel right, when those who felt they felt right could not tell me how they felt when they were so certain they felt right!"

American Christian Review

"APT TO TEACH"

Paul declares that one who has the desire to be a shepherd of the souls of men shall be "apt to teach" (1 Tim. 3:2). He also declares that "the Lord's servant must not strive, but be gentle towards all, apt to teach, forbearing" (2 Tim. 2:24). This requirement simply means "skilful in teaching". According to the *Englishman's Greek Concordance* these are the only two places where it appears. In one place it is the requirement of the Shepherd; in the other, the Evangelist. But isn't it strange that the Shepherd of today can hire someone else to do HIS OWN WORK FOR HIM? It would be unthinkable for a gospel preacher to hire out his work to someone else, yet this is what the Shepherds have done today. What would your opinion be of him who was hired by the preacher? Jesus said that the hireling "careth not for the sheep" (John 10:13). The Lord has given each of his servants work to do. They alone are responsible to fulfill their duties. No one else can be hired to do it for them.

DEAN SPURLOCK

Prayer:

"Do not pray for easy lives. Pray to be strong men! Do not pray for tasks equal to your powers. Pray for powers equal to your tasks.

Phillips Brooks

Self-Interest:

The man who lives for self alone, lives for the meanest mortal known

Joaquin Miller

NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

Kentish Town: The 101st. anniversary meetings brought together a good number of brethren and sisters to enjoy the ministrations of Brother Paul Jones, and to encourage us in continuing the Lord's work in Hope Chapel. The happy fellowship and social intercourse were greatly appreciated and we are anticipating vigorous and faithful proclamation of God's word.

THE WILL OF GOD

WHEN you give in to God do not do so with a sigh. You would think to hear some say "Thy will be done" that they were submitting to the worst kind of evil. God is not your enemy: He is your Friend. God's will is everywhere, always, and only good.

C.A. Gilbert

OBITUARY

Bedminster, Bristol: It is with much sorrow that we record the passing of our Sister Collins. She was of a very quiet and retiring nature, but her influence will be sadly missed. We extend to Bro. Collins and Jean our sincere sympathy in the great loss they have sustained, and commend them to the gracious source of all comfort and consolation. Bro. John Partington conducted the funeral service.

L.D.

Ince-In-Mackerfield: With regret we report the death of brother William Robinson, a stalwart of long standing in the congregation, on his ninetieth birthday. Bro. "Bill" will be sorely missed for his walk of faith and for the wholehearted singing of his praises to his Father in heaven. We rejoice to have been privileged to share in the experience of his life, and his words and actions have left a lasting impression on those who met him. He was concerned for the church, saddened when it seemed to him that essential things were being neglected, and happiest when progress was being made in the Kingdom of Heaven. In spite of long suffering through illness he showed his faith constantly by his giving, and by his determination to be in his own seat despite on occasions having to walk miles to be there. He was a busy figure as he saw to what some believe to be the incidentals of our meetings—hymn books in their right places, a bible for everyone, chairs in straight, neat rows. His contribution to the life of the congregation at Ince is immeasurable. "Blessed are the dead, that die in the Lord."

CAUTION

When a fellow gets to thinking that he's really very wise,

And in picking out his head-gear it is hard to find his size;

When he feels that he's important in the running of the earth,

And he has his own opinion of exactly what he's worth;

It's then you want to watch him, but be careful, never trust,

For when anything's inflated, it is liable to bust

When a fellow gets to talking like he thinks big fellows talk,

And he gets a style of walking like he thinks big fellows walk;

When he feels that he's a wonder and is bigger than the boss,

Just strike a balance on him and you're bound to find a loss;

You will find he's really smaller than the little grain of dust,

But be careful, never handle, for he's liable to bust.

Frank Carleton Nelson

"Watch, therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming... You must be ready, for the Son of man is coming at an hour you do not expect." (Matt. 24:43,44).

THE time was the 19th of May, 1780. The place was Hartford, Connecticut. The day has gone down in New England history as a terrible foretaste of Judgement Day. For at noon the skies turned from blue to grey and by mid-afternoon had blackened over so densely that, in that religious age, men fell on their knees and begged a final blessing before the end came. The Connecticut House of Representatives was in session. And as some fell down and others clamoured for an immediate adjournment, the Speaker of the House, one Col. Davenport, rose to his feet. He silenced them and said these words: "The Day of Judgement is either approaching or it is not. If it is not, there is no cause for adjournment. If it is, I choose to be found doing my duty. I wish, therefore, that candles be brought."

Alistair Cook: "Letters from America"

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