

# *The* **SCRIPTURE STANDARD**

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

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## **THE BOOK OF MORMON TRUE OR FALSE**

MORMONS claim that the Book of Mormon was 'infallibly translated by the gift and power of God' and that it is therefore infallible and that Mormons, by contrast, can only accept the Bible as the word of God 'insofar as it is correctly translated'. If the Bible can only be accepted by Mormons 'insofar as it is correctly translated' then we assume that they accept all of the Book of Mormon because it is correctly translated. Yet it is full of errors and is not even a complete book. In the original edition of the Book of Mormon (1830) there is a page entitled "Preface" which consists of an explanation from Joseph Smith as to how thieves and rascals stole away 116 pages of the manuscript. This "preface", like many other things, is not to be seen in present editions of the Book of Mormon. Joseph Smith explains in this preface how that God has instructed him not to try and repeat the writing of these stolen 116 pages as it would just cause people to talk. If these 116 pages (and 116 pages is a big chunk of the book) contained words of importance (and most Mormons would reckon that even one word of the Book of Mormon was very important) then we have a Book of Mormon with 116 pages of important matter missing. The real reason for Joseph Smith's failure to reproduce the 116 stolen pages was that he could not. He could not possibly remember what he had written on them and, of course, if he tried to reproduce them and the thieves then produced the original 116, and the words on the pages did not exactly agree, then the fat was in the fire. Thus Joseph Smith stated that God, in a vision, told him not to try and reproduce them. If Joseph Smith had really been God's prophet or Seer then thieves would not have been allowed to prevent the publication of the complete Book of Mormon. It seems very careless of God to allow thieves to steal such a large part of such an important document.

One of the most striking evidences that the Book of Mormon was man-made is revealed in its lengthy quotations from the King James version of the Bible. It is a plain fact that many hundreds of passages in the Book of Mormon are taken straight from the Bible: e.g. large portions of Isaiah, the sermon on the Mount (according to Matthew) several verses from the writings of the apostle Paul, etc. The remarkable thing about these Bible quotations in the Book of Mormon is that they have all been taken from the King James Version. The King James Version, was of course translated by bishops of the Church of England in 1611 which is several centuries after the last part of the original Book of Mormon was supposed to have been written.

Think of it! Here is a book of which the greater part was supposedly written originally in the pure Egyptian language (1 Nephi 1:2) on plates brought by Nephi from the city of Jerusalem 600 years before Christ, later to undergo one transcription, and that by the prophet Mormon into "Reformed Egyptian" (Mormon 9:32) and then in the 19th Century purportedly to be 'infallibly' translated into English through the instrumentality of Joseph Smith by 'the gift and power of God', and Lo and Behold, when the translation is made the text contains large chunks of a version of the Bible made in the seventeenth century from Hebrew and Greek texts, which (in the case of the Hebrew text) had been handed down from generation to generation, copied and recopied hundreds of times. Obviously the man responsible for the writing of the Book of Mormon had the King James Version of the Bible in front of him when he was writing. If we accept the claim that the direct quotations in the Book of Mormon which are exactly the same as the King James Version were 'infallibly translated by the gift and power of God' then we are driven to the conclusion that the bishops of the Church of England infallibly translated these quotations into English from the Hebrew and Greek texts. But the scholarship of the world concurs that these translators were not infallible men and that they did err occasionally in their translation. Everyone, not just Mormons, accept the Bible in so far as it is correctly translated. However the writers of the Book of Mormon made the fatal mistake of including in the Book of Mormon (claimed to be the infallible revelation to Joseph Smith by the gift and power of God) some of the passages in the King James Version which contain some of the mistakes made by the translators. The truth is that the 'author of the Book of Mormon' simply copied into his 'manuscripts' portions (suitable to his purpose and to 'pad out' the book) of the Bible (King James Version). Take for instance Moroni 7:45 where, in reference to God the quotation from 1 Corinthians 13:5 of the King James Version is made, i.e. that God "is not easily provoked". The word 'easily' is not to be found in any Greek manuscript and indeed the word has been dropped in the Revised Version of the New Testament (1881) and from the American Standard Version. Adam Clarke states, "How the word 'easily' got into our translation is hard to say but has nothing in the original to countenance it". Those who wrote the Book of Mormon apparently were unaware of this and by using the word 'easily' betrayed the fact that they simply copied directly from the King James Version. Another similar example is in 3 Nephi 12-14 (Sermon on the Mount Retold) where Mormons would not only have us believe that Christ preached the Sermon on the Mount in America in the year 34 but that He preached it in the language of 1611 (in the language of the King James Version in fact). Not only this, but that He preached it with the known translation inaccuracies included. Thus 'openly' (Matt. 6:4-6 and 'for Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory' (Matt.6:13) are now admitted not to be part of the original manuscript and have been omitted from the Revised Version and subsequent translations. These words however appear in the Book of Mormon and, as quotations from the King James Version, prove that the writer of the Book of Mormon did not receive them from God but copied them out of the Bible. There is nothing wrong with copying words from the Bible provided we do not state that we received them directly from God through the Urim and Thummim or from gold plates written in "Reformed Egyptian". Mormons must explain how plates written originally 600 years before Christ could contain the text of the King James version of the Bible (nor written until 1611) including the italic words which interpolated into the text by the translators.

If you receive a visit from the Mormon missionaries ask them to explain this strange circumstance and listen carefully to the explanation. The glaring truth is that the Book of Mormon was concocted by man, not necessarily Joseph Smith, and is a fraud the magnitude of which is incapable of being quantified. The Book of Mormon has absolutely nothing to commend it and those who perpetrate it upon a humanity, already bewildered by false doctrines, will certainly answer to their Makers. Individual Mormons, are in the main, very orderly and courteous people but the Book of Mormon should be treated as a poison. The more one subjects the Bible to the very closest of scrutiny the more is one convinced of its divine origin but the more one subjects the Book of Mormon to similar scrutiny the more clearly is one convinced of human origin. Next issue, God willing, I shall mention some other inconsistencies of the book.

EDITOR.

# THE FORGOTTEN PLEA

(An appeal to the Association Churches of Christ (from the words of Thomas Campbell)  
Final Instalment

## IV CHRISTIAN MINISTRY

"That all that is necessary to the highest state of perfection and purity of the Church upon earth is, first, that none be received as members but such as having that due measure of Scriptural self-knowledge described above, do profess their faith in Christ and obedience to him in all things according to the scriptures; nor, secondly, that any be retained in her communion longer than they continue to manifest the reality of their profession by their temper and conduct. Thirdly, that her ministers, duly and Scripturally qualified, inculcate none other things than those very articles of faith and holiness expressly revealed and enjoined in the word of God. Lastly, that in all their administrations they keep close by the observance of all Divine ordinances, after the example of the primitive Church, exhibited in the New Testament; without any additions whatsoever of human opinions or inventions of men.

Lastly. That is any circumstantial indispensably necessary to the observance of Divine ordinances be not found upon the page of express revelation, such, and such only, as are absolutely necessary for this purpose should be adopted under the title of human expedients, without any pretense to a more sacred origin, so that any subsequent alteration or difference in the observance of these things might produce no contention nor division in the Church.

As for the Bible, they are but little beholden to it, they have learned little from it, they know little about it, and therefore depend as little upon it. Nay, they will even tell you it would be of no use to them without their formula; they could not know a Papist from a Protestant by it; that merely by it they could neither keep themselves nor the Church right for a single week. You might preach to them what you please, they could not distinguish truth from error. Poor people, it is no wonder they are so fond of their formula! Therefore they that exercise authority upon them and tell them what they are to believe and what they are to do, are called benefactors, These are the reverend and right reverend authors, upon whom they can and do place a more entire, and implicit confidence than upon the holy apostles and prophets; those plain, honest, unassuming men, who would never venture to say or do anything in the name of the Lord without an express revelation from Heaven, and therefore were never distinguished by the venerable titles of Rabbi or Reverend, but just simple Paul, John, Thomas, etc. These were but servants They did not assume to legislate, and, therefore, neither assumed nor received any honorary titles among men, but merely such as were descriptive of their office. And how, we beseech you shall this gross and prevalent corruption be purged out of the visible professing Church but by a radical reform, but by returning to the original simplicity, the primitive purity of the Christian institution, and, of course, taking up things just as we find them upon the sacred page. And who is there that knows anything of the present state of the Church who does not perceive that it is greatly overrun with the aforesaid evils? Or who that reads his Bible, and receives the impressions it must necessarily produce upon the receptive mind by the statements it exhibits, does not perceive that such a state of things is as distinct from genuine Christianity as oil is from water?

Support such ministers, and such only, as exhibit a manifest conformity to the original standard in conversation and doctrine, in zeal and diligence; only such as reduce to practice that simple original form of Christianity, expressly exhibited upon the sacred page.

## V CHRISTIAN MORALITY

"It would be strange, indeed, if, in contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, we should overlook those fruits of righteousness, that manifest humility, piety, temperance, justice, and charity, without which faith itself is dead, being alone. We trust we have not so learned Christ; if so be we have been taught by him as the truth is in Jesus, we must have

learned a very different lesson indeed. While we would, therefore, insist upon an entire conformity to the Scriptures in profession, that we might all believe and speak the same things, and thus be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment, we would, with equal scrupulosity, insist upon and look for an entire conformity to them in practice, in all those whom we acknowledge as our brethren in Christ. "By their fruits ye shall know them". "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Therefore whosoever heareth those sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man which built his house upon the sand. Woe unto you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, for ye say and do not". We therefore conclude that to advocate unity alone, however desirable in itself, without at the same time purging the Church of apparently unsanctified characters, even of all that cannot show their faith by their works, would be, at best, but a poor, superficial, skin-deep reformation. It is from such characters, then, as the proposed reformation, if carried into effect, would entirely deprive of a name and a place in the Church, that we have the greatest reason to apprehend a determined and obstinate opposition. And alas! there are very many of this description, and in many places, of considerable influence. But neither should this discourage us, when we consider the expressly revealed will of God upon this point, Ezek. xlv 6:9 with Matt. xiii:15,17; 1 Cor. v:6, 13, with many other scriptures, Nor, in the end, will the multitude of unsanctified professors which the proposed reformation would necessarily exclude, have any reason to rejoice in the unfaithfulness of those that either through ignorance, or for filthy lucre's sake, indulged them with a name and place in the Church of God. These unfaithful stewards, these now mistaken friends, will one day be considered by such as their most cruel and treacherous enemies. These, then, are our sentiments upon the entire subject of Church-reformation; call it latitudinarianism, or puritanism or what you please; and this is the reformation for which we plead."

BRIAN J. BOLAND.

## ASK

Lower and lower, dear Saviour, we pray,  
Losing the self-life still more ev'ry day;  
Weak and unworthy, we're looking above;  
Empty us, Jesus; then fill us with love.

"Now unto him that is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us" Ephesians 3:20.

ASK.....WHAT DO I ASK?.....DO I ASK FOR PRIVILEGE?

"Then came to him the mother of Zebedee's children with her sons, worshipping him, and desiring a certain thing of him. And he said unto her, What wilt thou? She saith unto him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom. But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, we are able, And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father. And when the ten heard it, they were moved with indignation against the two brethren. But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many. And as they departed from Jericho, a great multitude followed him" Matthew 20:20-29.

## ASK.....WHAT DO I ASK?.....DO I ASK FOR PRIVILEGE?

What words shall I use to describe the glory and wonder of God's most precious word? How can one find words that are adequate to portray the glorious truths, that seem to shine with a brilliance from this inspired volume. Time and again the words of God can be brought to mind, "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place wheron thou standest is holy ground" Exodus 3:5.

For our meditation this month, we are to consider this incident which happened as Jesus was going up to Jerusalem with his twelve disciples. Jesus said to his disciples:- "Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes and they shall condemn him to death, And shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify him: and the third day he shall rise again" Matthew 20:18-19.

"Then came"! One marvels at the audacity of the mother of the sons of Zebedee, and also of James and John, coming to the Lord Jesus, with such a request, at such a time of sorrow. Yet, how often our own experiences are not unlike the action of these three, on the top of the mountain one moment, worshipping God and enjoying a glorious fellowship, and then something is said or done, and all the joy in our hearts has suddenly vanished. Sometimes down in the valley, walking with our Lord in dark Gethsemane, and on to the place called Calvary, and "Then came"! And our minds are on other matters, and for a while forget Gethsemane and Calvary. Perhaps we frial children of the dust, ought not to be too hard on the two disciples and their mother. Let us thank our Heavenly Father for this event, for we can see much of ourselves, in the lives of the men and women of the Bible, and rejoice that the faults and failings of those near and dear to Him, are not hid, but can be clearly seen, and as a result we are also edified and rebuked.

Note how human the request:- "Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom" Verse 21. How like a mother, anxious shall we say, over anxious for the welfare for her two sons, James and John. Are you a Father? are you a Mother? Surely you too, would like your children to have a special place, in the Kingdom of God. A great deal no doubt had been heard of the Kingdom in the home of Salome, in all probability, the message of the forerunner of Christ, John the Baptist, "Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" Matthew 3:2 had been discussed. Then again, James and John, with the other disciples had been sent out to preach:- "The kingdom of heaven is at hand" Matthew 10:7. That kingdom came into existence on the day of Pentecost when about three thousand souls were added to the Lord's church. See Acts 2:41 But on this occasion the mother of Zebedee's children had her eyes fixed on a future kingdom, the heavenly kingdom, and a vision of one son on the right hand of the Lord, and the other on the left.

## ASK.....WHAT DO I ASK?.....DO I ASK FOR PRIVILEGE?

I may ask, you may ask, but we must expect the same answer:- "Ye know not what ye ask". May I quote J. H. Jowett, "There is little or no rebuke in speech or tone. There is no indignant retort that they are asking amiss; there is only a graciously tender answer that they do not know the content of their own request. He assumes that what they are seeking is near companionship in His sovereignty, and very gently He intimates that they cannot have counted the cost. "Ye ask for sovereignty alongside me, that ye might share in my dominion; ye know what is involved in such sovereignty: ye know not what ye ask! Ye think ye are asking for a garden, but in reality ye are asking for a battlefield, for my gardens are just transformed battlefields, and every owner of a garden has been a warrior on the field. Ye know not what ye ask!" That is the principle of the Master's teaching, Men ask for exalted summits, as though they were the immediate gift of the Saviour's hand, and they are reached by hard and toilsome roads".

J.H. Jowett, further said:- "Thrones are for those who are fit to sit on them; we arrive at our throne when we are ready to rule. Sovereignities come to us in grace and sacrifice. It is well to lift our eyes to the hills, to the sublime human sovereignities which fill the vision in the sacred word, and then in the strength of God's blessed grace and love set out for the difficult climb. For we have not to wait for our Lord's companionship until we reach a throne; He is

with us while we are aspiring to it. He does not wait the warrior's arrival when the battle is over and won; He is with us on the field. Our companionship does not begin at the summit; it begins at the base. It is an interchange of cups from the start, "I will come in and sup with him, and he with Me".

ASK.....WHAT DO I ASK?.....DO I ASK FOR PRIVILEGE?

Campbell Morgan said:— "The desires we express are well-born, and in so far they are worthy. But our very limitation makes it impossible for us to know whether they can be granted. God is always dealing with His own individually, but always also with a view to their place in the much larger whole of His complete and final purpose. It is patent, therefore, that one element which can never be omitted from true prayer is that of submission. We must believe when we pray, not only that God is generous. To believe that only, will make us doubt it, when He denies. We must believe also, in His perfect wisdom and justice. To do so will enable us to praise Him with equal sincerity whether He give or refuse to do so. That is the fulness of faith, and it is only as we so pray that we can find perfect rest and peace.

"Humble we must be, if to heaven we go;  
High is the roof there, but the door is low".

Alexander Whyte said:— "No man can humiliate you and clothe you with shame if you are always clothed with humility..... When you are next bidden to anything, begin to sit down in the lowest room: yes, in the very lowest room you can get. Begin at once to humble yourself everywhere, and in everything. Put on the sack-cloth of humility immediately and always. Set less and less store by your own talents, attainments, performances, and deserts; and set more and more store by all other man's talents, deserts and performances".

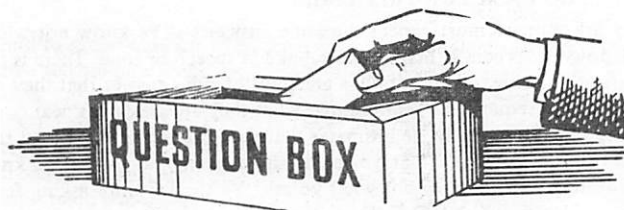
"Would'st thou be chief - then lowly serve;  
Would'st thou go up - go down;  
But go as low as e'er you will,  
The Highest has been lower still".

ASK.....WHAT DO I ASK?..... DO I ASK FOR PRIVILEGE?

"But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" Matthew 20:26-28.

May the Lord's richest blessing be your portion.

LEONARD MORGAN




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Conducted by  
Alf Marsden

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"WHAT is meant and what are the implications of 'Counting the Cost' before entering the Kingdom of God. Did the Ethiopian eunuch have time to do such a thing before his immersion"?

DURING the past few years it seems to me that within the church we have had many so-called 'conversions' which have not really been conversions at all. Many who have been immersed have had to be disciplined, and this within a very short time after immersion. Of these, a good

number have had to be denied fellowship because of their unrelenting acquiescence to the demands of the world which they seem never to have left anyway; others have just drifted back into the world because, as one such put it to me, "I didn't have any real idea of what would be expected of me".

This state of affairs is obviously very undesirable from several standpoints. As regards the individual, he/she will be in a worse position than if they had not known the truth. The church leaders will be sad because they will have seen the joy of immersion turned to bitter ashes. Furthermore, the morale of the group will be lowered because of the seeming victory of Satan over those ideals which they themselves hold dear. Perhaps it is timely that this question is asked. Maybe we shall learn something from studying this question, not only from what I may be able to say, but more particularly in our own individual study of it in the future.

### Counting the Cost

The questioner asks, 'what is meant by counting the cost?' In simple terms this means to sum up; to consider or esteem; to include. In practical terms it means that before we embark on a project, whatever that project may be, we must first make a reasonable assessment of whether we are able to carry it through, taking into account the resources we already have and other resources which we hope to obtain which will act as enabling agents. Now to reasonable people this may seem to be elementary practice, but my personal observations have convinced me that society is moving to the point when people in their secular dealings are no longer prepared to count the cost - if they want a thing they must have it - and if this is so then we should not be surprised if they take the same attitude when they view other relationships which they may be required to enter into. What concerns me, and I am sure other committed christians, is that people should attempt this loose and cynical attitude in their relationship with Christ. This should not happen, and we should see to it, as far as is possible, that it happens only very infrequently or not at all.

### The Implications of Counting the Cost.

That 'Counting the cost' is a well attested scriptural principle is not in doubt. Clear teaching on this can be found in Luke 14:25-33 when Jesus taught the multitudes and recounted two parables which we refer to as the Tower Builder and the Warring King, even though these are not scriptural titles as such.

Before Jesus spoke these parables he uttered some words which people down the ages have found very difficult to accept. Luke records him as saying, "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple". Luke 14:26,27.

These words of Jesus imply a veritable rejection of everything in our acceptance of him. How can we esteem Jesus, whom we have not seen, greater than the children who are our own flesh and blood and whom we are constantly in contact with? AND what of our lives? Those lives which we tend so assiduously. Are we prepared to give even our own lives for his sake? These are questions which the christians of long-standing has wrestled with throughout his christian experience. By what strange alchemy do we expect people who have no christian experience to sacrifice everything upon their confession of Christ as Saviour? We will return to this point later.

The parable of the Tower Builder actually mentions the principle of 'counting the cost' The main point that Jesus seems to be making is that the man who is going to build must take stock of the resources which he has in order to complete the job, and not to embark upon the building with resources sufficient only to finish the foundations. The spiritual implication seems to be consistent with what we see around us today. People accept the foundation, which is Christ, but are unable to build on that foundation because of their spiritual immaturity; or is it because they do not know the immediate resources on which they can call? It is true to say that given time spiritual maturity can develop through teaching; it is equally true to say, I think, that

a person who responds to the invitation to be immersed without any prior knowledge of what is expected of him may not allow us the time to teach him.

The parable of the Warring King gives us a further insight into the problem of counting the cost. One spiritual implication of this parable would seem to point to a person outside of Christ with limited resources of his own who might find himself fighting against a God who has illimitable resources. The person would then, after counting the cost, decide that he was in a situation where his resources would be inadequate to achieve what a God with illimitable resources could achieve for him. He would then come to his senses and agree with God while he was still able to. This would pre-suppose that the person already knew about God, His power, His love, and His ability to develop within the person the resources which would enable him to live the overcoming life.

#### SO what can we do?

Perhaps we have concentrated too much on getting people 'into the water' as the saying goes. There is a strong desire in some quarters for instant numerical success, but this may not always be the best way. I am only too aware that if a person sits through a gospel meeting for the first time and at the end of the meeting asks to be immersed that it is extremely difficult to refuse such a request, but would it not be better to talk with such a person and try to instil into him what was really meant by 'obeying the Lord?' May be we would have to spend one, two, three hours with such a person in an effort to increase his knowledge of what would realistically be expected of him after he was immersed. Perhaps this approach would be kinder than immersing him and then hitting him with the things he should be doing but which he had no prior knowledge that he would be expected to do.

I am not so naive as to think that you can teach a person all the christian virtues in a short period of time, but I do think that a person should know something in line with the following:—

- a) The sort of commitment that the Lord expects
- b) The resources that God will give in order for the commitment to be successful
- c) That he/she would be expected to meet with the saints in a given locality'
- d) That certain unchristian activities which the person might be engaged in should be replaced by christian virtues as the person grows in the Lord.

These things, and others, are all inherent in 'counting the cost'. I am sure that this should be critically examined in all of our minds so that we shall not have this depressing business of withdrawing fellowship from comparatively newly-born christians.

#### The Ethiopian Eunuch

The question is asked, "Would the Ethiopian eunuch have had time to count the cost before he was immersed?" Well, there are certain things we do not know concerning this situation, but there are certain facts that we do know which may help us.

In the first place we are told that the eunuch was reading the scriptures prior to Philip joining him; admittedly, there were certain things that he did not understand but he must have been gaining some knowledge. Secondly, the eunuch was travelling from Jerusalem to Gaza but we are not told how far he had travelled from Jerusalem when Philip, who was in Samaria, joined him. But the scripture says that after the incident Philip was found at Azotus which is on the coast West of Jerusalem. The distance from Jerusalem to Azotus is some forty miles over desert country, so if Philip joined himself to the chariot near to Jerusalem then he would have spent a considerable amount of time with the eunuch taking into account that the chariot could not travel very fast.

The point I am making is that there could reasonably have been a few hours in which Philip could teach the eunuch, hours which the eunuch could use for contemplation of those things which Philip was bringing before him. He could at least have fulfilled the condition that I am stating, i.e. that he had prior knowledge of what Christ would expect of him.



I am convinced that we need to count the cost before we commit ourselves. I contend that we need to know what commitment to Christ really means before we can hope to make a meaningful commitment. I feel sure that the eunuch understood what would be expected of him hence the rejoicing as he went on his way. We can rejoice also when we fully understand and know how to meet the just claims of Christ upon us.

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

## SCRIPTURE READINGS

JANUARY 1978

1-Deut. 30	Galatians 1
8-1 Kings 22:8-28	Galatians 2
15-Genesis 13	Galatians 3
22-Genesis 16	Galatians 4
29-Micah 6	Galatians 5

### BY DIVINE APPOINTMENT

WE do not need telling after reading the opening sentences of the letter to the Galatians that Paul had enemies working among his converts. His authority was being challenged. It was claimed that he appointed himself; that the real authority was with the apostles who had personal appointment from Jesus and were at Jerusalem. So not only did Paul have to assert emphatically his appointment by Jesus, but also to show that he had approval and agreement with the other apostles. News did not travel fast in those days or the other apostles would doubtless have vindicated Paul themselves. False teachers have no scruples being in league consciously or not with the Father of Lies. Circumcision and the other Mosaic rites were still in operation and had custom and tradition on their side, as well as the alleged support of the Scriptures. When Jerusalem was destroyed in AD 70 these points largely lost their force, but the letter was written about AD57. Therefore we read "an apostle not from men, neither through man" (1:1), and again "the gospel which was preached by me ... not after men ... but it came to me by revelation of Jesus Christ", (1:12). It was universally recognised that the other apostles preached the true gospel. So "those who were reputed to be pillars gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship"

(2:9). There can be little doubt that it was during Paul's stay in Arabia (1:17) the revelations or part of them came, and we surely connect this with 2 Cor. 12:1-5 ... "I will come to visions and revelations ... fourteen years ago ... caught up to the third heaven ... into paradise". Paul did not really need to vindicate himself in view of the experience of divine authority witnessed by the Galatians ... "He that supplieth the Spirit and worketh miracles among you" (3:5). Little wonder then that Paul asks why "ye are so quickly removing from him who called you" (1:6), and "who did bewitch you?" (3:1). Today it is still necessary to point out to some that Paul exercises in his writings his divine appointment, and has authority. "The things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord" (1 Cor. 14:37). Only when he disclaims that authority dare we regard them otherwise.

### Unity in Diversity

The natives of Galatia comprise elements of at least five races some of whom were certainly heathen practising the evil worship of Cybele and similar orgiastic cults. The Jews would be well represented in commerce there, and there would be Greeks and Romans. We need to consider the letter in the light of the Acts of Apostles. The astonishing experience of the strait-laced educated Pharisee Saul on the Damascus road recorded three times there, made of him a fellow-apostle to Galilean fishermen, a tax collector and others regarded by the educated as "unlearned and ignorant men" (Acts 4:13). Their origin made no difference in the sight of God or of Paul (see Gal. 2:6; Eph. 3:8; 1 Cor. 15:8&9). Chosen miraculously by God he knew he must be in harmony with those who were apostles before him, and therefore was with them going in and out for a short time (Acts 9:27-30). He must also have paid a special visit to be with Peter (Gal. 1:18 & 19) when he also saw James the Lord's brother. Sent away for safety

from Jerusalem he spent years at work in Antioch and elsewhere before again visiting Jerusalem. The account of this is in Acts 15. The Judaisers had been busy but there was no question of Paul's being out of harmony. He was more than with them in their anxiety for the poor (Gal. 2:10), and what he preached concerning Jesus was just what they preached and believed also (Acts 15:24 "no commandment"). So the church composed almost exclusively of Jews rejoiced that the Gentiles formerly regarded with hatred and contempt were turning to Christ (Acts 15:3; 8-11). But there remained an obstinate minority clinging to the restrictions and observances of the Mosaic Law, and falsely when away from Jerusalem claiming the backing of the apostles in Jerusalem. They were working among the churches whose origin was Paul's work. They were perverting the Galatian Christians with some success, doubtless, due to skilful pretensions. Thus the main purpose of the letter is to win the Galatian Christians back to their reliance upon the faith of the gospel and away from the idea that they could be saved by obeying Moses and have the outward appearance of religious zeal. They could thus avoid persecution by the Jews, and neglect the superb standard of the Christ-like life. However diverse their origins every Christian is involved in a common following of Christ. Their freedom from the legal requirements of the law puts them under deepest obligation to bring their whole lives into conformity with Christ. They would be finding already that the leading of His Spirit meant refusal of consent to fleshly lusts regarded by others as the ordinary "thing". The law certainly forbade their indulgence, but the gospel provided the grace and the power to bear the fruit of the spirit (5: 19-24). What a contrast - who would not in his right senses flee from one and embrace the other?

### The Threefold Message

First we have roughly in the first two chapters, Paul's defence of himself. He is concerned not with human ideas or plans for mankind, but with the same gospel he was not ashamed to take to the world's capital city (Romans 1:14-16). It is complete and perfect, requiring no change or revision to make it better. It is the one hope for the heathen and the Jew. He has the authority to set forth its

terms. All apostolic revelation is one. Secondly, in chapters 3 and 4 the superiority of the gospel is set forth against the Law which was fulfilled by the redemption provided by the sacrifice of the perfect man, taking the place of the sinner, accepting the curse of the Law while uncondemned by it (3:13 & 14). Lastly in chapters 5 & 6 the conditions upon which there is freedom from the Law are pressed home. We might epitomise the instructions in the thought - "Shall we do evil that good may come" (Rom. 3:7 & 8:6,1).

No! the highest attainable standard of behaviour consistent with loving one's neighbour as oneself in the assignment of a truly Christian life.

R. B. SCOTT

### DESIDERATA

GO PLACIDLY AMID THE NOISE & HASTE & REMEMBER WHAT PEACE THERE MAY BE IN SILENCE. AS FAR AS POSSIBLE WITHOUT SURRENDER be on good terms with all persons. Speak your truth quietly & clearly; and listen to others, even the dull & ignorant; they too have their story. Avoid loud & aggressive persons, they are vexations to the spirit. If you compare yourself with others, you may become vain & bitter; for always there will be greater & lesser persons than yourself. Enjoy your achievements as well as your plans. Keep interested in your own career, however humble; it is a real possession in the changing fortunes of time. Exercise caution in your business affairs; for the world is full of trickery. But let this not blind you to what virtue there is; many persons strive for high ideals, and everywhere life is full of heroism. Be yourself. Especially, do not feign affection. Neither be cynical about love; for in the face of all aridity & disenchantment it is perennial as the grass. Take kindly the counsel of the years, gracefully surrendering the things of youth. Nurture strength of spirit to shield you in sudden misfortune. But do not distress yourself with imaginings. Many fears are born of fatigue & loneliness. Beyond a wholesome discipline, be gentle with yourself. You are a child of the universe, no less than the trees & the stars; you have a right to be here. And whether or not it is clear to you, no doubt the universe is unfolding as it should. Therefore be at peace with God, whatever you conceive Him to be, and whatever your labours and aspirations, in the

noisy confusion of life keep peace with your soul. With all its sham, drudgery and broken dreams, it is still a beautiful world. Be careful. Strive to be happy.

Found in Old Saint Paul's Church, Baltimore.  
Dated 1692.

### JOHN 3:16

God .....The Greatest Lover  
So Loved.....The Greatest Degree  
The World .....The Greatest Company  
That He Gave.....The Greatest Act  
His Only Begotten .....  
Son .....The Greatest Gift  
That Whosoever .....The Greatest Opportunity  
Believed.....The Greatest Simplicity  
In Him .....The Greatest Attraction  
Should Not Perish.....The Greatest Promise  
But.....The Greatest Difference  
Have.....The Greatest Certainty  
Eternal Life .....The Greatest Possession

## NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

**Kentish Town:** Anniversary meetings were held on Saturday, October 8th. It is the 106th year of the building. We express our thanks to God for permitting continuance of its use and our desire to continue with the same plea, seeking His blessing. We are grateful to those who joined us showing their interest and giving encouragement, and to Brother Leonard Daniell for serving as speaker both on Saturday and on Sunday. A useful discussion in the afternoon preceded tea when between 40 and 50 enjoyed social intercourse, and the evening meeting.

Additionally we had the services of Brother Steve Kearney from Dublin who preached every evening from Wednesday 12th to Sunday 16th. 5,000 leaflets were distributed some with personal invitation. We had good support from Tunbridge Wells church in particular and profited by the capable and interesting addresses of the preacher. Brother

Leonard Daniell gave us also five days of service in the following week in an effort to follow up the meetings. The help and services of our visitors and the support of the members has been much appreciated. R. B. SCOTT

**Kitwe, Zambia:** Born to Chester and Angela Woodhall, who are 'Old Paths' Missionaries in Zambia, a baby boy. on July 30th 1977. Ian Matthew (a brother to Frankie and Kim). Also had 262 baptisms in the same month (July). P. O. Box 2297. Kitwe, Zambia.

**Tranent, East Lothian:** It was with great joy that the church meeting at Tranent witnessed a young woman accepting her Lord in baptism on Wednesday 26th October. Karen Colgan, Sister Karen is the wife of Bro. John Colgan Jnr.

Bro. James Grant was labouring with us during the last two Sundays in October, and so it was a fitting end to the time he spent with us at Tranent.

JOHN COLGAN, Sec.

### MARRIAGE

On Saturday 8th October 1977 in the Meeting Hall of the Church of Christ, Cluny Terrace, Buckie, Sister Ruth Pirie eldest daughter of Bro and Sis. William Pirie, Buckie, to Bro. Alan John Moyes, eldest son of Bro. and Sis. Ian Moyes, Kirkcaldy. Bro. William Mair officiated.

May the Lord richly Bless them.

JOHN GEDDES, Sec.

### THANKS

Bro. and Sis. John McLuckie, Haddington, wish to take this opportunity to thank all the brethren who have been so considerate during the past few weeks. Sis. McLuckie has received so many cards flowers and enquiries about her progress after her operation that she is unable to thank all well-wishers personally. The prayers of the brethren have been a great comfort at this time.



**GROWING OLD**

The poet Robert Browning, in one of his poems said, about "growing old", that "the best is yet to be". Christians should regard life like this, and step by step we should daily be ascending, as it were, a Jacob's ladder bringing us nearer to the gates of Heaven; for, as the Apostle Paul said, he had a "desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better". It must be remembered that this great apostle was speaking from firsthand experience - because, in his vision, he had been "caught up to the third heaven".

It matters not how long we live.

**BUT HOW.** In short, it is quality of life that counts (regardless of what particular hour we enter the vineyard).

The Lord will support Christians all the day long of this troublous life, and it is good to know that "underneath are the everlasting arms".

He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most high shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. Sister R. PAYNE, Reading.

THE cynic is one who never sees a good quality in a man, and never fails to see a bad one.

**CORRESPONDENCE CLASS**

**Lesson 7. ACTS 15:1-35.**

- 1 Since circumcision was a rite of the covenant made with Abraham why did the men from Judea insist on circumcision 'after the custom of Moses'?
- 2 Outline the speeches of (1) Peter, (2) Barnabas and Paul, (3) James.
- 3 Explain the fulfilment of the prophecy quoted by James.
- 4 Who were present at this conference?
- 5 On what authority did they circulate the epistle.
- 6 Why did the Apostles at Jerusalem send Judas and Silas to Antioch since Paul and Barnabas were returning there?

Answers, which should be written on one side of the paper only, should be returned to Edward Jess, 34 Charles Street, Penicuik, Midlothian, Scotland.

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