

# The SCRIPTURE STANDARD

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

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## EXCERPT FROM 'MESSIAH'S MINISTRY'

By T. H. Milner

### THE ORDER

"THIS I say, lest any man should beguile you with enticing words, for though I be absent in the flesh, yet I am with you in the spirit, joying and beholding your order and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ" (Col. 2; 4, 5.)

1. The Lord's people have been beguiled with the enticing words of those who affirm that there is no divinely specified order in the Church of Christ. Some will have it that there is no order indicated in Scripture whatever, some that it is merely circumstantial, and, therefore, various; that it is merely human, and is not to be imitated; and others that there is a divine order intimated, but that it was not intended to be permanent. Let us view these assertions in the light of the following facts:

2. That an order is indicated appears from the application of terms of order to the churches. There is *taxis*—order, and *tasso*, *diatasso*, *tithemi*, and, *kathistemi*—to set, ordain, appoint, place, institute or constitute. If there be no order, it is not from want of terms indicative of it.

3. That order is intimated is unquestionable from the apostle's expressed gladness in beholding that of the church in Colosse, and from his commanding the disorderly disciples in Corinth to "do all things decently, and in order." Now, this word (*taxis*) is a most express term. It denotes not merely the absence of confusion, but order in series, course, or succession. Luke 1; 8, 9 contains it in saying that "Zacharias executed the priest's office before God in the ORDER of his course, according to the custom of the priest's office." And Heb. 5: 10 names that Jesus was "called of God a high priest, after the Order of Melchisedec." It is well known that a particular rank or course is thus meant, and that in the doing of the priestly work there was an exact order in the service. Note, then, that the Corinthian church was commanded to let all things be done in order—that is, one thing after another, in due course. The liberty of ministry obtaining among the brethren had been so far abused as that they required to be told to "prophecy one by one." When the church came together, "everyone had a psalm, a doctrine, a tongue, a revelation an interpretation." The apostle interposed no objection to this; he only said that all was to be done decently and peacefully to edification, and in order, (1 Cor. 14: 26-40).

4. That the order of the churches was divine appears from 1 Cor. 12: 18-28, where the apostle says that, "God hath set (*tithemi*) every one of the members in the body as it hath pleased him," and carries the analogy to the body of Christ, affirming each disciple "a member in particular", and that, "God hath set in the church first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that, miracles, then gifts of healing, helps, governments, and diversity of tongues". This same word the apostle uses with respect to himself in 1 Tim. 1: 12, chapter 2 verse 7; and 2nd Tim. 1: 11, where he says the Lord put him into the ministry, ordained him, appointed him a preacher and a teacher. And so also we find it in Acts 20: 28, where the elders are said to have been made overseers by the Holy Spirit. The placing, appointing, and constituting of the members of the body we thus see to be of God. This order then, is Divine.

5. That this Divine order is established by the apostles is also apparent from Acts 6: 3, where in case of the appointment of the table-servers the order was given, (*kathistemi*)—the setting apart was performed by the twelve Agreeably to this we find *diatasso* in 1 Cor. 7: 17; 9: 14; 11: 34 and 16: 1, where we read in Paul's words: "As God has distributed to every man, as God hath called every man, so let him walk, and so ordain I in all churches." Again, the apostle says, "So hath the Lord ordained" as himself had taught respecting the support of the evangelists. Things still deficient in the church, he said he would set in order when he came. Concerning the collection for the saints, as he had given order to the churches at Galatia so were the Corinthians to do.

6. That the order was uniform and universal is deduced from the statement that the apostle ordains so in all the churches. The order given to the disciples in Galatia was to be the rule for those in Corinth. 1. Cor. 4: 17 intimates that Timothy was sent to bring the brethren into remembrance of the apostle's "ways which were in Christ as he taught everywhere in every church." For these reasons, the only answer given to the objector to the apostle's teaching or action was, "let him know that we have no such custom, neither the churches of God" (1. Cor. 11: 16). This was an end of all controversy; it was the answer to all cavillers.

7. That the order established was permanent is demonstrated, first, by the commands given to the evangelists, such as Timothy and Titus, to teach, ordain, and set in order as instructed by Paul (1 Tim. 1: 3; Tit. 1: 5); and, second by the injunctions given to the churches to keep the ordinances as received, (1 Cor. 11: 2; 2 Thes. 2: 15: 3; 6). And it is to be recollected that when Paul says, "I praise you brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances as I delivered them unto you", or when he commands them to "stand fast, and hold the traditions which they had been taught, whether by apostolic word or letter," matters of faith and of practice are alike included. A *paradosis*, is simply a deliverance. In one of these quotations our translators have rendered the word, ordinance and in the other, tradition, the meaning being that which is handed down or ordained. And this is very clear when, in contrast with these injunctions respecting the observance of the apostolic traditions, the express commands as to the non-regard of all non-apostolic traditions are borne in mind. The Saviour told the Jews that by the traditions of their elders they made void the commands of God, and Paul cautioned the Colossians to beware, lest any man might spoil them through philosophy and vain deceit, after the traditions of men, after the elements of the world, and not after Christ. By this twofold class of injunctions, one enjoining the non-observance of mere human traditions or ordinances, and the other authoritatively commanding the keeping of the apostolic, it is unquestionably proved that the order at first established was intended to be permanent.

8. But, notwithstanding that it is thus established, that the Scriptures intimate church order, divine in its origin, apostolic in its institution, universal in practice, and perpetual in obligation, yet it may still be asked how far does this order go? What are its particular prescriptions? Does it extend to all the ordinances? Is it stated with such formal exactness as was the order of the first economy? Does it not leave arrangements to the wisdom of the brethren? To this our reply is, that arrangements under the strict law of the first institution were left to the wisdom of the administrators; only they were to show their wisdom in arranging to order. So, now, the order cannot be kept unless the priesthood—the brotherhood—arrange, so as to observe the "all things commanded". That the order is not formulated in the New Testament with such repetition as in the Old, is evident, but that it is less clear or exact, we do not allow. But, indeed, the like plan of institution was observed in both cases; a pattern—type, was shown, and specifications were given, conjointly with the command,—"See that thou make all things according to the pattern" (Heb. 8: 5). So with the law, but not less so with the faith; for a model church was planted at Jerusalem; from it members elsewhere were multiplied, so that it was said to the brethren in remote regions, "You became followers—*mimetees*, imitators, of the churches of God, which in Judea are in Christ Jesus" (1 Thess. 2: 14). And with the example of the first ecclesia for their imitation, they had also from the apostles the form, the pattern, the type of doctrine—so that with these, and the injunction to observe all things whatsoever the Messiah had commanded His apostles to teach His disciples to observe, precisely the same mode of institution was adopted in both economies. If the apostles' manner of stating their deliverances differ from that of Moses, their style is certainly not less clear, and the difference otherwise arises from the number of ordinances being much smaller, the ritual less cumbrous. but still there are ordinances and all particulars are given as to their names, numbers, meaning.

subjects, and administration. That the order enjoined extends to the whole of them is plain from the injunctions to remember the apostle **IN ALL THINGS**, and keep the ordinances—not some of them only—as delivered, but to let **ALL THINGS** be done “to edification”—“decently and in order”.

9. But, meantime, it is proper to observe, that while there is no liberty granted the churches to deviate from the apostolic order in the slightest degree, none to change the ordinance, none to leave them unobserved, none to institute others, and none to adopt such a form of worship or ministry as would in any respect prevent the due fulfilling of the divine commands by the brethren, yet there is a freedom of action permitted in the new institution which did not obtain in the old, arising, of course, from the fact that the ancient economy was a yoke of bondage, while the service of the present is one of freedom. **BUT THE LIBERTY WHEREWITH CHRIST HAS MADE HIS PEOPLE FREE IS NOT LIBERTY TO DISOBEY HIMSELF.** This were absurd, though this is very much the prevailing notion of Christian freedom.

—Selected by Sam. Wilson.

## THINGS MOST SURELY BELIEVED AMONGST US

### 1: The Church and its Worship

**THE** God we worship is a God of order. Looking at any of God's handiwork the unbiased mind is bound to admit there is perfection on every hand; by perfection we mean, that it cannot be improved upon; everything God has done and made reveals perfection.

In creation we read “the earth was without form and void,” but when God's Spirit moved across the waters light appeared “and God saw that it was good”. As the act of creation continues the same thought is expressed—“God saw that it was good”—and in the final act of creation, man appeared. We read, “And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good.”

When man sinned and ruined God's earth, Noah was given instruction on how to build a ship. It is said that shipbuilders have never improved upon the specifications God gave Noah in building this ship: perfection and attention to detail were the hallmarks of the vessel that saved Noah and his family in the disastrous flood that destroyed the rest of mankind.

Also if we turn to the instructions given to Moses in building the tabernacle we notice the same attention to detail as to what was required. “See that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed thee in the mount” (Heb. 8:5) and neither Noah nor Moses dare depart from that divine decree.

It is our purpose in these articles to affirm the same principles in the building of that spiritual ark, that spiritual tabernacle, the church. We are not referring here to the church in any district, for all have their imperfections; but we are referring to the Divine institution Christ spoke of when he said to Peter (Matt. 16:18) “Upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it,” that pattern shown us in the scriptures.

In our study of the subject of the Divine Pattern we want to present to our readers three lines of thought: (1) The Lord's Supper; (2) Non-use of Instrumental Music; and (3) Our Source of Income. We do so because it is on these three things that we differ most from those around us. There are other points of course, but for the purpose we have in mind—The Church and its Worship—we hope these will suffice.

#### (1) The Lord's Supper

This feast, which is the centre of worship of the Churches of Christ, was instituted by the Lord himself (Matt. 26: 26-29; Mark 14: 22-25; Lk. 22: 14-21; 1st Cor. 11: 23-26). It was practised by the early Christians on the first day of the week (Acts 2: 41-47; Acts 20: 7; 1st Cor. 16: 1-2). We see by these passages of scripture that the early Christians were those who had “gladly received his word” and had been baptised, and that these brethren met on the first day of the week for worship, which consisted of four elements: doctrine, fellowship, breaking of bread, prayer, not necessarily in that order. We also see from Acts 20 that preaching was included and 1st Cor. 16 tells us that a collection was taken up to raise funds for the church's work, which in those days consisted largely of help for poor saints. It is significant that this feast was one of only two ordinances our Lord left for his church; the other of course was baptism, and they both speak of his death, burial and resurrection.

It is in this feast that we differ so much from these religious bodies around us. Catholicism has lifted it up to a great ritual, endowing it with almost magic substance, with the High Mass, doctrine of trans-substantiation etc. The Established Church makes Confirmation a condition of acceptance to the feast, whilst others leave it out altogether. Most bodies have, when they do observe the feast, what we call an "Open Table", that is, admitting the unimmersed to partake, a practice that that British churches have long opposed, taking strong exception to those who have not obeyed the Lord partaking at his table. Briefly this is the position: the Lord's Table for the Lord's People, and for the Lord's People only. We repeat what we wrote in the previous article: "The New Testament knows nothing of Guest Communicants or 'neither invite nor debar' attitude; those who gladly received his word and were baptised were added to His Church and partook of the elements of his death, burial and resurrection." Who else, we would ask, has any right?

We contend most earnestly that the act of baptism is placed at the door of the church. How can those who have professed no faith in that first act of acknowledgement of His supreme sacrifice, expect to have the right to observe the second? Some might contend that they are as good as those who have been baptised; that may be so: but mere goodness is not the qualification required, it is obedience that counts. Take the case of the rich young ruler (Matt. 19: 16-22): who of us has a better character than that young man? The account in Mark tells us that when the Lord saw him he loved him. What a tribute! And yet he missed the way of eternal life for lack of obedience—like many other quite good folk to-day, they want heaven but on their own terms. Or again, take the case of Cornelius (Acts 10): here also was a man of such a character that it is recorded that he was "A devout man, feared God with all his house, gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always." Yet, as good as he was (and many of us could do to be as good as he was) he had to obey and be baptised before he could be numbered with the elect of God. So again we say with the authority of scripture, how can those who have refused to accept the terms of salvation laid down by our Lord Himself, expect to be accepted at the table of the Lord whom they are consistently rejecting? We bear in mind it is not our table but the Lord's, and the Apostle Paul in 1st Cor. 11: 27-29, warns against eating and drinking the cup of the Lord unworthily, for he who so does "eateth and drinketh condemnation unto himself, not discerning the Lord's body". We feel here the words of the Old Testament prophet might be heeded (1st Sam. 15: 22): "Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams."

## (2) The Non-use of Instrumental Music

The first question often asked by visitors to our meetings is, "Why don't you have music?" It has become so common in places of worship that to come across one that doesn't use it creates quite a surprise, yet it need not do. We often counter the question by asking, "Why use it?" That puts the onus where it belongs—on the enquirer: often he cannot give you a reason, only vague generalities such as, "Everybody else does". The fact is that this non-use in our worship is no fad, but a genuine conviction that it is not desired of God, which, to us, is more important than any man-made ideas as to what, or what not, we ought to use.

It is a fact of history, as well as of the New Testament, that the early church did not use instrumental music until about the sixth century when it was introduced by the Catholic church.

However, to turn to our principle "What saith the scriptures?", we invite our readers to turn up the following passages: Eph. 5: 19 "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord"; Col. 3: 16: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." No mention here or anywhere else of mechanical worship; but there is impressed "heart worship". We invite the reader to note, in passing, the type of vocal praise here mentioned: psalms, typical of Jewish worship; hymns, characteristic of western worship; and spiritual songs, typical of our coloured brethren's form of worship. So even here we see the infinite attention to detail so characteristic of the things of God.

Now let us look at some of the practical reasons for our non-use of instrumental music. The most popular instruments used are organs and pianos. These require skilled players: inevitably the qualification essential is the ability to handle these instruments; Christian qualifications take second place.

We can vouch for an instance when a choirmaster of a church had to apologise to a visiting preacher for not being able to use the organ, as the young lady who usually played it was not available—she was out courting! And for another instance when the writer was informed that at a gospel mission at a local church the choirmaster had been converted; as the gentleman in question had been the choirmaster for upwards of three years, it seems that the church's worship had been in charge of an unconverted man for that period! Which proves the inconsistency of departing from the Divine pattern: one cannot imagine a church of Christ having an unconverted leader of the singing in charge of their worship, for the very nature of the office demands a wide knowledge of the church hymn book and tunes.

**(3) Our Source of Income**

Again we quote Scripture (1st Cor. 16: 1-2): "Now concerning the collection: as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye: upon the first day of the week let everyone of you lay by him in store as the Lord hath prospered him." No tithes, no percentages, just freewill offerings according to our means and ability and, we would add, according to our willingness. We recall the story of a coloured brother who was inviting the congregation to contribute and put it this way: "We will now take up the collection, so kindly contribute of your means and not your meanness!" It was a practice in our early days, and I trust still is, that if for any reason we were not able to attend the Lord's table at any time, we saved our collection for the following week, so that the Lord's cause did not suffer financially by our absence. We would emphasise, the early church did not, indeed had no need to, raise money by Sales of Work, Bazaars, Organ Recitals, Raffles and Sweepstakes, as is the common practice among certain religious bodies. Another point we would make: that of not taking money from the unimmersed, the principle being "First give yourself and then offer your gift." We as churches have never believed in taking money from all and sundry, this is wrong and ought never to be allowed in our communities, unfortunately some churches are slipping in this matter, and we would warn of the danger: once you start accepting money from non-members it will be increasingly difficult to deny them other privileges; as we have cause to know from personal experience this can happen and can have disastrous consequences on church life, especially where influential families are concerned.

The principle behind all our giving should be, "Freely ye have received, freely give." If you have not received the gospel how can you freely give? In fact, what right have you to give? Searching questions we know.

A brother once asked an elder's advice on this question of giving, and the elder's advice is worth noting. The question was "How much shall I give?" The reply was, "Give until it hurts"; the young brother, not being satisfied with that rather cryptic reply, said, "And then what?" "Keep on giving" was the answer he got. A faith that costs nothing gives nothing, does nothing, and achieves nothing.

**H. BAINES**

The above article, and subsequent articles are the substance of Addresses given at Aylesbury and elsewhere in this area, and published by request.

**SCRIPTURE READINGS**

**APRIL 1936**

- 3—Isa. 52:13 to 53:12      Luke 23:26-46
- 10—Job 19:14-29          Luke 23:47 to 24:12
- 17—Zechariah 13          Luke 24:13-35
- 24—Hosea 6                Luke 24:36-53

**CONCLUDING A WONDERFUL BOOK**

EVERY Christian must be profoundly thankful that God put it into the heart of Dr. Luke to gather the truth about the life of our Saviour which he has given to us, though intending it rather for an eminent friend and believer. The

name Theophilus means God-lover. How very suitable, for lovers of God revel in the inspired pages, and will never exhaust their depths. There are some striking points peculiar to this gospel in the chapters we are reading this month.

First let us look at the information given in 23:27-32. We suppose that normally there would be spectators at a crucifixion—not a rare occurrence doubtless at that very place. Crowds gather at horrifying sights. Only Luke records that a great company including many women followed the doleful and cruel procession of soldiers and victims, and the women lamented Him unshamedly. The soldiers had compelled Simon of Cyrene to take the load of His cross from off His bruised and lacerated back, so He was able to respond to these expressions of sympathy and love.

In His noble and holy mind there was an intense realisation of the results of the injustice and hatred being wreaked upon Him, results inevitable when such wickedness comes to fruition. Evil men were to wax worse and worse in the doomed city. It could be compared to a green tree then, but would become utterly barren of every good quality; hence His solemn and sorrowful warning.

Then Luke records those wonderful words asking for forgiveness of His tormentors. It was customary to place the rough timbers of the cross upon the ground, to stretch the victim out upon it and drive home the nails, then to raise it and set it up in the hole prepared for it in the ground. It must have been at that time that Jesus prayed. How literally He carried out His own instruction—"Pray for those that despitefully use you" (Matt. 5:44). If He in those moments of indescribable anguish thought of their sin and their fate, how readily should His people forgive one another and forget their injuries. "The beloved physician" had doubtless observed the apostle Paul's reaction under persecution, and endured it himself, with this "mind of Christ." An eyewitness of the incident must have recounted the words and seen also the inscription in the three languages.

All the evangelists mention the two robbers, who at first joined in the mockery of the onlookers, but what a light is thrown upon the Saviour's character and behaviour by the account of the repentance of one of them. The bearing of the sacred sufferer was affecting those who watched. That had made Pilate strive to save Him. Now the robber saw and believed. Death was staring him in the face and he knew his own guilt. He must have known something of the life of Jesus and therefore His innocence. It dawned upon him that in spite of appearances here was a king. Oh, the thrill of the answer to his appeal! The gracious assurance of "paradise" must have lightened his dying moments, and Jesus was conscious of the faith of that wicked man. "They made His grave with the wicked" and "He was numbered with the transgressors" (Isa. 55:9 & 12).

Finally, in his account of the crucifixion Luke gives us the Saviour's closing words, quoting from Psalm 31:5 and expressing the confidence embodied in the words recorded by John, "It is finished."

In Mark's gospel we have a reference to the manifestation of Jesus to "two of them as they walked on their way into the country" (16:12). We are glad that Luke's narrative of this has been preserved to us. The details teach us valuable lessons, and so vivid is the story that we are tempted to say that perhaps Clopas told it to him during the time Luke was in Jerusalem. It shows what

hopelessness and despair had fallen upon those who continued to love the crucified one. It seems they had not the faintest remembrance of what He had told them so often—that He would rise again. Again and again He must have instructed them about the scriptures which foretold His death. However, we are in no position to judge them. How slow are we to appreciate what has been done for us in the work of Jesus, or to take up our responsibilities! How often do we forget the spiritual realities because of the world which presses on us?

We know that the wonders Jesus wrought and the expectations of worldly triumph associated with the Messiah made it nearly impossible for them to believe that He could be ignominiously put to death. What they had now witnessed made them forget what Jesus had said and the prophets had foretold. The remedy is to know and believe the scriptures, and never absent ourselves from the breaking of the bread, recognising His presence with us there. Let it never be a mere formality, but a gathering where our hearts burn within us.

The last words of the gospel place still further emphasis upon the understanding of the scriptures, which are undoubtedly those of the Old Testament as we have it today. They form also in the account of the ascension a fitting introduction to their sequel—the Acts of the Apostles.

R. B. SCOTT.

### QUESTIONS FOR CHRISTIANS

1. Does your milkman know you are a Christian? Does your paper boy know that you are a member of the Lord's church?

2. If you had to go to heaven on the testimony of your next-door neighbour, could you make it?

3. When you became a Christian did the church gain a member on whom to depend?

4. Which appeals to you most on Sunday: Bible study, business meetings in support of the church's welfare; or your favourite pleasures which you allow yourself?

5. If you should be called from the land of the living, is there any business in the Master's kingdom left unfinished by you—forgiving someone, helping to restore a backslider, etc.?

6. If a friend were to ask you what he should do to be saved, could you with your New Testament show him?

7. If the Lord were to pay a sudden visit to your house for a few days, are there any bad habits you would have to change while He was with you?

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## 'GIVE ATTENDANCE TO READING'

AMONG the many things committed to man with which he may glorify God is his mind. It is by his faculties of thought that man is most clearly distinguished from the rest of the animal creation, so that of him only is it said, "Let us make man in our image." Physical abilities, powers of co-ordination and endurance, though frequently remarkable, are not the most significant side of man's nature. Our age of materialistic emphasis often leads us to glory in the culture of physical strength, form and beauty to the neglect of man's mental and spiritual possibilities. It is true that the Word teaches us to be concerned with the health of the body and leads us to believe that the abuse of the body is sin. But this is because it is the "temple of the spirit." Its well-being is important because it is a trust of God. That is why those body-consuming habits which so clearly bespeak the carnal appetite should be so abhorrent to the Christian. When the body through its carnal desires dictates to the spirit in the Christian, God and reason are dethroned. The baser nature rules.

It is for these reasons that the mind or spirit of the Christian needs to feed on those things which can develop and strengthen it. Just as some devote regular hours every day to physical culture, the Christian needs to devote much time regularly to the culture and refinement of his higher nature. A man cannot be spiritually strong who is mentally lazy. The intellect and moral faculties of man can no more be strong without exercise than can the body.

### Read God's Book

Since the Christian has been given the perfect spiritual gymnastic equipment in the inspired word, there is little reason for his not growing steadily, flexing and stretching his spiritual "muscles" on "the sincere milk (and meat) of the word."

There are some suggestions we would make, however, to him who seeks to grow by giving "attendance to reading." Some seem to think that when one has read and committed many verses of the Scripture to memory, he is an "authority" on the Word and "really can quote it." Reading, memorising and quoting it is one thing and understanding is quite another. We frequently need to be brought up short with the question put to the eunuch. "Understandest thou what thou redest?"

### "Sound the Depths"

May we suggest first, to those who would sound the depths of God's word, that you secure a translation of the Bible in our language. The Bible is the "living" word and God did not intend that we should fail to feel its life and vitality because of words and phrases which are not a part of our language. Venerable as the King James translation may be, widely as it still is used, it is still in the language of people who lived 350 years ago—a language including many words that have seen a change, even reversal of meaning in some instances. There is as much need for us to read God's word to us in our current language as there was for the subjects of King James to read it in their language over three centuries ago. A recent translation which this writer has found very helpful is that of J. B. Phillips. He has attempted, rather successfully in the opinion of many readers, to put the original message of the Greek and Hebrew into the more informal, easily understood expressions of our day. Another translation which has enjoyed wide scholarly acclaim is the Amplified New Testament. If you prefer more formal translation, either the American Standard or the Revised Standard is of generally recognised worth. But of course, the main thing, whichever translation you use, is to read the Word with the respect and regularity which the inspired message of God deserves.

Read it, pray over it, commit as much of it as you can to memory—in short, make it yours. Regard it as the Father's message to you, his child. Above all, do not do it the injustice of regarding it merely as a selection of proof texts or an arsenal of weapons with which to war and wrangle with others who honestly differ from you. Such was never intended to be the use of the Bible. It does not "prove our doctrine," it IS our doctrine, if we properly regard and respect it.

### Read Other Viewpoints

In addition to reading and studying the Bible, we should avail ourselves of the wealth of other material which can enlarge our horizons and give us perspective. Some argue that "the Bible is enough. I don't need to read anything else." We notice that many who do, however, spend considerable time with their newspaper and non-religious magazines. We are not opposed to everything in these materials, but how much time is given in consuming the "news" (frequently mere scandal and sensation tripe) that ought to be given to more weighty and challenging material.

There are many excellent books of history, literature, sermons, commentaries, religious periodicals, etc., which can broaden the Christian's outlook and help to make him see the world around him, the "field" of his endeavour. Don't be afraid to read material that differs from the viewpoint of those around you. No one has a corner on the truth. Only the sectarian thinks he has. Many religious periodicals published by men who differ somewhat from your own convictions, or those of your particular "circles," may yet contain vital truths you need.

When we insulate ourselves and refuse to hear anyone who differs from us, we run the risk of missing truth which "our brethren," because of the necessary limitations of any "part" of the entire family of God, might not possess. Open up your mind and heart to truth wherever you find it. Don't let preachers or parties be your standard of judgment. Rely rather on the Divine Word itself.

Finally, no amount of attendance to reading can by itself accomplish for us what we need. We ought to spend more of our time "reading on our knees." Let us read for knowledge and pray for the wisdom which "God giveth liberally."

## THE WORLD TO COME

THE emphasis Christianity lays upon the world to come differs from the doctrines of social dreamers. Here lies its immense superiority to everything else within the sphere of human thought or experience. When Christ arose from death and ascended into heaven He established forever three important facts, namely that this world has been condemned to ultimate dissolution, that the human spirit persists beyond the grave and that there is a world to come.

It has been cited as a flaw in Christianity that it is more concerned with the world to come than with the world that now is, and some timid souls have been fluttering about trying to defend the faith of Christ against this accusation as a mother hen defends her chicks from the hawk.

Both the attacks and the defence are wasted.

No-one who knows what the New Testament is about will worry over the charge that Christianity is otherworldly. Of course it is, and that is precisely where its power lies!

Christianity, which is faith in Christ, trust in His promises and obedience to His commandments, rests down squarely upon the Person of Christ. What He is, what He did and what He is doing—these provide a full guarantee that the Christian's hopes are valid. Christianity is what Christ says it is. His power becomes operative toward us as we accept His words as final and yield our souls to believe and obey.

Christ is not on trial; He needs no character witnesses to establish His trustworthiness. He came as the eternal God in time's low tabernacle. He stands before no human tribunal, but all men stand before Him now and shall stand for judgment at the last. Let any man bring the faith of Christ to the bar of man's opinion, let him try to prove that the teachings of Christ are in harmony with this philosophy or that religion, and he is in fact rejecting Christ while seeking to defend Him. *Ipse dixit*, He has said it, is sufficient answer to all criticisms of Christ's claims.

Christianity has over the last half century been badly shaken by the criticisms of certain social philosophers. These gentlemen have assumed the basic soundness of the present world system. With a few improvements here and there a prosperous, healthy and peaceful society could be established right here on this earth, and to do this, say they, is the whole duty of man.

These men were observant enough to see that their concept of a permanently peaceful world was contrary to the teachings of the New Testament, so they quite naturally turned impatiently from them. Many Christian leaders, smarting under the charges hurled at them by the one-world thinkers, retreated from their Christian position and ran after the social philosophers crying, "Me, too; me, too", in a frantic effort to prove that the world had misunderstood Christianity all along. In doing this they, of course, surrendered all that is unique in the faith of Christ and adopted an emaciated Christianity which is little more than a ghost of the faith once delivered.

Let no one apologise for the powerful emphasis Christianity lays upon the doctrine of the world to come.

Christ came from God, out of eternity, to report on the things He had seen and heard and to establish *true values* for the confused human race. Then He drew a line between this world and the world to come and said in effect, "Choose



ye this day." The choice is between an earthly house which we can at best inhabit but a little while and the house of the Lord where we may dwell for evermore.

The problems of origin and destiny have escaped the philosopher and the scientist, but the humblest follower of Christ knows the answer to both. "In the beginning" found Christ there at the creation of all things, and "the world to come" will find Him there at their regeneration.

The church is being constantly tempted to accept this world as her home, and sometimes she has listened to the blandishments of those who would woo her away and use her for their own ends. But if she is wise she will consider that she stands in the valley between the mountain peaks of eternity past and eternity to come.

The past is gone for ever and the present is passing as swift as the shadow on the sundial of Ahaz. Even if the earth should continue a million years, not one of us could stay to enjoy it. We do well to think of the long tomorrow.

Towards the world to come we are all headed. How unutterably wonderful that we Christians have one of our own kind to go ahead and prepare a place for us! That place will be in a world divinely ordered, beyond death and parting, where there is nothing that can hurt or make afraid.

A. W. TOZER in "Alliance Witness."

## 'CONTEND EARNESTLY FOR THE FAITH'

"BELOVED, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." (Jude 3.) To "contend earnestly" literally means to wrestle. "The faith" refers to the system of faith—the gospel. All that Christians are to believe and obey (cf. Acts 6: 7; Gal. 1: 23), must be fought for and preserved.

The only antidote for evil is good and a mixture of evil and good is not good! The only antidote for error is truth and a mixture of error and truth is not truth! The world is so contaminated with evil and error, that the person who contends earnestly for the faith, becomes of necessity a reformer and a controversialist. Such a person is certain to be called a narrow-minded religious fanatic by many of his contemporaries.

Speaking the truth in love (Eph. 4: 15), exposing evil and error (2 Tim. 4: 1-5) are a vital part of fighting the good fight of faith (1 Tim. 6: 12; 2 Tim. 4: 7). We cannot sit back, as many brethren will do, in dignified silence and masterly inactivity when error raises its ugly head. Today we need a holy, healthy intolerance of sin and error in our midst. This will turn the tide of apostasy. As some scribe has so ably described the situation: "You can not clean up the church with soft soap."

When one earnestly contends for the truth, he is following faithfully in the footsteps of Jesus. Jesus was a persistent, powerful and masterful controversialist. He never failed to meet a challenge. He never lost a battle for truth. He recognized the great opportunity, by encounters with opposing sects, to discredit false teachers and their views and indelibly stamp upon the minds of the hearers great principles of truth and righteousness. The controversial sayings of Jesus occupy a prominent place in the Gospel writings. Many of his most priceless sayings, often quoted by non-controversialists, were provoked by controversy.

When one contends earnestly for the truth, he is following the example of the apostles and early Christians who freely shed their blood for the cause of truth. On one occasion it was necessary for Paul to rebuke Peter to his face. (Gal. 2: 11.) This was not a pleasant task for Paul but certainly a necessary one for the sake of truth. The controversy about circumcision was not treated with silence, but a meeting was called in Jerusalem where the matter was publicly discussed. (Acts 15.) Some brethren today would discourage such a meeting. Peter and John were threatened, beaten and imprisoned because they would not compromise the truth. (Acts 4, 5.) Stephen died a martyr's death because he earnestly contended for the faith. (Acts 7.) Paul, the grand old soldier of the cross, was beaten, stoned, left for dead, imprisoned, endured numerous hardships because of his devotion to truth. (2 Cor. 11: 23-28).

If you wield the sword of the Spirit in the direction of evil and error, you are certain to cross swords with the enemy. Several words in the original, translated "preach" in the King James Version, mean to argue, discourage, debate, discuss and contend. (Acts 20:7.) This is an integral part of the faithful proclamation of God's word and cannot be legitimately divorced therefrom. A man who claims to be a gospel preacher and refuses to engage in such, is either misinformed about his work, a coward or weak in the faith.

ALBERT HILL

## READ THE BIBLE TO FIND OIL

FOR millions of people all over the world the Bible is a source of inspiration. To millions it brings happiness. Millions search its pages for the answers to the problems of the world. But for Thomas Hartwell Horne, a scholar who died in 1862, the Scriptures held great mathematical interest.

Horne devoted 17 years to a study of the Bible from a mathematical angle. Amongst other things he counted every letter, word, verse and chapter in his own Bible, and later published his figures. He found that the whole Bible contains 3,566,480 letters which make up 773,746 words. The words make 31,173 verses which are arranged in 1,189 chapters of 66 books, 39 of them in the Old Testament, 27 in the New.

His count of individual words shows that "and" is used 46,277 times. "Jehovah" 6,855 times and "Lord" 1,855 times. Horne noted that the seventh chapter of Ezra contains every letter of the alphabet. The shortest verse consists of two words only. While the longest chapter is made up of 176 verses. This is Psalm 119.

The Bible has sometimes been used for non-religious purposes, with beneficial results. Some years ago, archæologists had obtained their most helpful information from chapters 12 and 13 in the Book of Genesis.

An American oil company used the Bible to good effect for exploration purposes. The ark of bulrushes made by Moses' mother—"She daubed it with slime and pitch"—gave the company its clue to search for oil in Egypt. Reasoning that there would be oil where there was pitch the directors gave the order "go." The Bible statement in Exodus 2:3 was a pointer to success. The company struck oil in the region some years ago.

Some people have given Bible quotations to justify their actions. A member of the London Stock Exchange who was called up for Army service wrote a letter to the War Office. It said, "See Luke 14:20." This reads: "I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come."

The reluctant conscript received a reply from someone equally well-versed in the Scriptures. It said, "See Luke 7:8." This read: "For I also am a man set under authority, having under me soldiers, and I say unto one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh—"

Because of a printer's error one edition of the Bible, printed in London in 1632, seemed to encourage sin. The edition omitted the word "not" from the Seventh Commandment so that it read, "Thou shalt commit adultery." This edition became known as the "Wicked Bible."

AUSTIN JONES.

## CORRESPONDENCE

Bro. R. B. Scott, Kentish Town, has received a letter from a church in Cuba, a copy of which we print below. Bro. Scott has replied to this letter and has sent November and December 1965 issues of the "S.S." We are indebted to Bro. Scott for his courtesy in sending us the letters. We hope to write Bro. Muniz in the near future on behalf of "S.S." readers.—Ed.

Called 13/414,  
Jovellanos,  
Matanzas,  
CUBA.  
Feb. 6th, 1966

To the Brethren in England.

Dear Brethren in Christ,—We have read in some magazine about the Church of Christ in that place, and we need to hear from you. If you get this letter, please write us soon. If you would like to hear more about us and the Lord's work here in Cuba we might to tell you more about it. Perhaps you don't know that the Church of Christ exist in Cuba.

We want you to know that we continue to teach the Gospel and the Government has not interfered with us in any way. We have respected the law so the Lord has taught us and we have been respected by the Government. This is the truth.

Pray for us and for the Lord's work along all Cuba and the world.

Sincerely yours in Christ,  
MANUEL MUNIZ,  
Evangelist.

A round rubber stamp bears the words Iglesia de Cristo, Jovellanos, Matanzas, Cuba.

## NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

Hamilton Street, Blackburn.—We have cause for rejoicing in that another soul has been saved. On Lord's Day evening, February 20th, Hillary Cliff, a scholar from the Sunday School, was identified with her Lord in baptism. Though young in years we pray that her life shall be given in service for the Master, and that by her witness others may be led to give their lives to Christ.

JIM PRITT.

Dennyloanhead.—The brethren here rejoice in another soul won for Jesus. During February we held special meetings supported by the labours of Bro. D. Dougall and by neighbouring brethren.

We had the joy of hearing the good confession of William Scotland, a young man who earnestly sought after the truth. He was immersed on Tuesday evening, 1st March. Our prayers are for his faithfulness unto the end.

A. SCOBIE.

**Slamannan District.**— For several months now the churches in the Slamannan District, supported by brethren from Haddington and Kirkcaldy, have been holding mutual benefit meetings for discussion of various subjects from God's word.

On Saturday, 5th March, 1966, over a hundred brethren met in the Tranent Church meeting-house to enjoy again mutual fellowship and to discuss the theme "What is Love?"

This discussion was led by two of our young brethren, William Wardrop Jnr., Motherwell, and Gerry Fox, Wallacestone, and the meeting was presided over by another young brother, Peter Sneddon, Slamannan.

A very profitable time was spent discussing this theme and we trust the addresses given and the discussion which followed will have accomplished the purpose of our meeting together—Mutual benefit to us all.

God willing, we hope to meet next in the Slamannan Church meeting-place on Saturday, 21st May, 1966, to discuss "The Second Coming of Christ," led by Bro. J. Sinclair, Tranent, and Bro. Jack Nisbet, Haddington and presided over by Bro. Wm. Black, Dalmellington.

We thank the brethren at Tranent for the use of their meeting-place and all who helped in catering for the material needs of such a large gathering.

We thank our Heavenly Father for the spiritual food received from this study and trust He will richly bless us in our endeavours to walk closer to Him and our Saviour Christ Jesus through the power of His word.

HUGH DAVIDSON.

### CAMEROONS EVANGELISATION FUND

I COUNT it a great pleasure to present the brotherhood with yet another progress report on the above fund. In these affluent days in Britain it is a very satisfying work to send tangible help to our abjectly poor brothers in Christ in Africa who are zealous for the work of the Lord. These brethren have meeting-places made from sticks held together with dried mud and have so little of

this world's goods that the Lord's day collection of the average congregation would almost buy a copy of the "Radio Times"!

Since my last report I wish to acknowledge contributions from a sister in Canada, a substantial sum from a sister in England (her third), a gift from Hereford and another considerable contribution from the congregation at Merrylands, Sydney, Australia. These gifts total no less than £51 13s., for which we thank all concerned for their expressed interest and realistic support. The fund now totals £370 17s. 8d. I feel I must again mention the example shown by the Australian churches participating, for in addition to generously supporting the press fund, they are also sending considerable sums directly to these brethren in Africa, to help in the gospel work currently being carried out there.

All those interested in this project will be very pleased to hear that brother Elangwe has been negotiating with an engineering firm in the English Midlands and has virtually completed the purchase of a printing press and its ancillaries. The amount in the fund at present will almost meet the price of the equipment but we envisage transport costs, wharfing charges and import duty. Brother Elangwe says he will communicate with the brotherhood through the "S.S." when full details of the transaction are available. By the summer or autumn therefore, the Lord willing, we hope that the press will be in operational service and providing large quantities of gospel literature and church material.

It would seem that we are reaching our goal and we are confident that much good will be accomplished by the venture in the saving of souls by the gospel and in the strengthening of the small congregations in the Cameroons. Denominationalism is making in Africa, as elsewhere, great inroads and the "Jehovah's Witnesses," etc., etc. lack little in the form of literature and material resources. Let us all resolve to see that the truths of the New Testament shall also be published abroad, and that we shall match the zeal of our African brethren with the readiness of our support.

Please remember these our co-workers in your prayers and if it be possible please send even just a small contribution to this fund, so that the printing machine may speedily reach its destination and become a powerful tool in the work of the Lord.

All gifts will be gratefully received by: James R. Gardiner, 88 Davidson Terrace, Haddington, East Lothian, Scotland.

### COMING EVENTS

**Newtongrange.**—Special Gospel Mission, 23rd to 28th April, Bro. Leonard Morgan (Hindley) preaching.

Saturday, 23rd April: All churches and brethren invited to the opening meeting at 7 p.m. Tea will be served on this occasion.

Monday, 25th April to Thursday, 28th April, each night at 7 o'clock.

**Doncaster.**—A Tea and Meeting have been arranged, to be held on Saturday, May 7th, 1966.

Tea at 4.15. Meeting at 6 o'clock. Speaker: Bro. Tom McDonald, Dewsbury.

**Tunbridge Wells.**—Anniversary and gospel campaign.

NOTE: The dates for these events have had to be changed from the previous announcement. They are now:—

Saturday, May 21st, 3 p.m. Three sessions consisting of devotional singing, Bible study, Any Questions, Tea: 4.30 p.m. Speaker: R. B. Scott (Kentish Town). Gospel meeting at 6.30 p.m. Preacher: V. Hunter (Wembley).

Gospel campaign, May 21st-29th with meetings every night. Preacher: Vic Hunter. Theme: "That ye may know Christ" (John 17:3). Fact and Faith film on Tuesday, 24th.

Come and share a good time with us

**Dewsbury.**—Special Whit Weekend Meetings in conjunction with a Mission to be conducted by Bro. Frank Worgan, May 28th to June 5th.

**Wigan: Albert Street.**—The autumn rally will be held on Saturday, September 10th, 1966: meetings afternoon from 3 o'clock; gospel meeting in the evening at 6.30. Tea will be served at 4.45. Names of speakers and other details later, also Lord's Day meetings September 11th. This early notice is given so that members may make forward arrangements and come to help us in this time of fellowship. Members desiring to stay the weekend give details to W. Smith, 262 Scot Lane, Newtown, Wigan.

### A PRAYER FOR THE OLD

"Blessed are they who understand,  
My faltering step and shaking hand,  
Blessed who know my ears today  
Strain to catch the things they say,  
Blessed are they who seem to know  
My eyes are dim and my mind is slow,  
Blessed are they with cheery smile  
Who stop to chat for a little while,  
Blessed are they who make it known  
That I'm loved and respected and not  
alone.

### CHANGE OF ADDRESS

**East Ardsley.**—Edward Pickersgill (Secretary), 7A New Bank Street, Morley, Yorks.

### CHANGE OF SECRETARY

**Tranent.**—Mark Plain, 33 Lammermoor Terrace, Tranent, East Lothian, Scotland.

### A CORRECTION

"S.S." March, 1966, page 30: Question 2, line 2: 1 Corinthians 3 should read 2 Corinthians 3.

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**EVANGELIST FUND:** Contributions to **R. McDONALD**, who is also Secretary of Conference Committee, "Aldersyde," 10 Mardale Road, Bennett Lane, Dewsbury, York.

**NYASALAND Mission:** Contributions to **W. STEELE**, 31 Niddrie Road, Portobello, Edinburgh, Mid Lothian.

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