

# The SCRIPTURE STANDARD

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

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## A HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL OUR READERS

I asked the New Year for some motto sweet -  
Some rule of life with which to guide my feet :  
I asked and paused; he answered sweet and low,  
"God's Will to know".

"Will knowledge, then suffice, New Year?" I cried;  
And ere the question into silence died,  
The answer came; "Nay, but remember, too,  
"God's Will to do".

## THE SANDS OF TIME

Another Year is Dawning,  
Dear Master let it be  
In working or in waiting ,  
Another Year with Thee.

It is difficult, I suppose, to take the old Calendar off the wall, and replace it with a new one, without reflecting upon the passage of time. This is particularly true as we get older and as time becomes more precious. Surely we are thankful, and may even marvel, that we have been spared to see another new year. Poets have waxed lyrical about "The March of Time" (as have hymn writers), but, more importantly, the Bible has much to say about this seasonal subject.

In the first place, we are the creatures of time (some might even say, the slaves of time) and in the context of Eternity, the human life-span (of three-score years and ten) is exceedingly brief. The Bible describes our lives as "a tale that is told" (Ps. 90:9) and sometimes it is a very short tale indeed (as is the case of these poor little infants in the Third World who, annually, die in their thousands from malnutrition). Job confirmed this view when he said, "My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle . . ." (7:6) and the Psalmist said, "Behold, thou hast made my days as a handbreadth, and mine age is nothing before Thee: verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity." (39:5). Coming closer into the N.T. times, James rightly remarks that we know not what the morrow shall bring "for what is our life? It is even a vapour, that

appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.” (4:14). If life is so brief (and it is) we are right to ponder the passage of time and recognise that it, like our health, is one of our most precious possessions. If we could all start life afresh, we would all doubtless spend our time more wisely, especially the years we seem to have frittered away in our youth. Someone has said that “Youth is wasted on the young” and no doubt we have all contributed to the basic accuracy of that observation. Since life is so short, Time is something we can’t afford to ignore.

Solomon said that, “A wise man’s heart discerneth the time: both time and judgment.” because to “every purpose” there is a prescribed time (“for every purpose under heaven”). He kindly enumerated a few. There is, apparently, “A time to be born, and a time to die: a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted: a time to kill, and a time to heal: a time to break down, and a time to build up: a time to weep, and a time to laugh, a time to mourn, and a time to dance: a time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together: a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing: a time to get, and a time to lose: a time to keep, and a time to cast away: a time to rend, and a time to sew: a time to keep silence, and a time to speak: a time to love, and a time to hate: a time of war, and a time of peace” (Ecc. 3).

Other Bible writers talk of “troublous times”; of “ancient times”; of “perilous times”; of times of refreshing”: of “times of restitution”; of “times of ignorance” (that God winked at), and of “times of rejoicing”. As the hymnwriter says, “The sands of Time are sinking” and a few moments rumination on the fact are always ‘timely’ and profitable.

### ALL THE TIME THERE IS

At one time, in nearly every home, there used to be at least one clock with an exceedingly loud tick, which also used to announce each passing hour with a musical chime, thus making us all very conscious of the relentless and inexorable march of time, but now with all the silent battery clocks time slips past us on tiptoe leaving us largely unaware of its swift departure. Only the necessity of changing the Calendar, nowadays, reminds us that it is later than we think and that time is of the essence. Given that we sleep for a third of our lives, and go to places of employ for a third of our lives, how do we spend the remaining third? This is a good question, I suppose, at the beginning of another new year. How do we spend our time, and how much of it is used in the Lord’s Service?

We often complain about not having enough time, yet surely we have never had so much time: and in fact we have all the time there is. When we look around at all the gadgetry in the kitchen, and around the home generally, we can readily see that we have infinitely much more spare time available to us than in any other age. Our forefathers had to go to draw water at the well, chop wood to light a fire in the oven to bake the day’s bread, wash clothes at the river-bank, etc., and a great many other arduous and time-consuming tasks. A switch on the gas fire now gives us heat, another switch on the washing machine takes care of the clothes and we can cook a whole meal in minutes on the ‘micro-wave’. Surely we have never had more spare time than we have now: but how do we utilise it? When the typewriter was invented: (a machine destined to save hours of tedious scribbling with a quill pen), one of the manufacturers adopted as their sales slogan, “To Save Time Lengthens Life”. While this slogan was, of course, true and false at the same time, it never-the-less highlighted the great value and spread of time-saving machinery, a process which has made incredible strides since the Industrial Revolution and has been the means of the men of today having ‘early retiral’ and wondering how they are going to occupy themselves with all the time at their disposal. Indeed there are now classes giving instruction to those who

have so much time on their hands that they don't know how to use it: a circumstance which surely would have astounded all those who slaved from dawn to dusk in the 'Satanic Mills' of the last century.

### THE TRUE PURPOSE OF TIME

And so, nothing can be more obvious than that we now have much more spare time at our command: but how has this affected our lives? Clearly our life-style has changed out of all recognition and there is now such a rush and bustle about modern living that doctors' waiting-rooms are full of patients suffering from the stresses of present-day living; and some even wish for a return to the 'good old days' with a very much slower pace of life. In some homes, family members rarely have time for conversation; some children exist on 'junk' foods and live separate lives in their own rooms watching their own personal T.V. sets. Any chance conversation usually concerns some T.V. programme. Thus much time saved by time-saving gadgetry is frittered away watching the 'one-eyed monster'! Certainly it is extremely tempting, after a hard day at the office or other workplace, to come home to an evening in the easy-chair watching T.V.

Plainly we must keep abreast with what is happening in the world, and many T.V. programmes can help us to do this, but we must also be aware that we could easily spend our whole life-time (as some do) watching the 'box'. This is a real danger.

To the business-man "Time is Money". What then, is time to the disciple of Christ? Time, to him, is opportunity. The alarming increase in suicides is explained by the fact that 'modern living' is seen, increasingly to be futile. If we were to think deeply enough about the matter we might, perhaps, agree that there is a certain futility about Time, and indeed about life itself, unless we consider these things in the context of God's eternal purposes. Taken on their own (Time and Life), there is an apparent futility to them. Without God, life, indeed seems pointless and aimless. The true purpose of Time is, therefore, that we might engage in the outworkings of God. The year just gone has proved that man never basically changes: his conditions might improve but he doesn't. Crime-rates of all kinds have never been higher: more people than ever die of starvation in a world of plenty (with 'butter mountains' and 'grain mountains'); murder and violence abounds; 'Amnesty' tell us that torture and barbaric treatment of political prisoners has never been worse, etc., etc. and we are again on the brink of a dreadful war. No: man does not change: he merely becomes more sophisticated in the realms of evil. The only hope for man is in the person of Christ and in the preaching of His gospel. The real purpose of time is, therefore, that it is 'A Day of Grace' to the world: that men might 'set their house in order'. God's goodness, forbearance and long-suffering with man is designed to steer him in the right direction, for man is "God's offspring". Paul could say to the disciples at Rome, "Or despiseth thou the riches of His goodness, forbearance and long-suffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance". (Rom. 2:4). When Christ returns Time will be no more, but why does Jesus tarry? Has He forgotten or lost interest? "The Lord is not slack concerning His promise (to return), as some men count slackness, but is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." (2 Peter 3:9). This, then, is the true purpose of Time: that all should have the opportunity to come to repentance. Time, is God's day of grace to the world.

### IMPORTANCE OF TIME

Time can be regarded in three ways, or has, as it were, three dimensions; Past, Present and Future. The Past is as water under the bridge and there is not much we

can do about it. It has some value, however, in the sense that we can profit by experience and not repeat the mistakes of the past. Notwithstanding, all around us, in politics and even in the Church, we can see men busily engaged in repeating some of the catastrophes of history. The New Testament does not recommend that we spend too much time commiserating and fretting about our past failures but rather that we get on with the present. Indeed, Paul claimed that **“ . . . this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus”** (Phil. 3:13). The apostle was not, it seems, too preoccupied with remorse for a past, which at other times made him regard himself as ‘chief of sinners’, but relished future opportunities of making up for lost time in the work of the Lord. Time is indeed precious. Occasionally doctors have the awesome task of telling a patient that they have only a very short period to live. We would all dread such news but must, at some time or other, have wondered how we would spend our remaining days in such circumstances. Such a situation would certainly concentrate the mind and, if we had only six months to live, our real priorities would truly come to the surface. We would count as precious each fleeting second, and certainly give to time its true and proper value. Such a thing actually befell King Hezekiah (2 Kings 20). The prophet Isaiah was sent to King Hezekiah to give him the news that his illness was terminal and that he should use the remaining moments to **“set his house in order”**. This news certainly concentrated the mind of the king and his weepings and prayers moved God to give him a reprieve of 15 years. Thus Hezekiah was thereafter living on borrowed time, and doubtless had a completely different attitude to time, and an entirely new set of priorities.

We are all living on borrowed time. This, I believe, is to what Paul refers when he exhorts the Ephesian Christians to **REDEEM THE TIME**. He says, **“See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil.”** (Eph. 5:16). The word here rendered “redeeming” means to buy back from the power of another, and in the present context means to recover or rescue our time from idleness or waste. “Because the days are evil” signifies that there are, and always will be, allurements and temptations in the world encouraging us to squander our time. As Jesus remarked, **“The fields are white unto harvest, but the labourers be few.”** There is so much to be done and so few to do it that time is at a premium. The Church is small numerically (even minute) and ‘all hands are required on deck’. The shortage of labourers is a problem twice compounded when they are not to be found in the fields but in halls of amusement, revelry, snoozing or just watching T.V. The same apostle gave a similar exhortation to the church in Rome when he insisted that **“It was HIGH TIME to awake out of sleep”** for **“the night was far spent, and the day was at hand.”**, (Rom. 13:11). Yes, it is later than we think. The past is gone: the future, for us, might not arrive; all that we have is NOW: now is the time to put our weight behind all efforts in the preaching of the gospel and in the progress of the Church.

God will judge every man’s work, or absence of it. Perhaps that is why Peter advises us **“to pass the time of our sojourning here with fear knowing that the Father, without respect of persons, judgeth according to every man’s work.”** Let us resolve that in 1991, if we should be spared to see it, we shall endeavour to accomplish much more for the Lord than we did in the year just gone. That we shall endeavour to give Time its true value, as those bent on **redeeming the time**, and that we shall find work to do in the harvest fields to the saving of souls. **“So teach us, Lord, to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.”** (Ps. 90:12).

EDITOR.

## GLEANINGS

*"Let her glean even among the sheaves." Ruth 2:15*  
**"As thy days, so shall thy strength be."** (Deut. 33:25)

### GOD'S GRACE IS UNFAILING

"Gods grace is unfailing, draw from that supply,  
 Be daily encouraged by power from on high;  
 Wherever He sendeth, thou surely shalt see  
 As the day may demand, so shall thy strength be."

### SUFFICIENT UNTO THE DAY

"The promise given to one of the tribes was, '**As thy days, so shall thy strength be.**' Strength was not promised in advance, — enough for all thy life, or even for a year, or for a month, — but the promise was, that for each day, when it came with its own needs, duties, battles, and griefs, enough strength would be given. As the burden increased, more strength would be imparted. As the night grew darker, the lamps would shine out more brightly. The important thought here is, that strength is not emptied into our hearts in bulk — a supply for years to come — but it is kept in reserve, and given day by day, just as the day's needs required."

J. R. Miller.

### SOMEONE HAS SAID

"The background of every day is grace, and the more tremendous the day the more abounding is the grace. And therefore we can interpret our difficulties as the index of our resources. Our mission betokens our capital in the bank, and we can draw upon "the unsearchable riches" to the last demand of our need. '**As thy days, so shall thy strength be.**'"

J. H. Jowett.

### BY FAITH

"We do not know from day to day, What troubles may assail,  
 But no misfortune great or small, Can over faith prevail."

F.B.

### THE MORNING LIGHT

**"I wait for the Lord, my soul doth wait, and in his word do I hope. My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning: I say, more than they that watch for the morning."** (Psalm 130:5,6)

"The morning light is often waited for with intense longing. By the sailors in a shipwrecked vessel; by a night-time traveller in a dangerous country; by an army that finds itself surrounded by an enemy. The morning light will show what hope of escape there may be. The morning light may bring life and liberty. In the same way, the saints of God, living in the darkness of this world, have longed for the light of His countenance more than watchmen for the morning. They have said, more than watchmen for the morning, my soul waits for the Lord. Can we say that too? Our waiting on God can have no higher goal than simply having His light shine on us, and in us, and through us, all day long."

Andrew Murray

### THE BIBLE SPEAKS

**"That which they have need of . . . let it be given them day by day."** (Ezra. 6:9)

**"For at that time day by day, there came to David to help him, until it was a great host of God."** (1 Chron. 12:22)

**"Who then is willing to consecrate his service this day unto the Lord?"** (1 Chron. 29:5)

**"For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness."** (Psalm 84:10)

**"Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and for ever."** (Hebrews 13:8)

## SO TEACH US

“So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.”

(Psalm 90:12)

“Destiny is being created by the choice you are making now. We act as though moments came to us to be smiled or sobbed away, as the case may be, and then to be done with for ever. It is not so. Montgomery sang truly when he sang:-

’Tis a mistake: time flies not.  
He only hovers on the wing:  
Once born, the moment dies not,  
’Tis an immortal thing.

Campbell Morgan

## FRANCES RIDLEY HAVERGAL

“As thy days thy strength shall be !”  
This should be enough for thee;  
He who knows thy frame will spare  
Burdens more than thou canst bear.  
When thy days are veiled in night,  
Christ shall give thee heavenly light;  
Seem they wearisome and long,  
Yet in Him thou shalt be strong.

## MORE WISE WORDS FROM W. RILEY

“We spent our day in the great alfresco palace of Nature, amid pictures of God’s painting, and returned at night, tired in body, but with heart and soul and brain refreshed by unseen dews of heaven’s own distilling.” . . .

“Why should I grudge Nature’s silent children their hour of rest ? The morning will come when they will again fling aside the garb of night and deck themselves in purple.”

## THE GIFT OF A DAY

“Each morning God puts a sheaf of blessed possibilities into our hands saying, ‘There, my child, these are for you, if you will.’ Each morning we rise to a clean sheet on which we may write what we please. We have the chance to learn, the chance to be kind, the chance to work, the chance to pray. This morning it was a blank cheque we got, valid for just as much as we would like to take.”

Arcibald Alexander

Selected by Leonard Morgan

**PEACE, PEACE WHEN THERE IS NO PEACE**

One could not read the Bible much less study it, without reaching the conclusion that the Bible teaches that peace is certainly something to be desired. There are many, many passages, which have reference to the subject of peace. Paul calls the gospel “the gospel of peace” (Rom. 10:15): he exhorts Christians to “follow after the things which make for peace.” (Rom. 14:19): and he states God is the “God of peace.” (Rom. 15:33). Isaiah calls Jesus the “Prince of Peace.” (Isa. 9:6).

Do these passages and other passages which speak of the value of peace, teach that peace should be sought and obtained regardless of the price? Does the Bible teach that the child of God should be interested in peace to the extent that he should sacrifice the truth just to say that peace prevails? Do the Scriptures teach that the faithful child of God, in the name of peace, should idly stand by and remain silent when error is being promoted and taught? The answer to each of these questions is a resounding NO !!

But there are those among us today seeking to lead the church into apostasy and doing so in the name of peace. There are those attempting to restructure the church under the guise of love. There are those striving to compromise with error under the cloak of unity. And if we do not arise and expose these false teachers who are speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them, then the church as you and I know it, that blood bought institution for which the Lord died, will be led into apostasy.

Certainly all who love God love peace. Paul states in Romans 12:18, **“If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.”** But brethren it is not always possible to be at peace with all men while doing the will of God. This is what our Lord meant when He said, **“Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace but a sword”** (Matt. 10:34).

When one reads the book of Acts, he can easily see that it was not possible for the apostles and early Christians to **“live peaceably with all men”** while doing the will of God. In Acts 4, Peter and John were threatened and commanded **“not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus.”** Did Peter and John acquiesce that peace could prevail? No! They said they could not but speak the things which we have seen and heard. Then they went back and prayed that the Lord would **“Grant unto thy servants that with all boldness they may speak thy word.”** Does this sound like compromise for the sake of so-called unity and peace? In Acts 5, the apostles were imprisoned, beaten, let go and commanded **“that they should not speak in the name of Jesus.”** Did they consent to this command in the name of peace? No, but **“they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name. And daily in the temple and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.”** (Acts 5:41,42).

In Acts 7 Stephen was stoned to death as a result of his faithful stand for the truth and the denunciation of error. Does this sound like compromise for alleged unity? Does this sound like peace at any price? Or does this sound like a faithful child of God denouncing and exposing error? In Acts 8, the church was scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria because of persecution. Is this an example of obtaining peace at any price? Friends, our Lord himself was not at peace with those who were opposed to the truth. Why was he crucified? Because of sacrifice and compromise in the name of peace, or preaching the truth.

These examples show that it is not always possible to be at peace with all men while standing for the truth. When one preaches the truth and stands firmly for that which is right, he will be brought into conflict with those who are in error.

Brethren, God needs men today like those Christians of the first century. Men who will stand up and face the enemy that truth, rather than peace may prevail. God needs men who are interested in peace but not peace at the sacrifice and compromise of truth. James said, **“the wisdom that is from above is first pure then peaceable”** (James 3:17) Note the order: first pure then peaceable. Anyone who sacrifices the purity of the truth for peace is not following James’ inspired instruction. The Lord needs men who will boldly declare that his church is not a denomination, and who will fight that she may never become one. The Lord needs preachers and elders who will stand against false doctrine, exposing and rebuking those who teach it. The church needs preachers, elders, and faithful Christians who will stand up and battle liberalism. Too many desire peace with all, rather than rebuking and exposing false doctrine. Men who are false teachers will make havoc of the church if we do not wage a battle against them. Evil triumphs when good men do nothing. Those who support false teachers are guilty of bidding God speed and should be marked and avoided (2 John 9-11).

Yes, peace is to be desired, and unity is to be wanted. But not the peace and unity that is sought and obtained at the compromise and sacrifice of truth. That is not the peace and true unity of the gospel. True peace and unity will prevail when we unite upon the truth, God's Word. Anything less is not peace not unity, but compromise and apostasy.

We have too many today who are crying, "Peace, peace when there is no peace." (Jer. 6:14).

John G. Priola

## KEEP WATCH WITH ME (Matt. 26:36-46)

Let us go to Gethsamane to learn a lesson from our Master.

Arriving at the garden Jesus leaves 8 disciples to watch, probably against premature surprise. Then, taking with him Peter, James and John, he enters within and bids them to "tarry here, and watch with Me." Then, goes further on, and prays, "Father if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me, nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt." Jesus is feeling already the burden of the cross. The betrayal, the trial, the mocking, the scourging, the cursed tree, and all besides which our thoughts cannot reach. So he prays to the Father. Arising, He comes to the disciples, and finds them sleeping. He says to Peter "O could you not watch with Me one hour. Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation." A second time Jesus goes and prays, and a second time finds them sleeping.

Here, I must pause, for time and space will not allow me to cover the whole incident. The lesson we must learn is here contained "Keep Watch with Me."

**"Keep watch with Me, it is the Saviour speaking  
Keep watch with Me, until the night be o'er.  
O! Let Me not return and find you sleeping,  
Keep watch with Me, and trust Me, evermore."**

Jesus invites us to Watch with Him. How lovingly He calls us. So Great a Master and yet He desires our companionship. Without Him we are prone to err, to be defeated in times of temptation, to fall into Sin. In the hour of trial, let us follow His example. Let us through Him, take it to the Lord in prayer.

**"Keep watch with Me, O blessed invitation,  
From one o'er all, the King of kings, and Lord of lords.  
Let not the foe, o'ertake you in your weakness;  
His hand in yours will perfect strength afford."**

Verse 38 of our reading records the feelings of Jesus, He says, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." The weight of the world's sin is bearing heavily upon Him. This burden he would take to the tree of Calvary; He staggered under the load of the tree itself, so much so that Simon the Cyrenian was compelled to bear the weight. See Luke 23:26 which has the suggestion, the foot of the cross was laid on Simon, to bear it following Jesus. Our sins were the greater load. "All our sins He carried. All our griefs, He bore." What He endured no tongue can tell, to save our souls from death and hell. Because He endured suffering of so great a degree, He is able to help us when we suffer.

In the hour of sorrow, grief and tears, He alone is the great comforter and restorer of the soul, but we must continue our watch with Him.

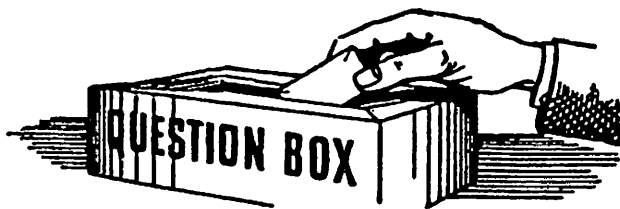
**"Keep watch with Me, when hearts are filled with sadness,  
When eyes are filled with tears, and cares abide,  
I am the only one can bring you gladness,  
And by My Grace you will be satisfied."**



Watching through the hours of darkness, until the dawn of the New Day, Jesus has inspired us with new hopes and aspirations of a better life to come, in which all our former enemies are destroyed. Sickness, disease, Sin and death are no more. All our trials will be over in a purer world, where righteousness reigns supreme, and we will need to Watch no more.

**“Keep watch with Me, the morning light is breaking,  
To herald the approach of God’s New Day.  
Your watch will soon be o’er, and rest afforded,  
In that fair place where you need watch no more.”**

Tom Kemp, Hindley, Wigan.




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Conducted by  
Alf Marsden

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**“What does the apostle Paul mean in 1 Cor. 7:14 when he speaks about the unbelieving husband or wife being consecrated by their believing partners? If the children of such marriages are ‘not unclean but holy’, does this mean that they are saved?”**

The letters that Paul wrote to the saints at Corinth contain answers to problems which were posed to him. The Apostle evidently wrote three letters to Corinth, two of which we have in the N.T. as 1st and 2nd Corinthians. However, in 1 Cor. 5:9 after he had passed his judgement on the so-called incestuous brother, he says, **“I wrote to you in my letter not to associate with immoral men,”** and this seems to suggest that a letter had gone to the saints at Corinth before the one which we call 1st Corinthians; sadly, this letter seems to have been lost to us. I mention this because that letter, like 1st Cor. 7, seems to have been concerned with matters of relationships and morality, and it is this with which we are concerned in the question.

A further important point has to be made. You will read commentators who will say that the Apostle spoke or wrote by ‘command’ or by what they call ‘permission’, implying that the latter constitutes his own advice on the statements concerned, and could easily lead people to assume that such comments would be ‘uninspired’ and therefore could be laid aside. This is not true. When Paul wrote to Timothy, **“All scripture is inspired by God”** (2 Tim. 3:16) it is a mistake to think that he is referring solely to the O.T. scriptures. What Paul means when he says in 1 Cor. 7:12, **“To the rest I say, not the Lord,”** is that he cannot refer to any extant direct command on the subject from the Lord, but his, Paul’s, comments are certainly as inspired as any other words in the Bible. Nothing in God’s Word can be laid aside. In order to glean the truth from this important area of the scripture, I believe we shall have to comment on three fundamental relationships which are contained in this chapter of the 1st Corinthian letter. Unlike the Apostle, my words are not inspired, therefore you will have to study what I say in order to see if they are a true reflection of what the Apostle is teaching us.

### MARRIAGE

Paul’s remarks about the relationship in marriage are definitive and have divine sanction, **“To the married I give charge, not I but the Lord, That the wife should not separate from her husband (but if she does, let her remain single or else be reconciled to her husband) — and that the husband should not divorce his wife”** (1 Cor. 7:10).

If this scripture speaks anything, it speaks about the indissolubility of the marriage bond, and it accords well with the words of Jesus as recorded in Matthew 19:1-12. Marriage, among other things, is about responsibility. The man or woman renounces the right to do as he or she pleases; there is now a partner to consider. Each partner has the power either to ennoble the marriage, or to pervert and abuse it. We ask ourselves in these days where Paul's exalted view of marriage has gone which he expressed so gloriously in his letter to Ephesus, "**Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her**"; also "**As the church is subject to Christ so let wives also be subject in everything to their husbands**" (Eph. 5:21-33). Unfortunately, marriage is now viewed as only one sexual relationship among many, and the view is now prevailing in many denominational churches that the leaders of such churches should look sympathetically upon sexual relationships **outside** the marriage bond. It now seems that leaders no longer have the will to lead, but are swept along by the tide of social opinion. Consequently, we have witnessed, and still witness, the deliberate dilution of the sanctity of the married state. One can only conclude that all this is for selfish ends; it certainly has nothing to do with God's Will, and one day the people who are responsible for it will answer to God.

#### THE IMPACT OF GOSPEL

The Apostle Paul was confronted with problems at Corinth (and other places) which the Lord had not previously commented on, hence he had no direct command of the Lord to refer to. A problem such as the desertion of an unbelieving partner was a case not contemplated in the Lord's words as recorded in Matt. 5:32; and 19:9. We need, therefore, to examine the text quite closely because the problem referred to in the question follows on logically from Paul's comments on marriage in the first few verses of the 7th chapter.

In the first part of 1 Cor. 7:14, Paul says, "**For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband.**" What Paul does not mean is that the unbelieving partner in each case is saved by the faith of the believing partner. The faith of the one person cannot be transferred to another person; this would make a non-sense of the Gospel call for each individual to have faith in Christ. No; what is meant here is that if the unbelieving partner agrees to remain, then the marriage is holy, and consequently divorce need not ensue (perhaps this should indicate to us how much God, Christ, and the inspired writers, abhor divorce). It is important for us to understand why this should be so, and Paul goes on to explain.

In the second part of v14 Paul goes on, "**else were your children unclean; but now they are holy**". Now we can see the reason for the statement in the first part of the verse. If the relationship in the marriage is declared holy, then any children of the marriage must of necessity be holy (legitimate). The questioner asks, "does this mean that they are saved"? It is at this point that we must be as precise as we can. When Jesus gave the Great commission He said, "**He that believeth, and is baptised, shall be saved**". The Bible asserts personal accountability with regard to sin, but it is patently obvious that a child of tender age has neither the ability nor the capacity to believe, nor would such a child be capable of sinning, therefore we must conclude that it could not be held accountable for something which it could not do. It is extremely difficult to understand why partners in a legitimate marriage rush to have their child 'sprinkled' (so-called baptism) because this would imply that the child was not 'holy', as Paul teaches in the passage under consideration. There will come a time, of course, when every person will reach the time of accountability, when there will be the consciousness of sin; then each person will need to become obedient to the Gospel, and will consequently need to believe, repent, confess Christ as God's Son, and be baptised (immersed in water). That will be a personal decision, based on response to the Gospel.

There is, however, a school of thought of which we must beware. It is argued by some that if the child is 'clean' then it is 'a child of God'. They cite what they call the Baptismal question, and their argument is that a person is not made a child of God by being baptised, but that infant baptism affirms that which has already taken place, i.e., that Paul affirms in 1 Cor. 7:14 that children are 'clean' and therefore children of God. They say that as Cornelius received the Holy Spirit and was **then** baptised, so children are received by adoption into the Christian family and are **then** to be baptised (sprinkled) as a **sign** of this. A close examination of the scriptures will refute this argument, and 1 Cor. 7:14 throws no light whatsoever on the question of infant baptism.

### THE PROBLEM OF EXISTING RELATIONSHIPS

Paul goes on to extend his teaching to include the relationships which people had before they were called to God through the Gospel. In verse 20 he says, "**Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called**". This refers to when he was called by God and saved, whether he was in servitude to someone as a slave, whether he was Jew or Gentile, or whatever. The circumcised person was not to become uncircumcised, and vice versa; as a matter of fact Paul illustrates quite vividly his estimation of the worth of circumcision, "**Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God**" (v19). The relationship with God is paramount, and the keeping of the commandments of God by the one who has been saved is vital. "**Art thou called being a servant? Care not for it: but if thou mayest be made free, use it rather**" (v21). The Lord's salvation makes the freeman a slave of Christ; it also makes the slave the Lord's freeman. The important thing to remember for those who have been called through the Gospel, whether bond or free when called, is that they are **both** the slaves of Christ. However, regarding slavery, Paul shows his mind, "**Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servant of men**" (v23).

With regard to this part of the text, there is one particular danger which we must beware of today. There are those who will say and teach that if they are called by the Gospel when they are members of a denominational church, that they should remain in that denominational group, even though they understand that the group to which they belong did not teach them the whole Gospel truth, e.g., immersion in water (baptism) for the remission of sins, and not holding a Communion Service every first day of the week. There is, in my opinion, certainly no mandate for this in the verses we have just considered.

We can well understand, when confronted with problems such as the ones we have looked at briefly, what the Apostle meant when he said that he had 'the care of all the churches', but for 'the joy that was set before him' he endured it all. He was truly 'Christ's man', and we are fortunate in that we have his inspirational wisdom to guide us.

(All enquiries please to Alf Marsden, 50 Costessy Way,  
Winstanley, Wigan. WN3 6ES).

## HEAD COVERING AND THE HAIR

I refer to the article "Head Covering and the Hair" by brother John Wood in the November issue of the Scripture Standard. I respect the scriptural learning which brother John has acquired and have benefited from it personally.

However, I would like to point out some wording in the article which may inadvertently give a wrong impression.

The phrase at the end of the introductory paragraph "apparently it did not suit the author's purpose to mention that a man must be veiled when praying or prophesying" may be taken to mean that the speaker was manipulating the Scriptures to suit a

theory. From listening to the lecture and discussions with the speaker I do not believe this to be the case. He accepted the invitation to attend at great personal inconvenience when not in the best of health and deserves courtesy and credit for doing so. It is up to us to respectfully examine everything from Scriptures, as did the Bereans.

Brother John infers the speaker's reasoning to mean that if a man cuts as much as half an inch off his hair he is uncovered and could thus engage in prayer. When he put this to the speaker during ensuing discussion he was told that a man should not have long hair.

I disagree with brother John's understanding of 1 Corinthians 11:4. This immediately follows Paul's statement in verse 3 that **"the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God."** The woman praying or prophesying with an uncovered head therefore dishonours her head, namely the man. The man similarly behaving with a covered head similarly dishonours his head, namely Christ. The final statement of verse 3 tells us that the head of the Son is the Father. The prophet Isaiah describes him as the Father's servant (Isaiah 42:1;52:13). In his beautiful prayer to the Father near the end of his earthly ministry Jesus said **"I have glorified thee on earth having accomplished the work thou hast given me to do."** (John 17:4), and the writer to the Hebrews tells us that **"though he was a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered"** (Hebrews 5:8). In Phillipians 2:8 we are told that Jesus Christ **"became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."** The Scriptures show us that in the relationship between the Father and the Son, the Son is in loving subjection to the father. I cannot understand brother John's statement to the contrary.

I look forward to reading the continuation of brother John's article.

Bill Cook,  
22 The Beeches,  
Woodside,  
Glenrothes. KY 5EA.

(The above item was received too late for inclusion in last month's issue.

All, and any material for publication should reach the Editor  
prior to the 15th of any month. Thank you. Ed.)

## QUESTION BOX 2

Dear Bro. Editor,

I have always appreciated Bro. Marsden's column and I think he made some pertinent, penetrating and telling points on who officiates at public events such as weddings, funerals and baptisms. It does matter, as he rightly suggests, but I wonder if his questioner was more concerned over the **validity** of the ceremony in God's eyes.

Some Christians are genuinely concerned that, if the person performing the ceremony is not a Biblical Christian — as we understand the term — is the ceremony valid in God's eyes? Are we scripturally baptised if we understand fully what we are doing, but the one baptising us does not — or later proves to have been a false believer? Is our marriage sacred before God, and our vows binding, if a non-Christian performs the ceremony? That seems to me to be the point behind the question and I do not believe Alf directed his attentions to it.

Everything Alf said, I would fully endorse and we would be very foolish to ignore his advice; however, I feel he would conclude, as I do, that any such ceremony has perfect validity before God no matter what the spiritual state of the one performing it might be. It is the attitude and understanding of the candidate which validates the baptism, all marriage vows, irrespective of their context, are binding on us in God's

eyes, and the final destination of the soul does not depend at all on who dispatches the body.

Yours in Christ,

Graham A. Fisher,  
36 Hallville Road,  
Mossley Hill,  
Liverpool. L18 0HRT.

(One or two other readers have expressed similar feelings: i.e. a very good answer but not addressing the validity of these things. Perhaps Alf will have another look at it when he has the time. Ed.)

## SCRIPTURE READINGS

Feb. 3	Mala. 3:	Luke 7:18-35
Feb. 10	Psa. 51:	Luke 7:36-50
Feb. 17	Isa. 55:	Luke 8:1-21
Feb. 24	Psa. 107:23-43	Luke 8:22-39

### A SINFUL WOMAN FORGIVEN

Luke's gospel has been described by some as the Gospel of Women. We must remember that in Palestine at that time the place of women was very low. For example, in the Jewish morning prayer a man thanked God that He had not made him "a Gentile, a slave or a woman." But Luke gives a very special place to women.

This particular woman had lived a sinful life, but on hearing that Jesus was in town came and anointed him with perfume from an alabaster jar. She shed many tears and her humility in the presence of the Master and her love for Him was evident for all to see (7:38). However, Simon, the Pharisee, was displeased with her presence. He said to himself: "This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that touches him: for she is a sinner" (7:39). Jesus then had to teach him a powerful lesson by way of the parable of the creditors and the debtors. Edward A. Armstrong has written: "The depth of Lord's insight was manifested by His words: 'Her great love proves that her many sins are forgiven'. Here lies the point of the whole story —

love covers a multitude of sins; for it is of God (1 John 4:7). The common assumption was, and is, that a prostitute's profession of selling sex debars her in the end from any experience of genuine human love and alienates her from the love of God. But our Lord did not regard sexual sin as worse than any other sins: and, if sin excludes us from God's mercy, what hope have we? The woman's lavish expression of love was clear proof that she had found favour with God; for if hatred indicates a sinful, unforgiving heart, love is the expression of a soul to that extent forgiven."

### THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER

One of the late W. Carl Ketcherside's books is entitled *The Parable of Telstar and Other Talks*. He wrote: "Have you ever thought of the kind of talk which Jesus might deliver today if invited to be a guest speaker at a weekly luncheon meeting of the Rotary Club? In all probability he would sprinkle his address with parables for the record says of his messages to those of his day, 'Whithout a parable spake he not unto them'. But what kind of parables would he now use to illustrate the kingdom of heaven? Certainly, if a parable is effective only when drawn from contemporary life, he would not talk about shepherds, flocks and folds . . ." We are left to wonder what he would talk about.

However, on this occasion Jesus drew upon a very common sight in the countryside — a sower sowing seed. The

seed fell on four different kinds of soil and only the good soil yielded a crop a hundred times more than was sown (8:8). Later the meaning of the parable was given by Jesus (8:11-15). His words have proved true and prophetic. I am sure, like you, dear reader, names come to mind when you read: **"Those along the path are the ones who hear and then the devil comes and takes away the word (of God) from their hearts, so that they may not believe and be saved. Those on the rock are the ones who receive the word with joy when they hear it, but they have no root. They believe for a while, but in the time of testing they fall away. The seed that fell among thorns stands for those who hear, but as they go their way they are choked by life's worries, riches and pleasures and they do not mature. But the seed on good soil stands for those with a noble and good heart, who hear the word, retain it, and by persevering produce a crop"** (8:12-15, N.I.V.).

#### A DEMONIAIC HEALED

Demon-possession is a perplexing subject to many people. There is no doubt that demons were a reality in Jesus' day. What were the demons? I believe that they were fallen angels released temporarily from Tartarus (2 Peter 2:4) to be a part of the great showdown between the forces of God and the forces of satan while Jesus walked this earth.

Demons dwelt in the bodies of human beings and this particular man whom Jesus encountered had been possessed of them for a "long time" (8:27). His name was Legion **"because many demons were entered into him"** (8:30). (Please note that the word devils is an incorrect translation of the Greek term. There were many demons, but only one devil, who is the master of them all.) Jesus had authority over the demons and they knew it. On this occasion they did not want to **"go out into the deep (Greek abussos, hence our English word abyss)"**

because once again they would be **"delivered into chains of darkness to be reserved unto judgement"** (2 Peter 2:4). So they **"besought Jesus that he would suffer them to enter into the swine"** (8:32), which was allowed. The result was that **"the herd ran violently down a steep place into the lake and were choked"** (8:33). Not only that, but the possessed man was restored to a full measure of health (8:35). Later on he just could not help himself from telling others of the great things Jesus had done unto him (8:39). If only all Christians everywhere would emulate his zeal and enthusiasm.

#### JAIURUS' DAUGHTER RAISED

Physical death is the consequence of the fall of our first parents. The scripture says: **"And it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgement . . ."** (Hebrews 9:27). Some die early and some die in middle age. Some see three-score and ten before passing on and a very few receive that famous telegram from the Queen before they have **"shuffled off this mortal coil,"** as Shakespeare described death. In the final analysis, life and death are in the hands of God.

One of the proofs that Jesus was the Messiah the Son of the living God was His having the power to raise the dead. A good example of this is seen in the case of Jairus' only daughter (8:41-42; 49-56). Jesus restored her to life by simply taking her by the hand and saying: **"Maid, arise"** (8:54). No wonder the parents were astonished (8:56). One wonders for how long they managed to contain themselves from telling others what was done (8:56).

#### THE WOMAN WHO TOUCHED CHRIST'S GARMENT

The miraculous healing of this woman is found in all three of the synoptic gospels (Matthew 9:20-22; Mark 5:25-34; Luke 8:43-48). Luke a doctor, tells us: **" . . . who had spent all her living upon physicians, neither could be**

healed of any . . ." (8:43). It was only when she came to the Great Physician that "she was healed immediately" (8:47). What led to her cure? Jesus said: "Your faith has made you whole; go in peace" (8:48).

We read of the term "virtue" in this passage (8:46). It is a translation of the Greek word **Dunamis** and means power (hence, incidently, our English word dynamite). Jesus, of course, still has healing power today. John wrote: ". . . and the blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin" (1 John 1:7). Dear reader, are you washed in the blood of the true Lamb of God? Are your garments spotless and white as snow? If not, believe in Him and obey Him today.

Ian. S. Davidson,  
Motherwell.

## NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

**Motherwell:** The church here is delighted to report an addition to our membership in the person of Mary McGhee, who was baptised on November 10th, 1990. Mary is to marry our Brother Ian S. Davidson on January, 19th, and news of their engagement and forthcoming wedding has been warmly received by brethren near and far. We extend our love and best wishes to them and pray that they will be an "Aquila and Priscilla" for the Lord.

**Slamannan District:** The Quarterly Mutual Benefit Meeting took place on December 1st at New Cumnock when a goodly number assembled to discuss that day's question, viz. "John 17: Unity: Why has this not been achieved among the churches? Can it ever be achieved? After an excellent tea the two speakers opened up the subject by their introductory remarks: James Moncrieff, Haddington, and Graeme Pearson, Dun-

fermline. The chairman was Bro. Ian Davidson, Motherwell. As usual the free hours discussion by the audience revealed much more to the subject than first thought and much food for thought was provided. The next such meeting will be held, God Willing, on 2nd March, 1991, at Dennyloanhead, when the subject will be "In what way were the Apostles of Jesus special, and why are there none today"? The speakers will be Bro. Jack Nisbet, Haddington, and Bro. David Chalmers, Dalmellington. The chairman will be John Wilson, Newtongrange.

Harry McGinn (Sec.)

**Hindley:** It is with joy in our hearts that we report the union with Christ Jesus of two young people; the children of Bro. and Sister Marsden, who live near Bamber Bridge. They have recently been attending the Gospel Meeting, and also a Bible Study meeting held in the home of Bro. and Sister John Morgan. David and Gemma were immersed on Lord's Day evening Nov. 20th after making the good confession. Their intention is to meet with us along with their parents.

We give praise to God and thank Him for all His wondrous blessings. We press onwards in the full assurance of faith, that we shall reap if we faint not.

Tom Kemp

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## PERSISTENCE

Nothing in the world can take the place of persistence.

Talent will not, for there is nothing so common as the successful man with talent.

Genius will not, for unrewarded genius is almost a proverb.

Education alone will not, for the world is full of educated derelicts.

Persistence and determination alone, are omnipotent.

Calvin Coolidge (1872 1933)

## OBITUARY

**Kirkcaldy** : It is with great sadness that we record the decease of our sister, Christine Tobin, who passed on to her reward on 20th November, 1990, aged 64 years.

Christine became a Christian during our Autumn Mission in 1983. Although several people were baptised at that time, Christine was the only one who has remained faithful. One of the things to give her great pleasure was her habit of giving small gifts to the children of members. She will also be greatly missed for her input at our Wednesday evening Bible Class.

Sister Ruth Moyes.

### GHANA APPEAL

To date (10/12/90) £17,476.77 has been collected for the work in Ghana.

In the past month I have received information from Ghana concerning the building programme. Money that has already been sent for this particular need has been used up and I have received from Koforidua a copy of the plans and photographs of the work already started. The foundations are laid and the concrete blocks have been laid to nine inches above ground level, where the money ran out.

This month I wish to appeal once again for money for building materials to enable our brethren to complete the work that we helped them start.

I have produced some micro photocopies (A4) of the plans received from Koforidua if anyone wishes a copy.

If anyone would like to assist in this appeal please send cheques to the address below, made out to "Graeme Pearson (Ghana Appeal)."

May I express my thanks to everyone who has supported this Appeal in 1990. With the intended long stay visit of brother Bill Cook in 1991 to Ghana I hope to give the Brotherhood a better feedback on the work in Ghana than I have been able to do in 1990.

G. Pearson,  
13 Fairways,  
Dunfermline,  
Fife. KY12 0DU.  
Tel.: (0383)728624.

### PHONE NUMBER

Joe Malcolm's new 'phone number is :  
0324 714150.

If silence be good for wise men, how  
much better must it be for fools.

People will overlook you being poor, but  
they will never forgive you for being  
poor and dirty.

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