

The SCRIPTURE STANDARD

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

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APRIL, 1959

The Christian as Priest

IN the previous article, "The Christian as Saint," it was pointed out that the conception many people have of saints is a result of false teaching, legend and tradition—a conception far removed from the simple and sublime teaching of the Bible. The same wrong and confused ideas prevail concerning priests and priesthood.

False Conceptions of Priesthood

The Roman Catholic Church is chiefly responsible for these false ideas of saint and priest. That Church has developed an elaborate doctrine of priesthood, to such an extent that it can truly be said that the Church of Rome is a hierarchy of priests, from the Pope to the humblest parish priest. In the priests all power and authority are vested. Irrespective of purity of life, the priest is "holy" in himself, by virtue of certain ceremonies performed upon him in consecrating him as priest. By the teaching of the Church and in the eyes of the "faithful," he has miraculous powers: at the priest's command Christ himself must come from heaven and be transubstantiated into a wafer, turned into the very body, blood, bones and sinews of Christ through the mechanical repetition of a few Latin words. With him is the power to forgive or withhold forgiveness of sins.

It makes no difference that Roman Catholic claims for the priesthood can be proved to be absurd and without the least foundation in even the Church's own version of the Bible. This mythology of the priesthood is still held in face of all facts. The priest is all-powerful. The rank and file of Roman Catholics must submit like sheep to all they are taught.

Not only the Church of Rome but the Church of England also looks upon the priesthood as a separate class of specially consecrated men having power and authority not possessed by others. True, the monstrous claims made for the priesthood in the Roman Catholic Church are not made in the Anglican Church, but many Anglican ministers arrogate to themselves the title priests, to the exclusion of the rest of the members of the Church.

Then there is the priesthood in non-Christian religions. In the religions of the East, Buddhism, Hinduism, Lamaism, Taoism and similar faiths, the priest is a specially consecrated and "holy" man, having great authority and able to perform miraculous works. He is venerated and feared by the devotees of those religions.

What the Scriptures Teach

Is this the Bible conception of priests and priesthood? To ask the question is to answer it. It is true that claims are made by the Church of Rome and the Church of England that their systems of priesthood are founded upon the Bible. But it can be demonstrated that such claims are based upon a priesthood which no longer exists: the Jewish priesthood, fulfilled in Jesus Christ. These priesthoods are based, necessarily, upon the Old Testament, upon the old error of applying commands and teaching to those for whom they were never intended. It would be

as right for a priesthood finding its authority in the Old Testament to offer all the sacrifices and perform all the ritual that the Jewish priests did, except that to the Jews it was full of meaning, but to us its meaning has been fulfilled in Christ. To offer such worship now is dead worship.

So far as regards denominations calling themselves Christian, all agree that the authority for the church of the Lord Jesus Christ is in the New Testament. Even if the Old be followed in its worship and service, the New is eagerly cited if it supports or seems to support the teachings and practices of these denominations. Yet in the New Testament nothing is found which would justify the system of the priesthood as a special and separate hierarchy.

What we do find is that the Christian priesthood is one in which all Christians are priests. Writing to those "chosen and destined by God the Father and sanctified by the Spirit for obedience to Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 1:2), Peter addresses them as "a royal priesthood." The glorious blessings that God promised to His people Israel are fulfilled in the spiritual Israel, "the true Israel of God." God had said that Israel would be to Him "a kingdom of priests" (Ex. 19:6). Peter, by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, shows the highest spiritual meaning of this promise. In verse 5 of chapter 2, he exhorts that we "be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God, through Jesus Christ." In Rev. 1:6, John writes that those who have been freed from sins through the blood of Jesus Christ has been "made priests to His God and Father."

In a glorious passage in Rev. 6, the same writer tells of the new song he heard in heaven, that Christ by His blood ransomed men for God and "made them a kingdom and priests to our God." And almost as a climax to the book of Revelation and to the whole Bible, John writes that those who share in the first resurrection and over whom "the second death has no power shall be priests of God and of Christ." (20:6).

The Service of Priest

What is the office and what the duties of a priest? In the Old Testament he is one authorised to minister in sacred things, especially to offer sacrifices at the altar. Not only was priesthood a Divine institution, but the priest himself was Divinely chosen: "For every high priest chosen from among men is appointed to act on behalf of men in relation to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. And one does not take the honour upon himself, but he is called by God, as Aaron was." (Heb. 5:1-4). The priest was not elected by the people, nor did he choose himself. Even the great High Priest, Jesus, was *sent* into the world. He received His commission and authority from God. In opening His earthly ministry He said, "He has anointed me . . . He has sent me" (Luke 4:18).

Even so, the priests in the New Testament church are "chosen by God" (1 Pet. 1:2), "a chosen race" (2:9). The sacrifices we are to offer are not those of dead animals, whose shed blood reminded the people of the price to be paid for sin: "Under the law almost everything is purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins" (Heb. 9:22). Christ in Himself offered that sacrifice once for all (verse 26). What we, as Christians, are to offer to God are spiritual and living sacrifices: "I appeal to you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship." (Rom. 12:1); "Through Him, then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge His name. Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God." (Heb. 13:15-16). To quote again 1 Pet. 2:5, we are exhorted to be "a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ."

In no sense has the church of the New Testament an official priesthood. All the wrangling about "validity of the ministry," "holy orders" and "apostolic succession" is over something which never existed and never will. In the article, "Priesthood in the New Testament" in the *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* it is very finely said:

"Nor is it any part of the New Testament conception of the priesthood of believers that any individual should act in any respect for any other. Though the intercessory supplication of believers in behalf of other persons has of late often been represented as a priestly act, as being, indeed, that activity which is essential to any real priesthood of believers, the N.T. thought is quite different . . . In ancient times it was held that men in general could not have direct access to God, that any approach to Him must be mediated by some member of the class of priests, who alone could approach God, and who accordingly must be employed by other men to represent them before Him. This whole conception vanishes in the light of Christianity. By virtue of their relation to Christ all believers have direct approach to God, and consequently, as this right of approach was formerly a priestly privilege, priesthood may now be predicated of every Christian. That none needs another to intervene between his soul and God; that none can thus intervene for another; that every soul may and must stand for itself in personal relation with God—such are the simple elements of the N.T. doctrine of the priesthood of all believers."

We are priests for ourselves, to offer ourselves; all that we have and are to God. But let us ever remember that of ourselves we are not acceptable to God. Our own priestly offerings must come to Him through Jesus Christ, our "High Priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek." Only what passes through Him is pure before God. As God looked upon His children of Israel through blood—"when I see the blood I will pass over you"—so now He looks upon us and hears us through the blood of His son. "Through HIM let us offer the sacrifice of praise continually."

The veil is rent: lo! Jesus stands
Before the throne of grace;
And clouds of incense from His hands
Fill all that glorious place.

His precious blood is sprinkled there,
Before and on the throne;
In heaven His wound-prints now declare
His work on earth is done.

Boldly our heart and voice we raise,
His name, His blood our plea:
Assured our prayers and songs of praise
Ascend by Him to Thee.

EDITOR.

Bible Things in Bible Terms

LATIN terms which have found their way into the English language often enable us to "becloud wisdom with a multitude of words." Sometimes a single Latin derivative can wreak havoc with a fundamental New Testament concept. The word "minister" is a striking example. "Minister" fails completely to express the meaning of the various New Testament Greek words for which it stands. It also does violence to the doctrine of Bible names for Bible things.

The original Latin word *min-ister* (lesser) was an expression of contrast with *mag-ister* (greater). The term in government came to mean an *assistant* to the magistrate. By way of the Catholic Church it acquired the connotation of religious *office* and found its way into current political and religious usage. So far has this word led us from original Biblical meanings that today we have: (1) a single "minister" in a whole congregation; or (2) if the church is rich and strong in numbers, an additional "associate minister" or "assistant minister."

Some day a few of the richest churches may require four or five "ministers." In that case, it may be appropriate and equally scriptural to call the No. 1 "minister" the "prime minister" in keeping with the importance of that dignitary. For is it not true that the word now in use among churches of Christ in America is practically identical in meaning with the word "pastor" in use in most Protestant and Catholic bodies?

A Relationship rather than an Office

In the New Testament the various Greek words which have been translated "minister" do not describe an *office* in the church. They picture (with one exception) the *relationship* which all Christians bear to God. Gentiles and Jews alike were once slaves of sin. The Saviour bought them from the auction block and the redeemed thus became his property ("Know ye not that . . . ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price"). The Bible describes those thus bought as Christ's "slaves" (Greek: *douloi*).

As an example of the more than one hundred times this expression is used (and regretably translated "minister"), Paul in the salutation of his letter to the church at Rome describes himself as "Paul, a slave of Jesus Christ." It is a fitting finale for John in picturing the redeemed about the throne in the New Jerusalem to write: ". . . and his slaves shall serve him." (Rev. 22:3).

Considering the present connotation of the word, it is obvious that a beautiful Christian concept is robbed of meaning when Romans is made to read: "Paul, a minister of Jesus Christ." It is pertinent to observe, also, that in no instance does Paul or any other New Testament writer refer to himself as a minister of a church. There is a tremendous gulf between the primitive Christian concept of *slave of Christ* and the latter-day innovation of *minister of a church*.

Not content with the ordinary Greek *doulos*, Paul on occasion applied the undignified or dishonourable term *huperetes* ("galley slave" or "slavey" expresses the meaning well) to himself and fellow workers. Thus he writes in 1 Cor. 4: "This is how you are to look upon us, as galley slaves of Christ . . ." The imagination is sorely strained to see behind the strut, bombast, pomposity, egotistical sureness, or papistical *excommunicados* of some "ministers" the abject humility of the slave at his oar.

From a Christian's Diary

By Berean

Billy and Obedience. I hope it's not plagiarism to quote from Dr. Graham's world copyright feature, "My Answer—by Billy Graham," in the British *Christian Herald*, but when such a preacher writes on obedience one's heart begins to be "strangely warmed." At a time when he is headline news in Australia, with a congregation of 65,000, and claiming "well over five thousand decisions for Christ," in the first week of the Melbourne Crusade, one would not expect any but the usual "faith alone," "Come to Christ, then join the church of your choice" type of gospel.

This is, in fact, the case in the issue of 14th March. To the question, "Can a man be converted without being aware of it?" he refers to Mrs. Graham, who "does not recall the time nor the place where she received Christ," and then quotes "God works in mysterious ways His wonders to perform."

In the adjacent column, however, to a question on God's rejection of Cain's sacrifice, he hits the nail smartly on the head with these words: "Cain decided

that he would worship God in his own way, while Abel followed God's command. It was not the sacrifice itself which was effective, but rather the *obedience and faith implicit in the act of worship*" (my italics). Then, quoting Hebrews 11:4, he goes on: "Today we should be very sure that we receive and act on God's way of salvation. . . God offers us a complete plan and it is our privilege and duty to accept it."

Exactly! Immediate and complete obedience to God's plans is the demonstration of our faith and repentance. If this way of salvation—"God's way of salvation" (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Col 2:12)—were preached to five thousand in Melbourne as it once was preached to three thousand in Jerusalem, the same result would be achieved and five thousand souls would be added to the Lord's body instead of being directed to human institutions.

* * *

More Coercion. We are sometimes told that it is unkind to expose the evil record or the papacy in times past; that

Roman Catholics today regret their church's past history of oppression and persecution. Such talk brings to mind some articles of Von Schultz's summary of the Leonine doctrine or laws of the R.C. world. One states: "The Pope can release from every obligation, oath or vow, either before or after being made." Another, "The execution of Papal commandments for the persecution of heretics causes the remission of sins." Yet another, "He who kills one that is excommunicated is no murderer in a legal sense."

With these in mind one listens sceptically to "Lift up your Hearts" programmes on the B.B.C., when conducted by papists. Such a "father" recently spoke in homely Irish accents, in words of seemingly whole-hearted devotion to Christ, so different from the pompous, ceremonial atmosphere of his church. It was almost cheering to one's heart to hear him stress that there is no compulsion in Christianity! "No-one can be compelled to believe," he said. Yet one wondered whether he would have dared to say that had he been broadcasting to Protestants in Italy, Spain or Columbia, where all kinds of "persuasion," including unofficial murder, are being practised against anti-catholics. More than a score of church buildings have been closed in Spain. Last year six were peremptorily closed after having been given permits to build. Services in private homes are prohibited. Marriages between Protestants are deliberately made intolerably costly by the need for court action, and housing development schemes are for R.C.s exclusively. In Colombia, under cover of revolution and civil disorder, scores of Protestants have been murdered by fanatics. Two died in January, when thugs fired into a chapel, shouting, "These Protestants must be exterminated."

This is not past history. These things are happening now, with the full approval of the Pope and they give a very clear idea of the intentions of the papacy for any democratic country once Parliament and Establishment become subject to Rome.

* * *

Spiritual Wickedness. We can only justify attention to such matters as the foregoing appalling facts, if we are ready to take action in an appropriate, Christ-like manner. We must prepare ourselves

to wield with accuracy "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: with all prayer and supplication praying at all seasons in the Spirit, and watching thereunto in all perseverance and supplication for all the saints."

Physical force is not a weapon for the Christian, "for our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places" (Eph. 6:12, 17, 18). "Be ye merciful, even as your Father is merciful. . . . For with what measure ye mete it shall be measured to you again" (Luke 6:36, 38).

* * *

Pseudonymity. It is somewhat disappointing that the main response evoked by these occasional jottings from my diary has centred on the subject of the writer's identity. It might appear that few readers disagree with what has been written, but that the most critical want to know who has written it before they attempt to contradict it.

Is it a sin to hide one's identity? Evidently the "cult of personality" is not limited to political affairs and can colour the thinking of Christians. It was such respect of persons that hampered the work of God at Corinth, calling forth the apostle's description, "carnal." Today we too often accept a preacher's words for the sake of his name alone. We can agree with words signed "A.B" but not with those signed "Y.Z." We ought to agree with a writer because he writes the truth, not because he happens to be brother Smith, brother Brown or brother Robinson. It is only because I prefer my words to be assessed for what they are worth that I propose, with the Editor's permission, to continue to place myself alongside all sincere truth-seekers and searchers of the Scripture and remain the humble servant of the reader:

BEREAN.

The New Day

The pen is clean,
The page is white,
The air is keen,
The morn is bright.

Past wrongs are dead,
Regrets are vain,
Lift up your head;
Begin again.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Apl. 5—Isaiah 6.	Acts 22.
„ 12—Psalm 59.	„ 23:1-16.
„ 19—Psalm 37:1-17.	„ 23:17-35.
„ 26—1 Kings 21:1-16.	„ 24:1-21.

Paul's Defences.

We might well regard much of Paul's writing as his "defence," but our subject here is his four reported speeches he made upon his arrest in Jerusalem. It was to be expected that so vigorous an advocate of real Christianity should meet with strong and unscrupulous opposition. There is something also in the proverb, "To be great is to be misunderstood," and careful and frequent explanation will help to reduce this misunderstanding and, in the case of "Bereans," remove it. Some do avoid argument, but it is an essential part in proclamation of the gospel, and when carried on with right motives and in the right spirit it cannot fail to do good.

(1) The defence to his own people from the stairs.

The circumstances should be borne in mind while we look at a very wise and tactful speaker. Paul had given way to the suggestion of the elders of the Jerusalem church, and undertaken an obligation of the Mosaic law in order to meet the prejudices of a portion of the members—a large proportion—who had a wrong view of Paul's work and character and—may we say it?—a backward view of their new faith.

In consequence of this, and the time being the feast of Pentecost, when Jews from all over the world were in Jerusalem, he was recognised by Jews from Asia as the preacher who had won so many Jews, proselytes and Gentiles, to Christ in that region. Knowing this and misunderstanding his position, they assumed he had brought a Gentile, with whom they had seen him, into the Temple. Death was the penalty for any Gentile who went in beyond the Outer Court—and this by authorisation of the Roman authorities themselves. So easily inflamed were the Jews by any suggestion of such desecration that it only needed the shouts of Paul's enemies to create a wild commotion, and it would seem almost a miracle by itself that Paul

was not murdered before the soldiery came and seized him. Perhaps the sacredness of the precincts allowed sufficient delay, while they dragged him into the Outer Court.

We now observe the salient points: First, Paul used the Aramaic language instead of Greek. This would please, flatter and prejudice the Jews in his favour. The Romans probably did not understand it. Then he proceeds with his story, bringing forward his connection with Jerusalem, and his training under a well-known Rabbi. He notes his own zeal in his earlier years, connects it with their own excitement, and records the efforts he made to destroy the faith they hated. His respect for the high priest and elders, and the services he gave to them, would increase their interest, and hold off their interruption. Visions and messages from God were part of their faith, and Ananias would be approved as a good Jew. It was impossible that Paul should not eventually come to the truth which hurt them, and so the uproar began again at the word "Gentiles." That God could favour the Gentiles with salvation was abhorrent to them. How blind to all good can we become?

(2) The defence before the Sanhedrin.

Here we have a very different court of appeal, and two things which happened appear to throw some discredit upon Paul. We say this humbly and not critically—how could we be critical of one whose life and work exceed in depth of love and height of sacrifice anything before or since in the same sphere? His hasty reply to the wicked instruction of the High Priest would be justified by all ordinary standards of behaviour, but not by that of Christ.

The apple of discord thrown into the council certainly served to bring a useless enquiry to an early close, but did not provide opportunity for such a reasoned approach as might have been made. However, doubtless Paul knew what a hopeless effort that would be in such a company, and would remember the treatment meted out to his Master by the same council some thirty years before.

His not knowing the High Priest could be accounted for in several ways—his shortsightedness, the constant changing of the High Priest by the Procurator,

and the continuous strife among the Sadducees for the office. Apparently the hatred between the two parties was greater than their hatred for the Christian religion. We think that Paul felt he had opened himself to accusation, as will be seen by verse 21 in ch. 24.

(3) The defence before Felix.

In this case Paul has certain charges to meet, and he meets them effectively. He does not have religious prejudice to face here, and therefore puts emphasis upon his own personal faith and attitude to the Jewish religion. Felix had a good knowledge of this through his position as Governor, and through his wife (verse 24). He has now a man before him who is the embodiment of the new faith and contrasts vividly with his accusers, the representatives of the old. Their fanatical prejudices are certainly his "head-ache." That the resurrection is brought so prominently before him is not accidental, and his subsequent interest proves it had not fallen upon altogether closed ears. However, we sadly note his procrastination, his fear of the Jews and his hope of monetary reward. This gave Paul two years of a loose kind of imprisonment, and we can only assume he used it well. It would however be a great trial to him by its enforced inactivity. We pass over Paul's interview with Festus, the new Governor, as it could hardly be called a defence. It resulted in his insistence on being heard by the Emperor to avoid assassination by the Jews.

(4) The defence before Agrippa.

We have here the fullest account of Paul's early life and that heavenly vision which changed it so wonderfully. Here is the fulfilment of God's words to Ananias, "... this man is my chosen instrument to uphold my name before the Gentiles and their kings" (9:15), and he is still to uphold it before the Emperor himself. We marvel that by God's grace this man is able to speak so plainly and impressively to his eminent audience. Festus was obviously quite disturbed, and his interruption brought out Paul's personal appeal to the King himself. I suppose we must accept (perhaps reluctantly) the later translations of Agrippa's reply. It could hardly be seriously contemptuous in view of the verdict recorded (26:30-32).

R. B. SCOTT.

Lesson Outlines for the Lord's Day School

SERIES ONE

LESSON ONE

Conversion: The 'About 3,000 persons.'

Lesson Verses: Acts 2:22-42.

Memory Verse: Acts 2:32.

Objective. People became afraid when they realised the awful consequences of their sinful state. About 3,000 of them believed the message given by the apostle Peter, turned from their former manner of life, were immersed in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of their sins, and were added to the new community.

Time. The day of Pentecost of the year A.D. 30. Between the Passover day and the day of Pentecost was a period of 50 days. The Passover was celebrated by the Jews on the 14th Abib, the name given to the month on which the Israelites came out of Egypt. (See Ex. 12, Lev. 23, Deut. 16). The month Abib covers parts of March and April. Pentecost was a yearly feast.

Place. Jerusalem. This first announcement of the Good News was to be in Jerusalem (Luke 24:47). In those days Jerusalem was the capital city of Judea in Palestine at the eastern end of the Mediterranean. The temple in which the Jews worshipped God was in Jerusalem. Jerusalem in these days is still of great importance.

Preacher. The apostle Peter was one of those chosen by the Lord Jesus Christ from among his disciples. The appellation *apostle* was given by Jesus himself (Luke 6:13). In the New Testament an apostle is an ambassador or an envoy of a king. Peter was the envoy of King Jesus, who rules in heaven and on earth. The Twelve Envoys, in Jerusalem, awaiting the fulfilment of the promise of the Father (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4) were on this day of Pentecost, 'Invested with power from on high'; they were 'Immersed into the holy Spirit' just before Peter gave his message. The Lord Jesus Christ, now returned to the right hand of his Father in Heaven, was fulfilling his promise to be with them.

The power of the holy Spirit (1) enabled the apostles to speak in foreign languages—they spoke to the foreign-speaking Jews in their native tongues;

and (2) brought back to the remembrance of the apostles all that Jesus had taught them during his sojourn on earth. Many other gifts were imparted through the Holy Spirit.

Audience. These devout Jews and proselytes had come from far and near to Jerusalem to celebrate the feast of Pentecost. Parthia, Media, Elam, Mesopotamia, Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus, Phrygia, Pamphylia, Egypt, Libya, Rome, Crete, Arabia (consult the atlas). A most suitable occasion for the first proclamation of the good news.

Message. The purpose was to give to men, in this case Jews, a 'knowledge of salvation in the forgiveness of their sins.'

Peter told the people they were wrong in supposing the apostles to be drunk. The facility in foreign languages was the outcome of being immersed into, being clothed with, the holy Spirit. The prophet Joel, about 700 B.C., had prophesied that God would pour out his Spirit in the last days, and this was being fulfilled.

Peter referred to the Lord Jesus Christ as Jesus the Nazarene, a man proved to you to be from God by the miracles, signs, and wonders which he performed.

He charged his audience with crucifying and killing the Lord Jesus Christ at the hands of non-Jews, then referred to the words of David in Ps. 16. 11. Before any decay in the body of Jesus, he had been raised again from the dead by his heavenly Father, who had exalted him to his own right hand; 'to the place where he was before.'

'God has made him whom you crucified both Lord and Christ!'

Results. The audience were cut to the heart and said to the apostles, 'What are we to do?' Peter said, 'Repent and be immersed every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins and you will receive the gift of the holy Spirit.' This promise applies to—

- (1) Yourselves,
- (2) Your children, *i.e.* all other Jews and
- (3) To those outside, *i.e.* to all men everywhere outside Jewry, who will call upon God through the Lord Jesus Christ.

Peter also said, 'Save yourselves from this perverse generation.'

Those who received the words of Peter—those disposed to eternal life—were

immersed. They were obedient to the good news. Such numbered about 3,000 who were added to the new community, the Church of Christ.

The converts devoted themselves to the teaching of the apostles, to the fellowship, to breaking of bread, and to prayers.

Objective. We are in the same sinful state as those Jews were on that day of Pentecost. The Lord Jesus Christ gave his life for us as well as for the Jews, and is anxious that we turn to him with full purpose of heart, mind, and will. We believe in, and trust in him. Let us also be immersed into the Name of the Lord Jesus for the forgiveness of our sins, and we too shall be granted the gift of the holy Spirit, and he added to the new community.

[Versions referred to in preparation of the above: Authorised; Revised; American Standard; Anderson; Campbell, Doddridge and McNight edited by A. Campbell; Weymouth; J.N.D.; Rotherham; Authentic; Moffatt; Basic English; and Englishman's Greek.

Throughout the outlines the word immersion has been used instead of the transliteration baptism which means 'dipping in water.'

Should any desire to make use of the outlines when preparing addresses and would care to submit outline or address in full, I will do my best to give useful hints.

Many brethren will doubtless forward constructive criticisms of the outlines. Such will be most welcome].

A. HOOD.

A Word NOT in season

A barber who had been converted during a mission was anxious to get others to share his own happy state. He asked the missionary what he could do to be helpful and was told that he was fortunate in being brought into such close contact with his fellow men. He was recommended to offer a 'word in season' to his customers, and determined to do so.

The next morning the first customer happened to be one of the toughest characters of this district, who gruffly said 'Shave,' has he slumped into the chair. While lathering him the barber was striving to pluck up his courage to offer the 'word in season,' and as he took up the razor and bent over towards the customer's face he became brave enough to ask, with great solemnity, 'Are you prepared to die?' 'No,' screamed the customer in terror as he jumped out of the chair and rushed in the street, with his face covered in lather, seeking a policeman and protection.

CORRESPONDENCE

I would be most interested in contacting any church which would be willing to entertain a group of French brethren during a 10-day holiday tour of England next July. We propose a trip through London in the direction of the Lancashire area, but hasten to add that no definite plans have been made.

We would probably decide to come provided the following information could be obtained: Would churches be willing to entertain a group of 15 or 20 brethren overnight, providing lodging and meals? If such could be worked out would it be of any advantage to the work in your area? Would this work too much of a hardship on the church which accepted such a programme?

We hasten to add that this would be a combined pleasure-fellowship vacation. We would like very much to see an organised evening meeting among the French and English brethren at each church which invites. We could so organise the affair that one of the French brethren would speak each evening—with either an interpreter or possibly in English. We would also like to have some English brother speak (with interpreter) to the French brethren. We feel that this would be a fine way to build up some of our leading brethren from Belgium and France.

If the time is too short we would be interested in such a trip for next year. It is our hope that in the eventuality of such being accomplished we can repay the compliment by organising a Franco-British fellowship meeting in Paris some time in the future.

DONALD DAUGHERTY.

3 Rue Leon Bourgeois,
Sèvres (S. ET/O),
France.

A WARNING

A person named William Wray, 3 Lockwood Terrace, Hull, is writing round the churches, pleading poverty and unemployment and seeking information about churches of Christ. We suggest extreme caution, as this looks like a business proposition, of which our informant has had previous experience.

NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

Blackburn.—It is with great pleasure that we record another addition in the person of Maureen Brogan. She had been attending all meetings both on Lord's Days and weeknights for a considerable time. Sister Maureen's conversion is a result of personal evangelism, for she has been brought to a knowledge of the truth by the influence of a brother and sister in the church, through the Word. We pray that she may be strengthened all the way. She was immersed on Lord's Day, February 22nd. To God be the glory.

H.W.

Ince-in-Makerfield (Lancs.). — Well-attended meetings with profitable teaching and preaching! This was our experience on Saturday and Lord's Day February 14th and 15th, 1959. Bro. Will Steele delivered the addresses. We appreciated his coming to save us, for only the day before his coming his mother had passed away, and Will had lost much rest because he desired to minister to her needs until the end. To him, and to the many Christians from neighbouring churches who came to support and encourage us, we say, 'Thank you.' Ann Whittle, a scholar from our bible school, expressed her desire to be baptised, after hearing the Gospel on February 15th, 1959. We further taught her the Word of Life, and on Lord's Day, February 22nd, 1959, she confessed Jesus as the Christ and was baptised into Him. To God, Who giveth the increase, we give the glory. Brethren, please pray for our young sister, and for us.

Morley.—The church on February 28th and March 1st celebrated its sixty-fifth anniversary. The proceedings began on the Saturday with the customary tea, when many friends and brethren from surrounding churches gathered with us; in addition to the local churches of Ardsley and Dewsbury, we had brethren from as far afield as Blackburn, Wigan, Eastwood, Kirkby-in-Ashfield and Ilkerton.

The evening meeting was presided over by Bro. Amos Barlow of the Morley church, who spoke fittingly on "Fellowship." Bro. L. Daniell, of Bristol, took the word "Consider" from Psalm 8 and

invited us to consider, not only the heavens as God's handiwork, but his greater work in Jesus Christ. Bro. L. Morgan, of Hindley, with characteristic vigour, spoke on the subject of "Exaltation," taking for his texts "Be thou exalted, O Lord" and "Bless the Lord, O my soul."

These two brethren also addressed the Lord's Day meetings. Bro. Daniell in the afternoon spoke appropriately on "Great Days" and Bro. Morgan in his gospel message spoke on "The Beauty of Jesus."

We thank our two brethren for their faithful and efficient service; also Bro. John Daniell, who assisted at the Lord's Day meeting. Touching reference was made on the Saturday to the life and work of the late Bro. Fred Sugden. We are grateful to all who by their presence and prayers helped us to enjoy a good week-end. To God be the glory.

HAROLD BAINES.

Paris.—The work in Paris (and France in general) continues to be most encouraging. We were overjoyed to witness the baptism of our Brother Georges Alibo on March 6th. Brother Alibo was contacted by our correspondence course of Bible study. Brother Jean Hovannes, who preaches regularly for the churches at Rheims, Chaumont and Nancy, reports three recent baptisms at Rheims and two at Nancy. Pray for us that such might continue.

Our young Brother Patrick Gros preached his first sermon two Sundays ago. He promises to develop into a fine proclaimer of the Word. We now have at least three young men in the French brotherhood who promise to develop into fine evangelists. Pray for them, brethren, that they may not grow weary in well-doing.

DONALD DAUGHERTY.

Tranent.—It is with great joy that we record the addition of another precious soul to our numbers. Mrs. Fraser, mother of Sister Elizabeth Buchan of Peterhead, put on her Lord in baptism on February 19th, after attending our gospel meetings for some time. We give thanks to our heavenly Father for this further proof of the power of the gospel unto salvation.

D. SCOTT.

Woodstock, Capetown.—Glad to sound out some glorious news. A young married man, whom I had been visiting for a few months at Brooklyn Chest Hospital, really studied the matter of salva-

tion and was immersed into Christ on Lord's Day, February 8th. His sister and brother-in-law are also members of the church, so while there was joy in heaven amongst the angels, there was joy amongst his family as well. This young man is very eager to become a preacher and labourer in the vineyard of the Lord.

At Bridgetown, Athlone, to help the work there, I showed gospel strip films on the Patriarchal Age, the Mosaic Age, the Christian Age, God's Plan for Redeeming Man and the History of the Church. Attendances averaged about sixty each evening.

On February 22nd, another man who formerly had been a patient also at Brooklyn Chest Hospital and whom I had visited three years ago, was immersed into Christ.

T. W. HARTLE.

U.B.S., 1995

August 15th to 22nd, 1959.

A VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL will be held (D.V.) for the above period, in Tunbridge Wells.

Last year we had a camp at Paddock Wood. This year we have hired a private school, with residential facilities, and all who come will sleep in a "proper bed."

Meetings will be as last year: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday morning sessions. First session: a lecture on "The Christian Home." Second session: Forums or Questions Answered. Afternoons free of meetings. Evening devotional and singing sessions. On the Wednesday we shall go by special bus to the seaside.

Catering will be done for us by the school staff. Breakfast, mid-day meal, high tea and light supper provided.

Cost per head (full board and including outing to sea) £3 per head per week.

Accommodation is not unlimited, so those who intend to come should book early.

Enquiries to: A. E. Winstanley, 43a Church Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent.

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Sign on board outside London chapel: 'If your knees are knocking, kneel on them!'

OBITUARY

Bathgate.—The church has lost another of its members: Bro. James Chalmers died on February 18th. Bro. David Dougall conducted the funeral in the house and at the cemetery on February 20th.

Bro. Chalmers was a regular attender at the meetings until his ill-health no longer permitted him. In winter he looked after the heating arrangements for the meetings. We shall miss him, but we submit to God's dealings.

H. HOUSTON.

Blackridge.—The church has suffered a great loss in the passing of Sister M. G. Steele, after a long illness. She died on February 13th in her 82nd year.

At the age of 16, she became a member of the Lord's body through personal contact with the late Bro. James Wardrop, and the sixty-five years of her church life were spent mostly in the church at Blackridge.

Her mortal remains were interred at Shott's Kirk Cemetery, the services, both in the home and at the grave, being conducted by Bro. Carlton Melling, of Wigan.

We commend all who mourn her passing to our heavenly Father. "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord."

JOHN MCCALLUM.

Bristol, Bedminster.—We regret to record the passing of our brother Fred Wills, on March 4th, 1959, at the age of 63 years. He had been in poor health the past few years, but the end came somewhat suddenly.

Fred Wills joined the Church of Christ at Thrissell Street, Bristol, before the first world war and became an active worker immediately. He was an acceptable preacher, and as a teacher he had no peer. He was completely sincere, and lived the life he himself advocated. He was thoughtful of others, and seemed always to know the right thing to say, at the right moment. During the first world war he threw his whole weight on the side of the conscientious objectors, and gave such help as he could to those requiring help and guidance.

He carried on a long battle against the deviations from New Testament teaching within the Church, and when he finally left the Thrissell Street Church, the

loyal brethren met for the Breaking of Bread in his own home at Fishponds. He transferred to the Bedminster Church when he went to live in one of the Council's suburbs at Knowle. At once he began working in the church, taking his full part in all its duties.

When the second world war broke out, he conducted for many months a week-night meeting for children, which he called "Sunshine Corner." This was immensely popular, and the hall was packed with children. What good was done here will never be known for, because of the closing down of many churches and Sunday schools through the raids, many were denied the usual facilities.

It would need much more space than can be spared here to record all his many activities of Christian service, although his health was never robust. Appropriately enough, our brother was laid to rest in a part of Arno's Vale Cemetery known as Sunshine Corner.

Captain and Saviour of the host,
Of Christian chivalry,
We bless Thee for our comrade true,
Now called away to Thee.

We bless Thee for his every step
In faithful following Thee,
And for his good fight fought so well,
And crowned with victory.

A. L. DANIELL.

Scholes.—The church deeply mourns the passing of our beloved brother, Albert Bradbury, on February 17th, at the age of 43. Our brother was a true and faithful convert to the church of our Lord Jesus Christ, having obeyed the gospel four years ago. The pattern of his life in that space of time shone brightly through ill-health, physical affliction and travel difficulties, which finally marred his fellowship around the Lord's table. To the end, however, he remained faithful to the Lord. To his relatives, who miss the love and inspiration which he shed, we tender our sincere sympathy, and pray for God's richest blessing upon them at this time of trial and sorrow.

Bro. James Melling, senior, conducted the funeral services at the home and the graveside in Gorton, Manchester.

J. ASPINALL.

THE HYMN BOOK: PRECENTORS' EDITION

These are now being bound, and, it is hoped, will be available very shortly. The printed pages are interleaved with heavy quality opaque paper, allowing precentors to insert their own tunes on both sides of the leaves.

The number being so bound is very limited. Orders will be dealt with in strict rotation, so please send early to Paul Jones, 41 Pendragon Road, Birmingham 22B. Price 16/- post paid.

COMING EVENTS

Eastwood.—Anniversary services during the week-end May 2nd and 3rd. Speaker: Bro. T. McDonald of Dewsbury on Saturday, May 2nd; Tea 4 p.m. in the Community Centre, Church Street, Eastwood. 6 p.m.: Public Meeting, speakers: Bro. T. McDonald, Bro. A. L. Frith, Cleveleys. An intimation from church secretaries of numbers intending to join with us would assist us in catering. We want you to come.

CHAS. LIMB (Sec.).

Hindley.—The elders of the church meeting in Argyle Street, regret to announce that we are not holding a Bible School this year.

We do, however, invite young brethren willing to help with a Mission, conducted by Bro. A. E. Winstanley, Saturday, May 16th to Thursday, May 21st. Any willing to help in personal work and open-air meetings will be welcome. Hospital-ity provided.

Write for further particulars, if required, to L. Morgan, 'Briarcroft,' 39c Atherton Road, Hindley Green, Wigan.

We request the prayers of the brethren for this effort.

Morley.—Special Gospel Campaign during April. Meetings Saturdays and Lord's Days. Saturday meetings at 7 p.m. April 4-5, Bro. Alex Allen (Blackburn), April 11-12, Bro. John Breakell (Eastwood), April 18-19, Bro. Ralph Limb (Eastwood).

Saturday, April 25th, Special Rally. Tea 4 p.m., Evening Meeting 6 p.m. Speakers: Bren. F. C. Day (Birmingham), and Tom Kemp (Hindley). Bro. Kemp will address the meetings on the Lord's Day.

Come and help to make our meetings a success. Support us by your prayers, 'that the Word of God may have free course and be glorified.'

H. BAINES (Secretary).

Ulverston.—Anniversary meetings, Saturday and Lord's Day, April 18th and 19th. Saturday: speakers, Bren. R. B. Scott (Kentish Town), A. L. Frith (Cleveleys), J. Melling (Wigan), and D. Dougall (Wallacestone); afternoon 3 o'clock, evening 6 o'clock. Tea will be provided. Will brethren hoping to come, please inform us so that catering arrangements can be made? Write: J. M. Black, 37 The Gill, Ulverston.

Wigan (Alburt Street).—Special Gospel Effort, Lord's Day, March 29th to April 12th. Gospel Meetings, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays each week, all at 7.30 p.m. Preacher: Bro. "Bill" Richardson, of Holland.

Support in this effort will be greatly appreciated.

LIST OF CHURCHES IN MARCH S.S.

We have been informed that if a meeting at Lyddington is now held it is in the home of Bro. Harry Muggleton, Stoke Road, Lyddington. Mrs. Cheatele, 88 years old, is now living at 13 Ratcliff Road, Melton Road, Leicester, and meets with the brethren in the Adult School.

Please correct your list accordingly.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

L. H. Channing, 10 Mandeville Road, Aylesbury, Bucks. Tel. (as before) Aylesbury 2875.

HOLIDAYS THIS YEAR?

Why not BRIGHTON, where you get every holiday facility, plus the opportunity to maintain your Christian fellowship with the Church of Christ meeting in Oxford Street (London Road).

The brethren there will welcome you, and perhaps you could serve them on Lord's Day morning and evening, and on Tuesdays at 7.30 p.m. COME!

Get in touch with: E. T. Thorpe, 32 Wilbury Crescent, Hove, 4.

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All matter for insertion must be sent before the 10th of the month (news items the 15th) to the Editor: C. MELLING, 133 Long Lane, Hindley, Lancs.

Forthcoming events and personal notices: 3/- for three lines minimum; 8d. per line over three lines.

EVANGELIST FUND: Contributions to R. McDONALD, "Aldersyde," 10 Mardale Road, Bennett Lane, Dewsbury, Yorks.

Secretary of Conference Committee: A. HOOD, 45 Park Road, Hindley, Nr. Wigan.

NYASALAND MISSION. Contributions to W. STEELE, 31 Niddrie Road, Portobello, Edinburgh, Mid Lothian.

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