

# *The* **SCRIPTURE STANDARD**

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

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## **GLORY?**

WE live in a country that values its past glory. A visit to the museums in Edinburgh Castle will remind us of the military glories of bygone ages. Medals for valour, tattered flags from great battles, mementoes of great victories, all the nostalgia of Glory. Perhaps to the christians it speaks more clearly of a world that knows not God or His way to glory.

What does the Bible say to us today about glory? Glory is very much a biblical word, one commonly used by us, but could we easily describe what the Bible means when it uses this word?

Jesus in His great prayer to His Father, which is recorded in John's gospel chapter 17, used the word several times. These words of prayer were uttered in the upper room in the last few peaceful moments Jesus had with his disciples before He crossed the brook Kedron to go to the Garden of Gethsemane. He prays briefly for himself in the opening verses and then the rest of His prayer is devoted to the needs of His disciples and those who should believe through their word. His prayer for himself is, that He might receive the "glory he had previously had with His Father" before creation. It seems strange that the meek and holy Jesus should be so concerned with glory that He mentions it five times in the first five verses. Perhaps His concept of glory and our concept are different. His desire to have the glory which He had had in the presence of God points us in the right direction for an understanding of what real glory is. Real glory has to do with the presence of God.

If we cast our mind back to the Exodus from Egypt, the people led by Moses were out in the wilderness. The security of Egypt was left behind and they were going they knew not where. Who would provide for them in this wilderness? Moses? Aaron? So they complained about their plight. They had lost courage, lost their faith and most of all they had lost sight of God. In Exodus 16:10 we read, "It came to pass as Aaron spoke unto the whole congregation of the children of Israel that they looked towards the wilderness and behold the glory of the Lord appeared in the cloud" The glory (presence) of God was testified by the cloud. Its daily presence was a constant reminder that God was with them. Glory has to do with God's presence.

When Moses came down from Mount Sinai from the presence of God the Apostle Paul remarks, "that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance." 2 Cor. 3:7. Moses had been with God and his face shone with the glory of that encounter.

The writer to the Hebrews says of Jesus that He was "the brightness of His (God's) Glory" Heb. 1:3. Jesus said of himself that "he that hath seen me hath seen the Father". If we wish to see God we look to Jesus Christ, to His life and work, for He is the very brightness of the glory of God.

Jesus prays for Glory on the cross when he says, "the hour is come. Glorify thy son." We could be forgiven for wondering where the glory was in such a cruel and savage way of death. Indeed Paul quotes from Deuteronomy when he says to the Galatian Christians, "cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree". Crucifixion was degrading and humiliating and intended to be just that. But Calvary and everything associated with it have been glorified by the presence of God. There was manifested to all men, the great love of God for the human race. The centurion present at the cross recognised the presence of God and was moved to exclaim, "truly this man was the Son of God". Today we can sing the hymn. In the cross of Christ I glory. In Jesus Christ we see God reconciling the world to Himself at Calvary. In His life He demonstrated the presence of God and in His death He displayed the glory of God's saving power.

Later in the 17th Chapter of John's gospel Jesus prays that His disciples might be sanctified as they are sent out into the world. Then he prays for those who should believe through the work of the disciples that they might be united even as He and His Father are one.

Here we see the confidence of Jesus in His disciples and those who should follow. No question in His mind that they would not succeed, but rather the confidence that the work would prosper and grow down the ages. This faithful service of the disciples is to be the glory of Christ. In Jn. 17:10 He says, "and I am glorified in them". Paul in Gal. 3:21 says, "unto Him be glory in the Church ..... throughout all ages". This is the work of the Church in every age to so worship, preach and live that Christ is glorified in our lives. Perhaps, like the Jews of old, we get lost in the wilderness of life and lose sight of God and His glory. Sometimes we get discouraged and lose heart because the task seems too big and the resources too few. Remember that Jesus entrusted His work to eleven trembling, fearful, disciples who had a world to convert.

If we seek glory it will be found in the beauty of holiness, in the sanctified life. Glory will only be found in the presence of God, His presence in our lives setting us apart to His service.

Finally, Jesus prays in verse 24 that His followers, "be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory". If we have received the glory of the presence of God in our lives Jesus is praying that we might be with Him through eternity and share in His glory.

J. K. KNELLER, Tranent

*Brother James Gardiner has been unable to edit this issue of the Scripture Standard. While on holiday in Greece his wife, Betty, badly fractured her femur which required urgent hospital treatment. They have now returned to Britain and Betty is recovering in hospital.*

*We are grateful to all the brethren who have contributed articles at short notice to enable us to publish this issue.*

## THE ARCH-DECEIVER

AT the end of April 1943 the drowned body of Major William Martin, Royal Marines, was washed ashore in the Gulf of Cadiz, with a brief-case containing sealed envelopes chained to the wrist. Not far away floated a small rubber dinghy - obviously from a ditched aircraft. The pockets of the dead man's uniform contained an Identity Card No. 148228, a worn photograph of a girl, letters signed 'Palm', a jeweller's receipt for an engagement ring, ticket stubs from a London theatre, bus tickets, keys, and a letter from a bank manager about a slight overdraft (similar probably to many I have written in my time as a banker).

The Spanish authorities carried out a post mortem, and the presence of water in the lungs confirmed death by drowning. Since the sympathies of the Chief of the Spanish Naval Staff lay with the Nazis, there was a delay of two weeks before the brief-case was handed over to the British ambassador, and in that time the contents had been copied and the envelopes carefully resealed by a German agent. They revealed that the expected invasion of southern Europe would not be in Sicily, as expected, but in Sardinia, with diversionary attacks in Greece.

Also during this delay there had been an urgent exchange of signals between British high commands on the whereabouts of papers of great secrecy and importance known to have been in the possession of a courier named Major Martin.

The Germans regarded the drowning of Major Martin as an extraordinary piece of luck and carried out a major redistribution of land, sea and airforces to meet the attacks in Sardinia and Greece. It does not seem to have entered the minds of German commanders such as Admiral Doenitz and Field-Marschals Keitel and Rommel that the whole thing might be a plant. The corpse was that of an unnamed civilian who had died in London of pneumonia - hence the water in the lungs - and been taken to the Spanish coast by submarine. The rest of the evidence had been contrived. On 10 July the Allies landed in Sicily.

There is a lesson here for all of us who are in Christ Jesus. Deception is a strategy of war and our enemy Satan is the master of it. You see, originally, man believed in one God, but Satan introduced false gods (idols) to corrupt the power structure of the universe. God established prophets to declare His will, but Satan created false prophets to contradict the faithful. God sent the Messiah, Jesus, to save the world, but Satan introduced pseudo-Messiahs to mislead those who looked for the true one. God chose certain men to be apostles or envoys to an alien world, but Satan created false apostles to deny the truth. God appointed teachers to impart sound doctrine, but Satan introduced false teachers to spread abroad destructive heresies. God's ambassadors performed many miracles to confirm the truth of their declarations and to create faith in their testimony, but Satan engaged in the performance of false miracles to defeat the purpose of God. God founded one church through which to fulfil his plans, but Satan created many churches to divide and discourage believers and to frustrate the accomplishment of the divine will on earth.

Paul revealed to us the extent of Satan's abilities at deception when he wrote: "For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light" (2 Corinthians 11:14). My brethren, we should never underestimate this arch-deceiver. He is as active today as he ever was. But remember, he might be an inveterate enemy, but he is not an invincible one. Jesus overcame him, and we can too if we but remain faithful to our Lord. If Satan is active then we must enlighten. Go to it then brethren! Fear him not! The victory is ours! Victory is in Jesus!

IAN S. DAVIDSON, Motherwell.

## GLEANINGS

"Let her glean even among the sheaves." Ruth 2:15

### SPIRITUAL BEAUTY

"Moses wist not that...his face shone." Exodus 34:29

"SPIRITUAL beauty is loveliest when it is unconsciously possessed. Self-conscious virtue is lean and uncrowded. Moses has been closeted with God. The glory of the Lord has been poured upon him, bathing him in unearthly brightness, so that when he returns to the mountain-base his countenance shines like the light. The same transformation is effected every day, and by the same means. Spiritual communion alters the fashion of the countenance. The supreme beauty of a face is its light, and spirituality makes 'a face illumined'. The power of a beautiful spirit makes many a plain face lovely. The face of Moses was transfigured by the glory of the Eternal. But 'Moses wist not that his face shone'. That is the supreme height of spiritual loveliness; to be lovely, and not to know it. Surely this is a lesson we all need to learn. Virtue is so apt to become self-conscious, and so to lose its glow. Take the grace of humility. Humility is very beautiful when we see it unimpaired. It is exquisite with the loveliness of Christ. But there is a self-conscious humility which is only a very subtle species of pride. It is possible to boast of our humility. There are men and women whose only source of pride appears to be their modesty. How often we meet with men who, when requested to do some service, immediately hoist the flag of their humility, and declare that they are of the humble sort, and prefer to keep in the shade! Yes, but humility takes the lowest place, and does not know that her face shines. Pride can take the lowest place, and find her delight in the thought of her presumably shining face. Self-consciousness always tends to sour humility, and pervert it into pride. 'Moses wist not that his face shone'."

J. H. Jowett

### HEART-HUNGER FOR CHRIST'S LOVE

"When I read the Bible, I gather a great deal from the Old Testament and from the Pauline portions of the New Testament; but after all, I am conscious that the fruit of the Bible is Christ. That is what I read it for, and that is what I find that is worth reading. I have had a hunger to be loved of Christ. You all know, in some relations, what it is to be hungry for love. Your heart seems unsatisfied till you can draw something more toward you from those that are dearest to you. There have been times when I have had an unspeakable heart-hunger for Christ's love".

Henry Drummond

### A ROYAL THEOCRACY

"The reign of Christ is a royal theocracy; it is the kingdom of God on earth; it is the divinely imperial administration; it is a government which combines the two grand ideas of divinity and royalty. The two highest conceptions possible to man are its principal attributes. We have no higher idea of government than the imperial, and there is no loftier conception possible of imperial rule than the divine. Such is the rule of the Lord Messiah. This being so, it transcends all other forms of government; it over-rules every other existing power; it supersedes without exception each existent authority. It is a sufficient answer to any tribunal that dares presume to interfere with our submission to the commands of Jesus - 'We ought to obey God rather than men.' In it are fulfilled the ecstatic strains of Judah's prophetic bard, 'Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Father of the everlasting age, The

Prince of Peace; Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end; upon the throne of David and upon his kingdom, to order it and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth, even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this." T. H. Milner

### CHANGING BEER INTO CARPETS

"An infidel said to a converted drunkard, "Surely you don't believe these Bible miracles, such as Christ changing water into wine?" "No difficulty in believing that," he replied. "You come to my home and I'll show you how Christ changed beer into carpets, chairs, and a piano!"

### THOU ART THE SAME

"Thou art the same!" No change takes place in Thee.

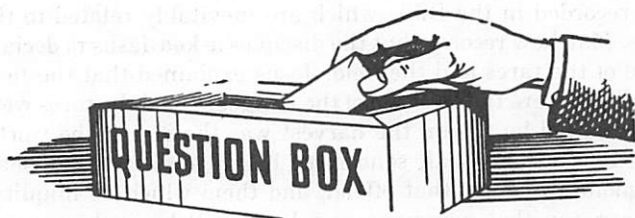
Thou art the same - though all else changeth here;

Thou art the same - the same continually, -

Ever the same to greet each opening year.

J. Danson Smith

SELECTED BY LEONARD MORGAN




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Conducted by  
Alf Marsden

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**"Can you please tell us something about the Second Coming of Christ? We do not seem to get much teaching on this subject in our Church."**

That Jesus is coming again cannot be doubted by anyone who studies God's word. When Paul wrote to the Church at Thessalonica he said, "And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you: To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints" (1 Thess. 3:12,13). John also makes a call to continuance in the Christian walk when he says, "And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming" (1 John 2:28). This grand and glorious time has been looked for by the saints throughout the ages, and we today also long for that day, and if the Lord should tarry, so will the saints in future days. When Jesus ascended from Mount Olivet those who were there looked stedfastly up to heaven as they saw Him go. The two in white apparel confirmed the longing hopes of those disciples who watched their Master go, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:10,11).

### The Day of the Lord

This phrase was in general use in the Old Testament and is used by Amos pertaining to the judgment on the nation of Israel, "Woe unto you that desire the day of the Lord: to what end is it for you? the day of the Lord is darkness, and not light. As if a man did flee from a lion and a bear met him; or went into a house, and leaned his hand on the wall, and a serpent bit him. Shall not the day of the Lord be darkness, and not light? even very dark, and no brightness in it". (Amos

5:18-20). Even in those early days the realisation of 'the day of the Lord' indicated doom for those who had not conformed to the will of God, and this ought to be a salutary lesson for those today who despise God and heed not His counsels.

Isaiah also confirms the terrible nature of 'the day of the Lord' against those who are lofty and puffed up and do not humble themselves before God (read Isaiah 2:10-22). He also illustrates quite clearly the insignificance of man when contrasted with the Almighty God. Similarly, Ezekiel castigates the prophets of Israel for their defection and lack of attention to God's will (Ezek. 13:5ff).

In the N.T. 'the day of the Lord' is the second coming of Christ. There are equivalent references which are inter-changeable and mean the same thing, e.g., 'the day of God' (2 Peter 3:12); 'the day of Jesus Christ' (Phil. 1:6); 'the day of the Lord Jesus' (1 Cor. 5:5); 'the day of our Lord Jesus Christ' (1 Cor. 1:8); it may also be referred to quite simply as 'that day' (2 Thess. 1:10); 'the last day' (John 6:39ff); or 'the great day' (Jude 6). Whatever expression is used it seems that the N.T. writers viewed the event as being of great importance, and we can understand that it would be the corner-stone of their great expectations.

### Related Events

There are events recorded in the Bible which are inevitably related to the second coming of Jesus. Matthew records that the disciples asked Jesus to declare unto them the parable of the tares and the field. Jesus explained that the field was the world, the good seed were the children of the Kingdom, and the tares were the ones who had been sowed by Satan; the harvest was the end of the world. Jesus then said, "The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity" (Matt. 13:41). So we can say that accompanying Jesus will be "holy angels", indeed, Matt. 25:31 makes this clear, "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory". It would appear that the "holy ones" are the saints as mentioned in 1 Thess. 3:13, "To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints". This coming of Jesus with His saints will not be, as pre-millennialists teach, with "raptured Christians" who will reign with Him on earth, indeed, the so-called "rapture passage" (1 Thess. 4:14-17) does not speak of *two* comings of Jesus, nor that the Lord will come to *the earth*. Paul simply says, "So shall we *ever* be with the Lord."

All the dead will be raised. An examination of 1 Thess. 4:16 and 1 Cor. 15 will indicate that perhaps Christians only are mentioned, "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first." (1 Thess. 4:16). John in his gospel seems to indicate that *all* who are in the graves shall come forth, "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and, they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (John 5:28,29). Furthermore, according to John, Jesus has a specific promise to those who obey Him, "And this is the will of him that sent me, that everyone which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day" (John 6:40. See also vv 44,54).

There will be a judgment. (Read Matt. 25:31-46). These words of Jesus indicate that mind-stopping event when all nations will be gathered before the throne of His glory. It is then that the final, cataclysmic separation will take place. Oh, what an awful day that will be for those on the left-hand side! To be led

away from the Lord and to *ever be with Satan*. We say to ourselves, "Well, surely, no sane person would willingly choose that", but the tragedy is, of course, that many millions of people are. Jesus seems to indicate that this will occur on the last day, "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day" (John 12:48). These words of the Lord illustrate how serious it is for those who speak and teach His words to others. We *must* 'get it right.'

The world will be destroyed. It is Peter who tells us about this in his second letter. (Read 2 Peter 3:1-13). In verse 10 Peter tells us that the destruction will take place on the "day of the Lord", or "the last day"; "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." The Christian is consoled by the assertion that there will be "new heavens" and "a new earth" wherein dwelleth righteousness.

### Further Considerations

The coming of the Lord will be sudden. Jesus said, "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only" (Matt. 24:36ff. See also Matt. 25:1-12; 1 Thess. 5:1-11; 2 Pet. 3:1-10). There is certainly no attempt made to hide the second coming of the Lord so far as the Bible is concerned, but what is stressed is the *unexpected* nature of His return. The Christian knows that his Lord *will* return; he doesn't know when that will be so he must always be watchful. The message of the two in white raiment on Mount Olivet was that the disciple should not be constantly looking up to heaven, but that he should be busy doing his Master's work and so preparing himself for "that day".

There can also be little doubt that the first Christians expected the return of the Lord *in their lifetime*. Paul told the saints at Corinth that they should be enriched in Christ, "So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Cor. 1:7). Paul also exhorted the saints at Philippi, "Let your moderation be known unto all men. The lord is at hand" (Phil. 4:5). He also said to Titus, "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:13). The imminence of the Lord's return does not necessarily mean that it must take place *immediately*; the word also means 'threatening to occur'; 'impending'; so we can say that the Lord's return is *always* threatening to take place, but the important point is that its final occurrence is *certain*. The appreciation of this idea tells us that the Lord can come at *any* time, and I have found nothing in the Bible which would serve to indicate what the *precise* time would be.

What can we then say to those who claim to fix the date of the Lord's return from Biblical prophecy? Well, I believe that we have to say that the concept of "the thief in the night" does away with *all* date-fixing. What the sinner needs to do immediately is to make his peace with God through obedience to Christ Jesus, His Son. What the Christian needs to do is to carry on with his Master's work while He yet tarryes. The Lord is coming again; that is certain. If we remain faithful we shall be with Him at 'that day'; that is certain. If people choose to ignore Him while they live here on earth, they will be banished from His presence on 'that day'; that is certain. We know, each one of us what we have to do. Let us arise quickly and do it.

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

# HOLINESS

"Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof". Rom. 13:14. Holiness is defined as Christ-like-ness. A very high standard, indeed the highest. If we are to reach it, we must keep our eyes on the target, Jesus Christ, so that we are continually aiming in the right direction. It is of the first importance that we as christians be following the true road, and not swayed by the world.

Jesus clearly spoke of the danger of putting our hand to the plough and looking back when he said, "No one who puts his hand to the plough and looks back is fit for the kingdom". Luke 9:62. Fit for the kingdom! Brethren are we fit for the kingdom? Dare we ponder on this statement of the Lord? The object lesson of the ploughman teaches us that if we are to be Christ-like, then clearly our lives must steadfastly reflect His life. If we take our eyes from the Lord Jesus for but a while, we may lose our way, our status, and in the end our very soul. Departure from Jesus will be seen in our lives, to be recognised by all, yet in self delusion not acknowledging to ourselves the symptom or fact of our error. In simplicity brethren we must take care to keep our eyes upon Jesus. Take time to be holy. The writer to the Hebrews has said, "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith". Heb. 12:2.

When full of the Spirit, we can radiate Jesus, letting the Spirit motivate our emotion, thought, will and actions. In this way, His desires become our desires. We become His active agents, ambassadors for Christ. 2 Cor. 5:20. We take it then just as the ambassador represents his country in a foreign land, so must we who are called to represent the kingdom of God in the world.

Someone has said that within everyone there is a vacuum which only God can fill. Now that is a great truth. Consequently the christian should be filled to running over. Again it has been said that in every sinner there is a saint struggling to get out. Likewise, in every saint there is a sinner trying to take over - the Devil. Beware brethren lest you be overtaken to such an extent that you cannot cope. Remember this, God does not leave us, it is the individual who leaves God.

Jesus speaks of our responsibility to God whom we must worship and serve according to His commands. Mark 12:30. This and many other commands set standards which seem at times impossible to reach, and so they are, unless our response flows from a regenerated heart that is right with God. It is more than important, it is essential, that we faithfully keep His commands.

Satan is ever trying to spoil that relationship just as he tried to do so unsuccessfully with Jesus. Luke 4:1-13. The onus is firmly upon the individual to seek and know Jesus fully. If our heart is not fully open to the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, we cannot testify of Jesus and glorify Him as we should in our lives. John 15:25-27. The Spirit is there to guide and help us. As we look at the life of Jesus we see and desire the life that can be ours as we allow the Holy Spirit to fill and control us.

Likeness to Thee: for this I pray  
more of Thyself in me display,  
so shall Thy life reflected be;

Thy likeness shine: undimmed in me. W. J. Brand

More than all else, we need the compassionate heart of Jesus. Without this we cannot hope to be like Him. Brethren we need to understand that many fail and falter because they do not know the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.



Let us check up on our spiritual larder, and if need be, restock with the true ingredients - love, power and blessing.

A. P. SHARP, Newtongrange

## LEST WE FALL

THE 51st Psalm is a psalm of David's expressing his deep contrition for the terrible sin that he had committed. The sin that David laments was the folly and wickedness which he committed with his neighbour's wife Bathsheba (2 Samuel 11). This sin led him into further sin in which he arranged the death of Uriah, the husband of Bathsheba, after which he took her to be his wife.

Now in this folly of David's lies a warning to all of us. David was a very righteous and upright man, a man of great repute of whom it was said that, "he turned not aside from the commandments of the Lord all the days of his life, save only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite". (1 Kings 15:5). David's repentance and contrition in this Psalm 51, for his adultery and for his wretched scheming, which was really murder in an indirect way, his repentance was so great and genuinethat there can be no doubt that God, in His infinite mercy, was able to forgive him. And so our warning lies in this, that he who thinks he stands may take heed lest he falls. We, of the New Testament church, know that our sins prior to our baptism for the remission of sins, have been forgiven us through our faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, but we are still subject to the trials of temptation etc., to all the wiles of Satan, and we must always be on our guard. We may think we are strong in the faith, but when suddenly confronted with temptation, even as David was, who knows but what we also may weaken and fall. Which one of us could compare with David's record towards God that "he turned not aside from the commandments of the Lord all the days of his life, save only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite". Not many, I feel sure.

In view of all this let us not be too critical of others who have fallen from grace, but rather let us pray for them and endeavour to be a Nathan who was sent by God to bring David to a sense of his guilt and to which he responded, as we can read in this Psalm 51.

Therefore let us watch and pray that we, who cannot claim such a repute as David had, that we fall not in temptation, and may we never cease endeavouring to bring the fallen to an awareness of their guilt and to a need for true repentance and a return to our merciful God. Let us always endeavour to be humble before our heavenly Father and to make our approach unto Him even as the penitent publican in our Lord's parable given in Luke 18:13 when he said, "God be merciful to me a sinner".

## A THOUGHT

Holidays are an important part of the family year. The weeks of anticipation, the careful planning, scrimping and saving, seem all worthwhile when we get away. Leisure and time off is very necessary. When God is in the picture, an added bonus is received. Try to make the holiday fit in with a visit to the local church. Take time to be holy.

### Rest

After the disciples first preaching tour, Jesus said to them, "Come aside into a desert place and rest a while ....." Mark 6:31. He went on to comment that there

were, "many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat". Have you found yourself saying, "I am so busy, I can hardly find time to sit down and relax?" If so, plan some leisure time in your holiday. Even Take time to be Holy.

### Sharing

A second element for a successful holiday is sharing. A time of sharing the chores, the planning, the errands, yes, and even the word of God. Show the faith, share the faith, live the faith. In this you will show to others that indeed you are a church member. Take time to be holy.

### Adventure

An ideal holiday also involves a spirit of adventure. Do this by exploring a new area. Look around, a christian family might be in the area. Share the love of God with them. Let it be seen. Take time to be holy.

When going on holiday take someone with you. Share it. When going away make sure that you take Jesus with you. In Him, is all joy, pleasure and happiness to be found. Just don't keep the faith - share it.

Have a good holiday.

A. P. SHARP, Newtongrange.

## SCRIPTURE READINGS

### AUGUST 1984

5—Gen. 2:1-17      Romans 6  
12—Deut. 5:22-33    Romans 7  
19—Deut. 6:1-15     Romans 8:1-17  
26—Psa. 44:1 & 9-26    Romans 8:18-39  
To do justice to these chapters I would have to attempt a book. However, a few columns is all I have, so I hope you understand.

### SIN

The apostle Paul once wrote: "This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief" (1 Timothy 1:15). *Sin is universal.* "There is none righteous no not one" (Romans 3:10). "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23).

*Sin is missing the mark.* It is man's failure to be what he was meant to be and what he should have been. G. K. Chesterton has said: "Whatever else is true of man, man is not what he meant to be".

*Sin is rebellion against God.* It is the refusal to submit, the insistence on taking one's own way and not God's way. In other words, it is saying: "Not thy will, but mine be done!" It is the enthronement of self and dethronement of God.

*Sin is transgression against God's law.* This speaks of sin against knowledge. Some might think they are excused because they know not God's will, but they are responsible for the neglect of a knowledge which they could have known. It is no defence to say, "I never knew," if the knowledge in question was open and attainable, which it is.

*Sin is imperfection.* How many can say: "I am the perfect son" or "I am the perfect daughter" or "I am the perfect husband" or "I am the perfect wife?" etc.

Sin is like a king, and men have become his wretched subjects. Sin is like a master, and men have become his helpless slaves. Sin is like a foe, and men have become his occupied territory.

James wrote: "Let no one say when he is tempted, 'I am tempted by God;' for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor

does He Himself tempt anyone. But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full grown brings forth death" (James 1:13-15). Death is a separation. Physical death is a separation of the spirit from the body (James 2:26). Spiritual death is the separation of the spirit of man from the Spirit of God. Eternal death is the eternal separation of man from the Everlasting God. Jesus came to unite man to the Father through Him. In other words, He came to give life, and to give it more abundantly. Only Jesus can deliver the sinner from the body of death (Romans 7:24, 25).

### FLESH

We have to be careful with this word. A lot of people equate it simply with the body, but that is a mistake. Paul, for example, wrote to the saints: "But you are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwells in you" (Romans 8:9). What then does Paul mean here by "the flesh?"

Albert Barnes says: "The flesh is human nature, corrupted by sin and selfishly concerned only with its own gratification." C. Norman Bartlett writes: "The flesh is unsanctified human nature, and represents all that we are apart from God." William Barclay states: "The flesh is human nature as it has become through sin. Man's sin, his own sin and the sin of mankind, has, as it were, made him vulnerable to sin. It has made him fall even when he knew he was falling, and even when he did not want to fall. It has made him such that he can neither avoid the fascination of sin nor resist the power of sin. The flesh stands for the human nature weakened, vitiated, tainted by sin. The flesh is man as he is apart from Jesus Christ and His Spirit." W.E. Vine says simply: "The flesh is corrupt human nature, the

dominating element in unregenerate man." I hope these definitions help you in your understanding.

If you want to compare the works of the flesh with the fruit of the Spirit then read Galatians chapter 5. Each word Paul mentions there should be analyzed in depth. It is only after this is done that there can be a full appreciation of the two conditions.

### LAW

Our late brother William Wardrop often used to tell us at Motherwell: "The law diagnosed the disease, but Jesus provided the remedy." Paul wrote: "...for by the law is the knowledge of sin" (Romans 3:20). "What shall we say then? is the law sin? Certainly not! On the contrary, I would not have known sin except through the law. For I would not have known covetousness, unless the law had said, 'you shall not covet.' But sin, taking opportunity by the commandment, produced in me all manner of evil desire. For apart from the law sin was dead" (Romans 7:7-8).

Let it be emphasized that the law was no bad thing. "Therefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good" (Romans 7:12). But it could not justify or give life. The failure was not with the law but with man. Its purpose was simply to hold man in restraint until Christ came. "Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith" (Galatians 3:24). To be saved, man needed not a new legalistic code, but a Saviour. Faith in Him would justify and give life. Jeremiah prophesied of the new covenant in Christ Jesus (Jeremiah 31:31-34). The Hebrew writer speaks of it in his letter (Hebrews 8). Study that passage within its context. It will help you greatly.

### GRACE

The Christian is no longer under law but under grace (Romans 6:14). In my notes on "Grace" I have this comment

by someone: "Grace is that power of God which clothes a man with day-to-day fortitude and strength. Grace is that power of God which adorns a man's life with lovely things. Grace is a man's day-to-day defence and inspiration. Grace is not only the strength of the mountain top; it is the source of strength for the ordinary road of every day."

More and more in my life do I recognise the inadequacy of law. More and more in my life do I realise and experience the sufficiency of God's grace. Indeed, by the grace of God I am what I am. There but for the grace of God go I!

### THE SPIRIT

In Romans chapter 8 we have mentioned "the Spirit", "the Spirit of God", "the Spirit of Christ", and "the Spirit of adoption". There is, of course, only one Spirit (Ephesians 4:4), so these are titles which describe the same being. He is a personality of the Godhead or Godhood (Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14). He has a mind (Romans 8:27); He can teach (John 14:26, 1 Corinthians 2:13); He can reprove (John 16:8); He can guide, speak and reveal (John 16:13; 1 Timothy 4:1); He can be grieved (Ephesians 4:30); He makes intercession (Romans 8:26); etc. Jesus described him as "another Comforter" (John 14:16). Another is *allos* which means "another of the same nature"; Comforter is *Parakletos* which means literally "called to one's aid". This reveals that Jesus sent a helper like Himself who could encourage, strengthen, and support the saints during the age when He was absent.

Life is in the Spirit. Without the Spirit one is dead i.e. without the Spirit one is separated from Christ. "Now if any one does not have the Spirit of Christ he is not His" (Romans 8:9). With the gift of the Spirit one can produce the fruit of the Spirit in his or her life (Galatians 5:22-23). This

reminds me of something F.F. Bruce once wrote: "As an apple tree does not produce apples by Act of Parliament, but because it is its nature to do so, so the character of Christ cannot be produced in his people by rules and regulations; it must be the fruit of His Spirit within them".

Dear disciples, we have been adopted into the family of God. (Read all about Roman adoption when you have the time). Once we were slaves to sin, now we are sons and daughters of the only true and Living God. Therefore, we can call him "Abba, Father" (Romans 8:15). One day we hope to see him as he is, and be with him through all eternity. Oh blessed hope! Paul said: "For I consider that the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us" (Romans 8:18).

Paul asked a number of questions towards the conclusion of chapter 8. One of them was: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" (Romans 8:35). I wish to point out a couple of things from the list that follows. The terms "angels", "principalities", and "powers" refer to the three ranks of angels believed on by the Jews. "Height" and "depth" were technical terms dealing with the movements of the stars or planets. Astrology is no new superstition!

The love of God - how safe and sure it is! Nothing can separate us from it. My brethren take comfort and strength from that fact.

Ian S. DAVIDSON, Motherwell

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AT the close of life the question will be not, how much have you got, but how much have you given; not how much have you won, but how much have you done; not how much have you saved, but how much have you sacrificed; how much have you loved and served, not how much were you honored.

# CHRISTIANITY ISN'T FAIR!

"It isn't fair!" the indignant lady protested; and as I paused to hear her story I had to agree. For several years now, the same woman had faithfully prepared lessons and taught the children's classes. Others, equally capable of the job, had accepted no responsibilities, made no effort to assist in this demanding effort; and when their aid was solicited they had dozens of "ready made" excuses.

Somehow, it didn't register that the teachers *also* had headaches, were "nervous", had household problems, weekend guests, working husbands and demanding children. "*It isn't fair!*" that some take all the time-consuming, often exasperating, thankless work, while others go "scot-free". We could reasonably expect an equitable sharing of the load.

For that matter, "It isn't fair" that the same few do all or most of the "visiting". "It isn't fair" that the same ones are continually called upon to furnish "rides" for the aged and infirm. "It isn't fair" that the same ones feed the visiting preacher, clean the church building, furnish the bulk of the contribution, put out the bulletin, care for the sick. But thirty-four years of preaching and working with congregations has taught me that too "few" usually do these jobs.

## Christianity isn't a "fair" religion!"

Does that shock you? Well, give it some thought before rejecting it. Was it "fair" that the most godly, pure, compassionate, self-less man to walk the face of the earth was crucified upon Calvary? What was "fair" in the beheading of John, or the stoning of Stephen? If like circumstances prevailed today, would you speak up loud and strong? Even though it meant that you, from among many saints, had

to suffer death? Or would you argue that "it isn't fair" that one should die (especially *this* one) while others are unmolested?

Is it "fair" that Christians regularly meet for worship, while others have that day for fishing, hunting, or just "resting"? Christians have to support the work of the Lord, while others *get* to spend that money on new golf clubs. Is that the way you feel about it? If so, I predict that you will soon buy a new set of clubs — at the Lord's expense.

For Christianity IS UNFAIR by all worldly standards of "fairness". One of its first rules is, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." Again, "Ye are not your own . . . you are bought with a price".

The teacher who continually *gives*, and *gives*, and *gives*; does so because he, or she, has first given *self* to the Lord. If that teacher or worker in any portion of the Lord's vineyard begins to operate on a "fair" basis — doing only what "everyone else" does — usefulness to the Lord will cease.

"If they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned." (Heb. 11:13-16). Read all verses, study awhile, and then tell us if you think it is "fair"!!!

Robert F. Turner

# THE TREASURY

Many of the problems which arise from time to time among the people of God directly concern the use, or abuse, of the "Treasury". This has often led to the question, "Where is the authority for a congregation to have a treasury?"

A "Treasury" is simply a place of deposit and disbursement of collected funds. When those who were "possessors of lands or houses sold them and brought the prices ... and laid them at the apostles' feet and

distribution was made ..." a "Treasury was constituted (Acts 4:34, 35). Likewise, when Paul gave order to the saints at Corinth to lay by in store that there be no gatherings when he came, it is suggested that the money was to be put in one place - a "Treasury" - from which relief could be sent to the needy saints at Jerusalem (1 Cor. 16:1,2). The question is, was each congregation's "Treasury" of a permanent nature into which its members made regular contributions?

A congregation is the banding together of saints in any place for the strengthening and building up of the body of Christ (Eph. 4:11, 16), who with one mind pool their resources (means and abilities) under a common oversight (elders) as ordained by the Lord (Acts 14:23). There are numerous passages in the New Testament which suggest that each church had a permanent treasury constituting a potential by which its members were able to act collectively.

In Acts 4:34, 35 we find that distribution was made to the needy among them from the common treasury "at the apostles' feet". Later, Acts 6:1-6, we find a *daily* ministrations to the needs of widows. Taken together these infer the maintaining of a regular contribution into a treasury. Churches sent to Paul while he was at Corinth (2 Cor. 11:8), and the church at Philippi sent *regularly* to his needs (Phil. 1:5, 4:15, 16). Paul's language in second Corinthians 9:6-10 though making reference to a special contribution, is based on the broad principle requiring Christians to be ready *always* to meet the needs of the Lord's work. He tells them that as they sow bountifully and purposefully God is able to *continually* make all grace abound to the sowers that they will *always* have sufficient not only to meet their own needs, but also to abound unto *every* good work. Where the need is constant a regular contribution would be necessary.

Till the Lord comes again the need will remain to support faithful men in the preaching of the gospel, as will the necessity to relieve needy saints. Congregations ought to have a regular program of work and worship which will require, as it did in apostolic times, the retaining of a treasury into which saints give as they have been prospered.

Roland J. McDowell

## THE BOOK THAT ENDURES

ON the Times building in London two books are sculptured in stone. They represent respectively the past and future of human literature. On one, the Past, ivy is graven to indicate how the writings of past ages are overgrown with antiquity like the ruins of an old cathedral. On the other rests the scythe of Time to indicate how all future writings of men will be severely tested by Time as to whether they can endure, while all that is mortal perishes. On the Bible Society Building in the same street one Book is sculptured — the Book of God, with the sentence: "*The Word of the Lord endureth forever.*"

A. T. PIERSON

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CHRIST sends none away empty but those who are full of themselves.

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## BELIEF : (23)

### A GOD OF LOVE

(1 John 4:5)

In view of what has been said it need hardly be emphasised that behind such a magnificent display of mercy combined with justice there is the highest possible love. How well it accords with the perfection of God described by David (Psalm 18:30) and by our Lord himself: "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" (Matthew 5:44).

This had to do with love, for Jesus had just said to his disciples, "Love

your enemies, bless them that curse you . . . pray for them that . . . persecute you" (Matthew 5:44). Such is the nature of God's love.

### "God so loved"

"For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

Paul put it this way: "God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8).

### Love is action

We see that perfect love is always connected with action. Not without reason therefore, love is given priority when "the fruit of the Spirit" is mentioned (Galatians 5:22). Jesus said, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13). Jesus did not merely teach this precept—he followed it. He showed that the quality of our love depends upon how much we are prepared to give up for it.

Jesus gave his life, and that of his own accord. "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down and I have power to take it again" (John 10:17-18).

### The object of love

Love in action must be directed toward an object. Jesus made the object of his love plain when he said, "As the Father knoweth me, even so I know the Father, and I lay down my life for the sheep" (John 10:15-16). So God, the Father, is also involved in this great plan of redemption. But who are the sheep?

### The sheep

The greatest love is shown when one lays down his life for his friends. So the sheep for whom our Lord laid down his

life were also his friends. Yet he said to his disciples, "Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you" (John 15:14). He states the same truth thus, "My sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish . . ." (John 10:27-28). Obviously his sheep were his chosen disciples.

### The other sheep

But Jesus also said, ". . . other sheep I have which are not of this fold . . . they shall hear my voice and there shall be one fold and one shepherd" (John 10:16).

"This fold" refers only to the Jews (Matthew 10:6; 15:24). "Not of this fold" must therefore refer to the Gentiles. The door of the fold was opened to them after the Saviour's death. (See 1 Corinthians 1; Ephesians 2).

### Obedience the key

Without doubt the key which opens the door is obedience. Our Lord said to disobedient Jews, "Ye believe not (that Jesus was the Christ) because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you; my sheep hear my voice, and I know them and they follow me, and I give unto them eternal life" (John 10:26-28; Hebrews 10:9).

How beautifully this language agrees with the actuality which came to pass: "He who believes and is immersed shall be saved."

It is equal to Jesus saying: "He who believes that I am Christ, the Son of God, and hears my voice calling upon him to repent and be immersed for remission of sins, shall by obeying my voice become my sheep and be received unto my fold (the kingdom of God) thereby being set apart, saved".

### Exercises in belief

Matthew 7:21; Luke 13:23-28; Acts 5:29-32; Romans 6:3-5.

W. BROWN

(To be continued)

## NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

**EASTHOUSES:** We are pleased to announce that Brother Andrew Kerr has been attending Gospel Meetings and now has been accepted into full fellowship of the Lord's Family, our prayer is that many may follow his example.

Morris Finlay

### CHANGE OF MEETING TIME

Church of Christ meeting at 60 Kenwood Road, Stretford, Manchester. Change of time for the Breaking of Bread is 12.45 p.m. and Gospel Meeting still at 6.30 p.m.

Please note our phone number is (061) 865-4242.

Allan Ashurst

**FALSE** doctrine, like poison, will generally be rejected when administered alone. But when blended with wholesome ingredients, it may be swallowed unperceived. Take care who fills your pulpit.

"THE links of the golden chain are, love, issuing from a pure heart; a pure heart, issuing from a good conscience; and a good conscience, issuing from an active or unfeigned faith. Faith, obedience, a good conscience, a pure heart, Christian love and happiness, are, under the government of Jesus, indissoluble. This is the moral order of the present empire of the Prince of Life.

If the fountain to be polluted, the streams are corrupt. If, in the truth believed, there be the least admixture of error, faith is unsound, obedience defective, the conscience partially defiled, the heart not fully purified, love is partial, and happiness incomplete."

Alexander Campbell

"CHRISTIANITY is the perfection of the divine philanthropy which was gradually developing itself for 4000 years. It is the bright effulgence of every divine attribute, mingling and harmonizing, as the different colours in the rainbow, in the bright shining after rain, into one complete system of perfections - the perfection of glory to God in the highest heaven, the perfection of peace on earth, and the perfection of good will among men."

Alexander Campbell

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