

# The SCRIPTURE STANDARD

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

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## BREAKING THE BREAD

From time to time statements and articles appear in this magazine with which I do not fully subscribe. Some readers on learning this are extremely surprised and wonder how any self-respecting editor can possibly print material with which he does not agree. I think that we must all live and let live, and that if an opinion is *honestly held*, and is not clearly unscriptural, such an opinion should be allowed to be expressed. I don't know anyone who can claim *any form of infallibility* in scriptural matters, and surely we are all just learners, hopefully helping one-another along the path to truth. Surely we should have an open mind on all issues, and if we discover that we are mistaken on any particular subject we should try and muster up the strength of character to change. To change requires a *degree of courage* which many of us completely lack. After all, hopefully this is why we have Bible Studies - that as learners we might change our ways.

Some years ago, (September 1980), I published an article entitled "Breaking The Bread" by brother James Orton from Brentwood, Tenn., USA. I did not share the conclusions our good brother reached on the subject, but was happy for readers to examine his views. I have corresponded irregularly with brother Orton for over twenty years or so, and can recall very pleasant times when he and his family stayed with us for a few days. Brother Jack Nisbet wrote a reply to the article at the time but I had hoped that other brethren might have felt disposed to deal with some of the other individual points raised. Actually I had not fully appreciated, until that article, that there were brethren in the world who did not believe that the loaf should be physically broken before being passed amongst the brethren. The Slamannan District of churches have just discussed the subject at the Quarterly Mutual Benefit Meeting and while interest is still fresh I would care to comment upon some of the views expressed by brother Orton in his article. (My views are, of course, entirely personal and not representative of any churches or individuals).

### "This Do".

"Jesus took bread and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat: this is My body." (Matt. 26:26). Brother Orton believes that when Jesus 'broke' the bread He "broke" it by plucking a piece off the loaf and eating it. He suggests that if we notice what *the disciples did* with the bread (i.e. breaking a piece off and eating it) then we shall know what Jesus did, because Jesus' command to the disciples was "This do" i.e. "Do what I have just done". Our brother suggests that, "If Jesus merely broke the loaf as a symbolic act, the disciples, in following this example would each have broken it again and the loaf would have come back to Jesus in fourteen pieces with no one having eaten."



It seems to me that this form of logic works against Bro. Orton's case. In the first place if the intention was for the disciples to do *exactly what Jesus had done* then each and every one of the disciples would have had to have taken a loaf in his hand, blessed it, plucked a piece off it to eat, (assuming for the moment that that is what Jesus did) and then passed their loaves around the other disciples with the command to them to eat. In the second place, the loaf could not, as brother Orton suggests, have returned "to Jesus in fourteen pieces with no one having eaten" for the very simple reason that after Jesus had broken the bread He instructed the disciples *to eat of it*. "This do" was an instruction not to Christians *as individuals* but *as congregations*. That is, each *group of disciples* (congregation) must take a loaf, give thanks for it, break it, and then eat it. The same is true of the cup - each individual Christian is not to produce his own cup, but one is required *per congregation*. One loaf and one cup. Thus at the institution of the feast Jesus produced the loaf and the cup for the group of disciples assembled there. Today someone likewise in each congregation must be appointed to produce the loaf and the cup at the appointed time so that, *as a congregation*, they might break the bread. The person who brings the bread and the cup does not laud himself to the position of Christ, or seek to usurp Christ, but is merely the agent of the brethren in this matter. All things are to be done decently and in order and the alternative (of no such person being appointed to such a responsibility) would lead to several brethren producing loaves and cups, and to other similar forms of chaos. Again, "This do" requires that when the meeting begins one brother must be appointed to initiate proceedings, to take the loaf, express thanks for it, break it and pass it amongst the brethren (quoting Christ's invitation to eat it, in memory of Him.) Any brother so appointed understands, as do the congregation, that he does not usurp the place of Christ but acts simply as the humble servant of the brethren. The procedure to be followed at the Lord's Table, as originally presented by Jesus with the instructions "This do" was intended for *congregations of the Lord's body*. *Individual* Christians can not legitimately spread the table, only congregations of two or more. This, I believe, is important to remember when we discuss such passages as 1 Cor. 10:16,17.

### The Only Difference

As far as I can gather from brother Orton's article *the only difference* between the two methods is that in one case the bread is broken in several pieces before it is passed amongst the assembled brethren, and in the other case the bread is claimed to be *broken* but is "broken" by the process of plucking a piece from it. The solution, to me, seems an easy one, viz. Is there any *scriptural authority* for the idea that Jesus 'broke' the bread by taking a piece off and eating it. If there is any such scriptural authority I believe that Jim would have produced it in his article. Instead, Jim suggests that "it is not likely" that Jesus would have partaken of the cup without having partaken of the bread. I believe we require something stronger than "*likely*" to prove a case. By contrast the N.T. nowhere says that Jesus either ate of the bread or drank of the cup. Indeed at the institution of the feast the N.T. says only that Jesus **BROKE** the bread *but instructed His disciples* simply to eat of it. There is a vast gulf between *breaking* something and *eating* it. The two separate operations come from totally different Greek words and should not be confused. Bread can very easily be *broken* without being *eaten*. Every winter while feeding the wild birds I *break* large lumps of bread into small pieces for the benefit of the birds, but I do not eat it - the birds actually *eat* it. Similarly *Jesus* broke the loaf but instructed *the disciples* to eat it. What I am seeking to emphasise is that breaking and eating are not interchangeable terms, even with reference to bread, and are completely different operations as can be seen, I think, from Acts 27:35 and Matt. 14:19.

Nearly everybody **BREAKS** their bread **BEFORE** they eat it. I certainly know of no-one who, at a meal, sits and chews pieces from a whole loaf. Even the British cut the loaf into slices (as a substitute to breaking it) before they start to eat it. slice by

slice. The French and Greek peasants, working in the fields, with their lumps of bread, blocks of cheese and bottle of wine, break their bread *before* they actually eat it. Nothing very revolutionary in any of this. This was true of the apostle Paul for we read in Acts 27:35 "And when he (Paul) had thus spoken, he took bread, and gave thanks to God in the presence of them all; and when he had broken it, he began to eat." This, I suggest, clearly shows that Paul actually broke the bread (with his hands) **BEFORE** he began to eat it. I hope this illustrates the difference between breaking and eating - two separate operations. There is nothing in the N.T. to lead us to suppose that Jesus did not break the bread in the same manner as Paul did. Will someone please describe to me **HOW** Paul broke the bread - he most certainly did not break it by eating a piece off it, for he broke it **BEFORE** he ate it. Similarly Jesus *broke it* and the disciples *ate it*. After all, why should Jesus eat it? was Jesus likely to forget His own death? *The disciples* were likely to forget Jesus' death. **WE** are likely to forget His death: and so the feast is one of *remembrance* but Jesus, I suggest, was unlikely to forget. Neither did Jesus have to eat the bread, and drink the cup, to show the disciples what to do - for they were intelligent enough to obey Christ's invitation to "eat of the bread" and to "drink of the cup" without a public demonstration.

I would care to refer also to Matt. 14:19 - the feeding of the 5,000 where the wording is virtually identical to that of Matt. 26:26 (the instruction of the Lord's Table) with reference to taking bread, blessing it and breaking it (where the word 'break' comes from the same Greek word.) Jesus took *five loaves*, gave God thanks for them, broke them and gave them to the disciples to give to the multitude. Again, we are not told that he *ate* the bread but that He *broke* the loaves. Is anyone prepared to suggest that when Jesus broke the 5 loaves that He did so by plucking a portion (from each of the five) and eating it? Surely no one could imagine for a single moment that Jesus did any such thing. Plainly Jesus took each loaf in His fists and broke it into a great number of pieces *suitable for distribution* by the disciples to 5,000 people, and above. It is equally plain that Jesus did likewise when He *brokethe* bread at the institution of the feast. I can't tell into *how many pieces* Jesus broke the five loaves but it is a fact that he shattered the loaves into many fragments. John says (Chap. 6:13 RV.) "So they gathered them up, and filled 12 baskets with *broken pieces* from the 5 barley loaves, which remained over unto them that had eaten". Twelve baskets of **BROKEN** pieces remained. Again I would ask some brother to describe to me exactly How Jesus **BROKE** the 5 loaves. Did He physically break them with His hands or did He pluck a little piece off each loaf and eat it? Again the inspired record does not say that Jesus *ate* of the 5 loaves only that He *broke* them.

### Did Jesus Eat and Drink?

Brother Jim Orton, in his article, apparently believes that Jesus ate of the bread and drank of the cup at the institution of the Lord's Supper. Jim quotes the words of Jesus "But I say unto you, that I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in My father's kingdom" and reasons that Jesus would not have said, "I will not drink again" if He had not drunk the first time; "and it is not likely that he would have partaken of the cup without having partaken of the bread." While the basic logic of that statement is open to doubt, I believe that Luke's account of the transactions of that evening informs us that Christ's declaration that "He would not henceforth ... etc" was made after eating the bread of the *Passover Supper*, and the drinking the cup of the *Passover Supper* and not at the institution of the Lord's Supper. At the **PASSOVER** Jesus said, "I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God." (Luke 22:16). The following verse says, "And He took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this and divide it amongst yourselves: For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come." This again was at the *Passover Supper*. It was *after these things* that Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper, and so the remarks "I will not eat

henceforth" and "I will not drink henceforth" refer to *the Passover Supper* and not to the Lord's table.

My space has gone and there are several other matters in the article I would have cared to comment upon, including the issue as to whether Christ's body was broken or not - perhaps on another occasion. It is however a puzzle to me how brethren can claim to break the bread (albeit by plucking a piece off) and yet believe that the loaf should be passed *intact* because the body of Jesus was *preserved intact* (not a bone of Him was broken etc.). It seems to me that *breaking* the bread is the very antithesis of *preserving the loaf whole*, for symbolical reasons and references to the Passover. Jesus did not seem to know about any of that for He *broke* the bread. Thayer says 'Brake' is from Klao 'To break' and adds the comment 'Used in the N.T. of the breaking of the bread. The act of dividing a loaf so that more than one person can properly partake of it.' This was a "physical necessity in order that the communicants could eat of it." Brother Orton says that "to break the bread in the middle is symbolically wrong". I don't know of any brethren who try to break the bread 'in the middle' but it is not symbolically wrong to *break it in pieces* for that is what Jesus did, just as He did when He fed the 5,000, and just as Paul did when he *broke* his bread before he ate it.

Like brother Orton I cherish the hope that these remarks will not be construed as a reflection upon the sincerity of any of the brethren, but I do trust that readers will be energetic enough to examine carefully all scripture references on the matter, and to be guided only by what they find there, and to be mature enough to change their practice if such a practice fails to find solid scriptural authority in God's eternal word.

EDITOR

## 'WHAT A LOVELY NAME'

Sainted millions through the years have died in calm repose breathing the lovely name of Jesus. Other millions have died excruciating deaths wracked with torturous pain at the hands of merciless persecutors, yet to be heard hailing the Captain of their salvation!

Oh, that the silver tongue of the orator were ours to extoll his magnificent worth; that the poet's powers could be summoned to phrase its beauty! If the stars would sing forth, or the oceans testify, or the redwoods give aught but muted testimony, all in harmonious union would surely declare "What a lovely name, the name of Jesus!" We are not ashamed to praise him. It is not a thing effeminate for men so to do. Men more manly than the manliest among us set the precedent. When Jesus was riding toward Jerusalem upon the borrowed colt, the exuberant throng strewed clothes before him and in clarion tones hailed "Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven and glory in the highest." When Pharisees among them desired the rebuke of such behaviour, these words of the Master served as reply, "I tell you, that if *these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out!*"

Yet, "Jesus" is not the only designation ascribed to this personage. We propose that the many names given Jesus, as a many faceted diamond, serve to emit the dazzling rays of his majesty.

### Alpha and Omega

In The Revelation, chapter one, I see John in deep cogitation when suddenly the tranquility of his inner sanctuary is shattered from behind by trumpet words declaring "I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last." Turning to see, he fell at the "brazen" feet of the silver haired Son of man. John needed none to explain that alpha was the first letter of the Greek alphabet, nor that omega was the last. Instantly, this One by the credentials of His visage, portrayed Himself to be all that His title suggests; the beginning and the ending, the sum total, the living consummation of all things both conceivable and inconceivable!

The Alpha! The beginning! How ancient! The giant redwoods of our western coast date back some 2000 years, yet, they become seedlings compared to this mighty "Cedar of Lebanon" who is the Root of Jesse. Scribes of two milleniums past spoke of their ancestors of ages gone of whom was Abraham. But Alpha declared, "Before Abraham was, I am!" If Job would sound somewhat aloof maintaining his innocence, we stand with him awed and humbled contemplating the Lord's question to him—"Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? Declare if thou hast understanding." Does it boggle the mind that "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God"? Mankind spends billions of dollars in quest for a clue that speaks of his beginning. Archaeologists scratch in the sand, anthropologists study bones of apes, astronauts blast into space, still they ask, "Where did it start?" Scientists once viewed our moon as the elusive Rosetta Stone of the universe whose stoney surface once surveyed would, as hieroglyphics on tablets of basalt once did for ancient Egyptian inscriptions, whisper secrets of beginnings on bending ear. Yet, with that orb now a conquered sphere with hundreds of her naked rocks exposed to searching gaze, has served, if anything, only to deepen the mysteries of our genesis to unregenerate genius. How long till trumpet voice from Patmos' lonely isle lends credence to that more believable record, "In the beginning...God?" We find our Rosetta Stones, and lose the "Book of Life"! Alpha said, "What thou seest, write in a book." That Book is at our fingertips; centered on the mantle, displayed on the shelf or there on the table constraining wisdom to believe "Christ the beginning, and Christ the end."

Omega? Yes indeed, and glad thought too! Christ, the consumation. Where is civilization headed? It is not only "Whence came the universe," it is also "Where is it going?" Change is all about us. Corruption and corrosion engulf us. By what delicate thread is this globe suspended? And to what is the upper reach of the thread attached?

If the scarred and wrinkled face of mother earth appears to give scientists insufficient clue to a beginning, her wearisome countenance seems to betray signs of a climax. Energy shortage. Famine and pestilence stark realities. Skulduggery and mayhem monotonously persist. Millions fighting for elbow room, and elbowing for fighting room! But Omega, standing within and without, can assess the situation and say, "Heaven and earth shall pass away but my words shall never pass away." Though mountains of marble would wear to a nubbin, or oceans dry to a puddle or even shall the whole melt in fervent heat... standing still at the threshold of eternity shall be none less than The Omega. What a bold concept revealed! What confidence is ours! What a lovely name, Alpha and Omega!

### Jesus, the Fullers' Sope

Yet, probably, it is in the name "Jesus" and all that it means that the lovely aurora from heaven is best displayed. For this facet of our Gem reflects His role as "Saviour." Angel words said it all; "And thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins." Malachi seems to have captured the yearning need of the ages when he likened this "Purifier of Judah" to "fullers' sope." A fuller was one who enriched the value of cloth or yarn through a process making it thicker and more compact. Fullers' sope, or fullers' earth, is a natural clay-like emulsion which removed grease stains from the material before the fuller plied his craft. In spite of "all our righteousness," we lie in a heap before the Fuller "as filthy rags." Sin, though called by any other name, is still the smudgy, grease spot staining the soul of humanity. The wicked yet, as in former days "fleeth when no man persueth" and, still, are as "the troubled sea when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt." It is the properties of the Fullers' sope we want when seeking satisfaction from pleasures or acts of charity or deeds of kindness and even benevolence. Worthless spot removers offered by man to erase this blotch on the soul have proven to be just that. The psychologists who teach no moral standard above those individually set, have not

erased sin. Theologians tried by advancing that God is dead, the social worker tried by blaming society at large for individual wrongs, and the environment, and heredity, and poverty and lack of education. Worthless spot removers! Violence is on the increase; national faith is on the wane; witchcraft and satanism is gaining ground. The greasy smudge of sin yet stains the soul!

But, enter the lovely name of Jesus who "Shall save his people from their sins." Throw away man's failures and be cleansed by the Fullers' sope. See it as it flows from riven side mingling with our common denominator, the dust of the earth. Reason bids us look at the suspended figure on Golgotha's brow. "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow." What a lovely name the name of Jesus who has "washed from us our sins in his own blood"!

His loveliness is past finding out. The hungry have found him the Bread of Life. Master builders have hailed him the Chief Corner Stone; historians, the Son of David, yea, the Root of Jesse. Many a sin-sick and wayward soul has found in him their High Priest, Mediator and propitiation for their sins. To kings, he has stood as King of Kings; to lords as Lord of lords. To the weak he can be viewed as the Lion of the tribe of Judah; to the blind, the Light of the world. You who are dying, know that he is the Life; to the dead, he is the Resurrection. The lovers of the night skies view him as the Bright and Morning Star; to those thirsty, the Water of Life; to the lost, he is The Way. And to Almighty God? "This is my beloved Son." What lovely names are the names of Jesus!

From: 'The Light' by - Clark Carlo, Monett, Mo.

## GLEANINGS

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

**"BE OF GOOD CHEER IT IS I BE NOT AFRAID"**

"And he saw them toiling in rowing; for the wind was contrary unto them: and about the fourth watch of the night he cometh unto them, walking upon the sea, and would have passed by them."

Mark 6:48

"May we not say that He saw the disciples more clearly in the darkness than in the light; more clearly on the sea than at the service; more closely when they were toiling in rowing than when they were sitting at His feet? His tender pity makes Him most conscious of us when we want Him most. On some wild night when the storm sweeps and howls about the place, step into this little home. Here in the warm and cosy room sits the mother and the little one lies upon her lap. The older maiden moves about the place busied with a host of services; and the lad bends over his books. Which of her children, think you, the mother sees most clearly? Listen to the angry burst that comes howling about the house and then goes moaning up the hillside. It is not the baby in her arms, nor the maiden at her side, nor the lad at the table of whom the mother is most conscious. Her thoughts and heart are all away at sea, there beside her sailor son, longing to wrap him about with safety, breathing for him her prayers. He saw them toiling in rowing. There is a true sense in which Jesus sees us most clearly in our business worries and in our week-day wants. Those lands that are furthest from the sun have often more of it than the very equator. The prairies of Manitoba, where the frost is said never to go out of the ground can yet bring forth its wealth of golden corn because of the lengthened hours of sunshine in summer that undo the fierceness of the winter. And still further north there is given to the lands a summer in which the sun does not set. It is the emblem of Him. He is ever nearest to those who need Him most.

But the half is not told. "About the fourth watch of the night He cometh unto them." He has gone up the mountain side. Yes, but He never goes so far away but that

He can come to us. They are on the wild seas, and in the dark; but nothing can ever shut Him back from us. The very seas shall be His highway, and the contrary winds be but the wings on which He flies to our aid. It is good to think that the winds that beat us back from heaven are always fair winds to bring the Lord of heaven to our help.

He saith unto them, "Be of good cheer: It is I: be not afraid." Never did His words seem to be so gracious. Never did His presence seem so dear and blessed. It takes a bit of a storm to teach us what a blessed Saviour ours is, "as darkness shows us worlds of light we never saw by day."

Our Lord does not exhaust Himself in services and sacraments, and then leave us alone to go away on the rough seas of life, toiling in rowing. He sees us: He comes to us: He cheers us: He delivers us. How often have we proved it true. When worries have come sweeping and surging; when difficulties have hemmed us in; when darkness has gathered and we could not see a step before us, have we not suddenly found that Presence at our side. Some sweet "Fear not" has come over the seas; and immediately there was a great calm."

Mark Guy Pearse.

### DISMISSED BUT PROMOTED

"Stephen Girard, the infidel millionaire of Philadelphia, one Saturday bade his clerks come next day and unload a vessel which had just arrived. One young man stepped up to the desk, and said, as he turned pale, "Mr. Girard, I cannot work to-morrow." "Well, sir, if you cannot do as I wish, we can separate." "I know that, sir," said the young man; I also know that I have a widowed mother to care for, but I cannot work on Sunday." "Very well, sir," said the proprietor, "go to the cashier's desk and he will settle with you." For three weeks the young man tramped the streets of Philadelphia looking for work. One day a bank president asked Mr. Girard to name a suitable person for cashier of a new bank about to be started. After reflection Mr. Girard named this young man. "But I thought you discharged him?" "I did," was the answer, "because he would not work on Sunday; and the man who will lose his situation from principle is the man to whom you can entrust your money." "

T.W.T.

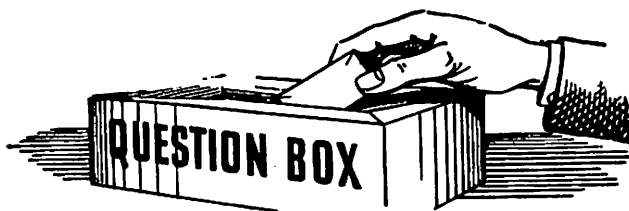
### DIVINE BEAUTY

"He hath made everything beautiful in his time." Ecclesiastes 3:11.

" "For every beauty there is an eye somewhere to see it," said a philosopher. Have we as God's children an eye to see the beautiful in everything the hand of God has touched? Above all, do we see the incomparable beauty in our Lord and Saviour?"

C.G.

Selected by LEONARD MORGAN.




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Conducted by  
Alf Marsden

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**"Has God authorised a specific way in Scripture by which the Church is to raise its funds? If so, what is it? Is there any scriptural justification for churches to charge money for services or literature provided by it in doing its work?"**

If there *is* a specific way mentioned in the Bible by which it is to raise funds, then that must automatically be the *authorised* way. This statement also raised a further question which needs to be considered, namely, that if there *is* an authorised way revealed, does this necessarily exclude any other *legitimate* way whereby a church



could increase its revenue? So let us examine the first part of the question and see if God *has* authorised a way. But before we do that, let us first make one or two pertinent observations.

In the first place, any community of Christians, because *it is* a community, has a supportive role to play toward any member of that community; in order to fulfil this role it needs money, and so the money has to be raised somehow. The supportive care exercised by the community would seem to be the most important reason for any church to raise funds.

Secondly, each community of Christians usually has one major fixed asset; it has a building in which to meet. The purchase and maintenance of this fixed asset necessitates the raising of funds. A wise and prudent community would keep such expenditure as low as possible consistent with the needs of the community; personal and collective ego and unwise management might make it an oppressive financial burden which in turn might lead to unwise (and unscriptural) methods of raising funds.

Thirdly, the on-going work of promoting the Gospel will always generate a financial requirement within the community. Funds have to be raised in order to promote and maintain this very necessary work.

How, then, are these necessary sums of money to be raised? An understanding of the principles of giving might help us, and this we shall now investigate.

#### The Principle of Giving

This is well attested to in the Bible. Paul reminded the Elders of the Church of Ephesus of his own unblemished record in this respect, "I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel" (Acts 20:33). He also has a word for those who crave after financial support, "Yea, ye yourselves know, that these hands have ministered to my necessities, and to them that were with me" (v34). Perhaps the Church wouldn't need to raise quite so much money if this were a general principle. He then goes on to give them the mind of the Lord on the subject. "I have showed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive" (v35).

Why should we give? Because God and His Son have given us the supreme example. Paul wrote to Timothy, "But (trust) in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy" (1 Tim. 6:17). He also pointed out to the Corinthian Christians, "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God" (1 Cor. 2:12). The Christian knows and understands that God gave the inestimable gift of Himself in Christ Jesus His Son. As Jesus said to His disciples, "Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give" (Matt. 10:8). I am well aware that Jesus was referring to the special powers which He had granted to them, but the principle remains the same, "freely ye have received, freely give."

#### The Scriptural Way.

There can be no doubt according to the teaching of the N.T. as to how a church should raise its funds. Paul exhorts the brethren at Corinth, "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order for the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come" (1 Cor. 16:1,2).

There are several points to notice here. One, Paul *ordered* the Corinthian and Galatian churches to make collection for the saints, in this case, the needy at Jerusalem. So the supportive care of the saints in Corinth and Galatia on behalf of the needy saints in Jerusalem was called for *explicitly* by the Apostle. This proves that the fellowship within the Body of Christ was a reality in those early days, and that the principle of inter-communion for specific purposes was demonstrated to all.

Two, the giving was to be regular and systematic. It was to be on the first day of



the week, and on that day each saint was to lay by him in store his liberality; the system of so doing would ensure "that there be no gatherings when I come". Paul's objective here would seem to be to encourage the saints to persevere in their giving week by week, and what better occasion than 'the first day of the week', that day which meant so much to the infant Church.

Three, every one had to give by measure "as God had prospered him". Each one had to make up his own mind as to how much should be given, But undoubtedly each one would be very conscious of what God had given to them. There is a sense in which we can say that although everything initially *comes* from God, while a man has something in his possession it can rightly be called *his own*, to do with as he wills. This principle was laid down by Peter when he dealt with Ananias and Sapphira. He said to Ananias, "Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power" (Acts 5:4). But surely the *measure* of the liberality is governed by what Paul wrote in his second letter to Corinth, "But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver" (2 Cor. 9:6,7).

So there *is* a specific way for the saints to raise funds, and this way, as we have shown, is revealed in God's Word. *Because* it is in God's Word it must be the *authorised* way.

#### Other Ways

In the second part of the question the questioner asks, "Is there any scriptural justification for churches to charge money for services or literature provided by it in doing its work". Well if there is, I certainly do not know of it. As I understand the position from my study of the N.T. I would conclude that the Church has three functions; to worship, to fellowship, and to preach the Gospel. If within the functions I have mentioned it can fulfil the scriptural injunction of 'doing good unto all men', then I would say that the resources needed to do this good should come from the Church's own liberality, raised in the way we have mentioned above. It was never intended that the Church should be run as a business organisation employing business methods, lucrative though these may seem from time to time. Who, for instance, would want to see the Church engaging itself in the mass production of prayers for sale to anyone. And what financial value would one place on the services of the itinerant preacher? I have heard preachers jokingly refer to £50 or £100 sermons, but is this so ludicrous in some peoples minds; I think not, because it seems to be the practice in some religious organisations to purvey printed material like this. We say, 'Ah, but this could never happen in the Church of Christ', but I sometimes wonder. It is the duty of leaders to follow the instruction given to Timothy, "Guard the deposit". Sometimes Christians have to be protected against themselves.

There are many ways used by so-called Christian groups to raise money; raffles, draws, sale of goods, financial returns from membership of clubs and suchlike, but these unscriptural practices have only arisen because members of these groups have neglected the scriptural injunction of *giving*. The tragedy is that such practices seem to have become part of the so-called Christian life. Surely there can be no true Christian in the Church for which Christ died who would want to join in the undignified scramble for the financial crumbs which fall from the world's table.

However, there is one method which I believe does not offend the principle of *giving*, and for which there is some legitimate financial return; that method is *covenanting*. In essence this simply means that in the U.K. a tax-paying Christian declares to the Inland Revenue the amount, or part of the amount, that he gives to the Church every year. At the year end the Inland Revenue allows tax relief on that amount in the normal way. I and others have examined this from every possible angle

and have concluded that this method does not contravene scripture in any way; the money declared to the Inland Revenue goes into the collection box every Lord's Day without anyone else seeing it or touching it.

I have tried to be as objective as possible in answering the question. The final court of appeal is, as always, the Word of God. If we err in this, then we always stand in need of correction.

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

## AND THEN THE HARVEST

Spring is a time for sowing the seed, to be followed, it is hoped, by a good harvest. For those of country stock, the word 'harvest' fills the mind with thoughts of bulging storehouses and barns replenished. We can easily visualise beautiful ripened crops, trees laden with fruit, rows of ripe vegetables; all ready for the in-gathering. Consequently a time of hard work awaits the would-be harvester. A time of work, pleasure and even fun. Today much of the pleasure is diminished, due to the high intensity farming methods and high technology mechanisation.

We must realise however that rich harvests do not just happen by accident. All must be planned. Ask any farmer! It takes careful planning and a substantial investment of time. Preparation of supplies and a lot of hard work, are the crux of the matter. Sacrifice, and even pain might venture into the progress of things. The end result depends on carefully directed planning: taking into consideration possible pitfalls of the way, previously experienced. The wise farmer always takes stock of such things. The wise farmer pays heed to the schedule of time and season, and works accordingly. He knows from experience that in the past, where success prevailed.

For the christian every season can be a harvest time. We may be in the winter of the church age: it matters not, the work must needs go on. We still have time to till the ground, to sow the seed. The word of God, demands that we be busy in the work, until the Lord Jesus returns. We must not be found wanting, idle or uncaring. Let us be diligent in the work, regardless of the season. Let us be diligent so that we may be thankful at His appearance. The words "Well done faithful servant" can be and are within the reach of all dedicated Christians: so be it.

Brethren the work of the christian includes, the tilling of the ground, the sowing of the seed, the nourishing of the young, and the ingathering of the fruit.

If active in the work, blessing will abound. There are no shortcuts to a true harvest. "Let us work while it is yet day, for the night cometh when no man can work."

A. P. SHARP, Newtongrange.

## SCRIPTURE READINGS

NOVEMBER 1984

- 4—Jeremiah 1      Romans 15:14-33  
 11—Daniel 1      Romans 16:1-16  
 18—Nehemiah 13:10-31 Romans 16:17-27  
 25—Jeremiah 6:9-21    Jude

## HUMAN SACRIFICES

Almost hidden from view Paul draws a picture of himself as a priest standing at the altar, offering up the believing Gentiles to God. It is in the words "minister" and "ministering", meaning *priestly service*. He makes a similar figurative application in Phil. 2:17. In that case he suggests his blood as a libation to accompany the sacrifice. The lives of the Christians are offered thus to God. It may be in fact that some of those of

whom he is speaking were sacrificed in the bloody persecution following quite soon. Human sacrifice, as also animal sacrificé, is horrifying, but such is the nature of sin that it is a fit reminder to us. Do we recognise the price of our redemption, the immeasurable humiliation and agony of the cross borne but the SON OF GOD? But Paul has the supreme honour of offering LIVING sacrifices, the souls he had been used by God to bring to a knowledge of the gospel. While he is almost apologising for writing the letter on account of the maturity of the Roman Christians, he is glorifying his commission from God in a special sense by preaching where no others had been. Now also he is ministering to the poor saints in Judaea another sense. He is bringing to them material help - food, clothing or money representing sacrifice by the Gentile Christians for their Jewish brethren. The ministering in this case is the same as that for which the church made the first appointment of "officers" in the Church - the DEACONS (Acts 6:1-7). All our boasted "Social Service and Security" springs from the early days of the church - and the world boasts of it as though an idea of its own.

How fitting that Paul should ask for the prayers of the Roman brethren for the gracious acceptance by the Jewish Christians of the gift he was taking from many who could scarce afford it, and for God's protection of his messenger of love and concern! He had been sent from that town where His Lord was crucified, and from which he had to flee for his life (Acts 9:28-30; 22:18). Their prayers were heard.

#### **The Apostle's Programme**

Paul had a longer journey than he had intended with the offering having written from Corinth (Acts 20:3), and was facing hazards with determination. We have a list of his companions and the graphic story (Acts 20:4 to 21:17). He explains his further plans and his hopes to extend his travels far beyond Rome. He is tasting beforehand the joys of fellowship with his brethren at Rome, enjoying anticipation

of loving spiritual converse, refreshment of soul in the long and arduous westward trek into parts where the news of the gospel is like streams of living water in a thirsty land, hitherto the dry land of heathen spiritual darkness and famine. This fifteenth chapter expresses the kindness of God towards the Gentiles. Paul, the Jew of Jews finding divine consolation and help for the mission to which he had been appointed. The same kind of joy is in today's preacher when he sees God opening the hearts of unbelievers to the plain truths of holy writ, or our brethren in foreign lands. Paul in particular in those early days is "blazing the trail" for those who by faithfulness to death changed the face of Europe, and made an Emperor acknowledge the true God. Sadly the apostasy closed down into dark ages of ignorance, superstition and persecution until the reformation released the word of God to the common people. Our own movement, however feeble, seeks to release truth and meet the commonly held false teachings respecting the WAY OF LIFE in its simplicity.

#### **The Apostle's Personal Relationships**

We have in chapter 16 a revealing concentration of Christian friendship and fellowship. We may give a special thought to the lives of Aquila and Priscilla. Sent out of Rome to meet in God's providence Paul the tentmaker at Corinth. We do not know whether they were already servants of the Lord, but they quickly became so, accompanying Paul to Ephesus and being useful there. The edict which chased them from Rome was obviously reversed - profane history confirms this - so they were in Rome while Paul was writing this epistle. Was it their presence there that made him familiar with so many of the members? Communication among the churches was evidently quite considerable - hence for instance "your faith is spoken of..." (1:8), and many similar expressions throughout the N.T. letters. This faithful couple was the subject of prayers from all around Paul's "territory"! Their heroic

self-sacrifice on behalf of Paul was well known. Next we have a look at Phoebe. She was a member of the church at Cenchrea near to Corinth and was entrusted with the letter for Rome. She was a servant - the word might justify a title "Deaconess". She had business in Rome, and Paul commends her to the brethren for help, thus further opening our eyes to the new comradeship being introduced into society. The collection of names in this chapter must indicate relationship formed by mutual love based upon the love of Jesus. We can only look briefly at the picture. Paul remembers that Epenetus was the first convert in Achaia, which we suppose meant a glance back at Athens. Then we view the sisters who were specially remembered for their toil for Paul, himself; Mary, Tryphena, Tryphosa, Persis and the mother of Rufus who mothered him. Under what varied circumstances were these loving services given, we wonder! Then there are kinsmen of Paul there, perhaps being Benjamites, two of whom had shared imprisonment with him and had also become christians before him. What earnest looking back to other times with gratitude to God for men of Jewish extraction! They may have acted as messengers among the churches dotting the map of the wide region of Paul's travels but now together in Rome. It would seem that several groups of disciples were meeting together at Rome - for instance Asyncritus and others in one district, Philologos in another, one sister with them. Then there were slaves, probably in two heathen households Aristobulus and Narcissus, but equally the masters may have become christian first. These all stirred personal recollections, "flashing upon that inward eye" and giving pleasurable encouragement. Then there are the greetings of Paul's close present and recent memories - Timothy and others sharing his work, Tertius, the one whose hands laboured with ink, pen or quill with each word. Gaius in whose house Paul dwelt, the other christians including the city treasurer, and a named brother, perhaps of similar rank in city service. It is suggested

that here Paul himself takes up the pen verses 25 to 27, touching so feelingly upon the great commission of the gospel to the Gentiles.

### Final Words of Warning

Looking over the church at Rome and understanding what perils every church of Christ faces, Paul reveals his fear of trouble through false teaching bringing division and motivated by worldliness, even mature and pureminded can be deceived. Hence watchfulness and the wisdom from above is needed for victory over the evil one.

### Jude

And may we here continue the theme with emphasis upon the question of division and causes of stumbling (Rom. 16:17). Careful and honest attention to the "once-and-for-all-delivered faith" enshrined in the New Testament is surely what is needed. The evils of pride, worldliness and promiscuity brought upon Rome the apostasy. Only humble adherence to truth based upon genuine love for God and neighbour, and relying only upon the precious blood of Jesus brings assurance of forgiveness and eternal life.

R. B. SCOTT

### WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED?

The answer to this vital question depends on just where you stand before God.

1. If you are an alien sinner, then you must believe on the Lord Jesus Christ with all your heart, repent of your sins, and be immersed in the name of Jesus for the remission of your sins (Acts 2:38; 16:30-34; 17:30).

2. If you are an erring child of God, then you must confess your sins, in sincere penitence ask God's forgiveness, and return to your duty (Acts 8:22; 1 John 1:9).

3. If you are a faithful Christian, you must, with God's help continue to live in the service of the Lord (1 Corinthians 15:58; Hebrews 3:14; Revelation 2:10).

## TRIBUTE TO CARLTON MELLING

As a life long friend of Carlton's I append my own little tribute in the way I know best in the following little poem. We were boys together, went through Sunday School and church together, until I finally became his brother-in-law. Even in our boyish games he was always the leader, even as he has always been throughout his life. Even as a boy his physical handicap was never taken any notice of, either by us or by him, and had little effect upon his prowess, nor in a lifetime have I ever heard him mention it as a handicap or complain about it. Even in his youth he was a great influence for good amongst the rough elements in the neighbourhood. Many were the young people who would come to Sunday School simply because Carlton was going to be there. His ready wit and fund of stories ensured him a ready following of which I was one. He was a man I always looked up to, admired and loved. The powerful influence of Carlton and his brother James, left its mark on Scholes and now Longshoot church, and one prays that the present leaders will be able to maintain the same course which has been set for them.

Good night, old friend, your little day is done;

Your labours ended by the setting sun.

The Master calls, His warrior must obey,

Lay down his arms, retire from the fray;

A soldier who was never known to yield

But always foremost on the battle field.

Still bright his armour, shining bright his sword;

He wielded well the Spirit of God's Word.

"The Bible says", was ever his command,

And on its precepts firmly took his stand.

The Bible speaks-that Word he well observed;

Where silence reigns-that silence he preserved,

And strong in faith he served his Master well,

And in God's House he truly loved to dwell.

Good night, old friend, you have well earned your rest.

Those dying in the Lord, indeed, are blest.

J.J. Smith

## FREE MORAL AGENCY

God does not *control* your life — He leaves you free to do as you please! Matthew 7:21, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven."

God desires we do His will, but what do you suppose men would say if God took away their right to think and do as they please? God's plan for developing Christian character is not done automatically but through experience of yielding to His way. God's ways are not our ways, Isaiah 55:3.

Voluntarily yield to His teaching of what life should be and then you will achieve the perfect character which God wants us all to have; 'perfect' meaning 'maturity'.

T. W. PHILLIPS II, Rosemead, Calif.

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*The Christian life is an enlistment for the whole man and for life. The call of Christ is a call to detach ourselves from many things that we may attach ourselves to one thing. Life without Christ is not life.*



## THE TWO COVENANTS CONTRASTED

### Old Covenant

Included one nation (Eph 2:12).  
Dedicated by blood of animals (Heb. 9:19).

A law in the flesh (Gen. 17:13).  
A priesthood of men (Heb. 7:11).  
Sacrifices often offered (Heb. 10:11).  
Circumcision in the flesh (Eph. 2:11).  
Circumcision by hands (Eph. 2:11).  
Circumcision a seal (Rom. 4:11).  
Sins remembered yearly (Heb. 10:3).  
Not perfect (Heb. 8:8).  
Could not give inheritance (Gal. 3:18).  
Ministration of death (2 Cor. 3:7).  
Yoke of bondage (Gal. 5:1).  
Written on tables of stone (2 Cor. 3:6).  
Purged the flesh (Heb. 9:13).  
The letter that killeth (2 Cor. 3:6).

### New Covenant

Includes all nations (Mark 16:15).  
Dedicated by blood of Christ (1 Pet. 1:19).  
A law in the mind and heart (Heb. 8:10).  
The priesthood of Christ (Heb. 7:28; 8:10).  
Christ offered once for all (Heb. 9:28).  
Circumcision in the heart (Rom. 2:29).  
Circumcision without hands (Col. 2:11).  
Holy Spirit seals (Eph. 1:11, 13).  
No more remembrance of sins (Heb 10:17).  
Perfect law (Jas. 1:25).  
Able to give inheritance (Acts 20:32).  
Law of Spirit of life (Rom. 8:2).  
Liberty-made free (Gal. 5:1).  
On the heart (Heb. 8:10).  
Purged the conscience (Heb. 9:14).  
The Spirit that gives life (2 Cor. 3:6).

## BELIEF : (26)

### Vital Questions

This is the final article of the series on "Belief".

Let the following questions be answered honestly by those who are genuinely anxious for their souls' welfare.

(1) Do you believe that Jesus is the risen, Son of God? (John 20:31).

(2) Have you seriously considered what Jesus meant when he said, "Except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish"? (Luke 13:3).

(3) Our Lord asked his apostles to preach repentance and remission of sins, beginning at Jerusalem (Luke 24:47) — have you repented? In other words, have you changed your mind towards God, and started seriously to listen to what Jesus commanded?

(4) His apostles, in following out our Lord's instructions, began preaching the gospel in Jerusalem and called upon all to repent and be immersed for the remission of their sins (Acts 2:38)—have you obeyed the gospel? See Acts 6:7. Have you been immersed for the remission of your sins? See Mark 16:15-16.

If not, why not? It is important to observe that what is commended by our Lord is immersion (Greek verb *baptizo*) and not sprinkling (Greek verb *rhantizo*). A reference to the series of articles on "Belief" will make this clear. Jesus requires the repentant sinner to be immersed, in spite of what the doctrines of men have substituted.

### Important Answers

If you can faithfully answer "yes" to all these four questions you may be sure that you are in exactly the same position as the Thessalonians, to whom Paul wrote: see 2 Thessalonians 2:13. You have been cleansed from your sins by God; you have been sanctified (set apart) by the Holy Spirit (Romans 15:16); you are now one of God's children; the words of the apostle are true of you: "Being now made free from sin and become servants to God, you have your fruit unto holiness (sanctification) and the end everlasting life (salvation). For the wages of sin is death (eternal death), but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ the Lord" (Romans 6:22-23).

W. BROWN

## A CHRISTIAN

should be like a good watch: open face, busy hands, pure gold, well regulated and full of good works.

## NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

**Kitwe, Zambia:** Bro. Jerry Davidson of the International Bible College, and two other visiting American brothers were involved in a car crash. This happened on the 14th July 1984, as they travelled to attempt to cross the Zaire border. Zaire/Zambian border hostility had previously prevented this. Our brethren only suffered from cuts and bruises, of which we were thankful. The vehicle they had borrowed from Bro. Chester Woodhall is a total write off. The loss is affecting badly the service of our mission team here in Zambia. Who work along with congregations in five provinces. The vehicle was in daily use before the crash. If you would like to obtain further information contact: Bering Dr, Church of Christ, Houston, or phone 713-783-2340.

J. M'Keown

**Slamannan District, Scotland:** The Quarterly Mutual Benefit Meeting took place at the Motherwell Meetingplace on Saturday, 8th September, when the subject for discussion was "The Breaking Of Bread". There was a goodly attendance and a very enjoyable period of fellowship followed. The Chairman on this occasion was John Wilson, Newtongrange, and the speakers were William Black, Dalmellington, and James R. Gardiner, Haddington. As usual each speaker was allowed fifteen minutes to deal with the subject, followed by one hour's general discussion. Great interest was generated with many of the brethren contributing comments on the subject. A special welcome was extended to our American visitors from Cleveland, Ohio, Colin McCallum (brother of John McCallum)

and his wife, Ginger. The next Mutual Benefit Meeting will be held, God willing, on 1st December, at Newtongrange, when the subject will be "Can We Identify The Man Of Sin of 2 Thess. 2:3? The speakers on that occasion will be James Moncrieff, Haddington, and David Chalmers, Dalmellington. The Chairman will be Hugh Davidson, Motherwell.

H. Davidson

**Ulverston:** The church in Ulverston is much encouraged by the coming into the area of John and Jane Stanton and their son Edward. John is working in Barrow and they hope soon to acquire a house in Ulverston. John and Jane are meeting regularly with us and sharing the fellowship and various activities of the church.

We are also very pleased that sister Jane Blackhurst has just returned to her home, and new employment in Barrow and we look forward to happy associations with her in the worship and work of the Lord in this area.

Robert Brown

## OBITUARY

**Wigan, Longshoot:** Once again we are sad to report the passing of a long serving and beloved brother in the congregation. On September 4th, Bro. Joe Aspinall was called to glory. Joe had been associated with the church at Longshoot, and formerly Scholes, for many years and had served as Secretary and Deacon in the congregation. He never regarded himself as a "platform" man but this did not prevent him from serving the Lord in other ways, and we thank God for the quiet and efficient way in which he carried out his duties.

We are thankful for his example of faith and praise God for the glorious hope of the resurrection through Jesus His Son to those who trust in Him. We commend Lily, his wife, and Ron, his son, to the peace and comfort only to be found in the Lord.

D. Melling



## CONSCIENCE

Conscience is like a sundial. During the hours of daylight, and so long as the sun is shining, the dial will have a correct recording of the time; but when the sun is not shining, or when the light comes upon it from a lantern or from the moon at night, its record may be completely inaccurate. So it is with conscience. So long as the light of God's Word shines upon us and directs our decisions the voice of conscience is both correct and helpful; but when it is illuminated by the light of our own imagination, or by the opinions of others, it will not only fail to give the true direction, but it will make the error all the greater because it claims to speak with authority. A fallible guide, who may lead us astray through wrong information, is worse than no guide at all.

## THINGS YOU WON'T REGRET

Doing a kind act.

Keeping your temper under insult.

Refusing to listen to malicious gossips.

Not posting that cutting, unkind letter.

Getting up every time you fall.

Trying always to better your best.

Holding to your righteous purpose in  
spite of opposition.

Keeping faith with yourself at any cost,  
and holding fast to your ideals.

## THE REASON

An actor was once asked by a preacher how the acting of fiction could influence people so much more than the preaching of facts. The actor replied, "I preach fiction as though it were truth. You preach truth as though it were fiction."

## COURAGE

Lord Nelson refused to put on a cloak to cover up the stars on his uniform, though they made him a mark for the French sharpshooters. So let us refuse to hide our loyalty to Christ by the cloak of silence, even when by speaking we may become a mark of ridicule.

## THANKS

On behalf of my sister Barbara and our families, I should like to express our sincere thanks for the love shown to us in so many ways by so many brethren and friends, following the death of our father, Carlton Melling. We have been touched greatly by the many cards, letters and other tributes, and it is encouraging to know that his life of service to the Lord was also a source of blessing to many who knew him.

We share our mutual woes  
Our mutual burdens bear  
and often for each other flows  
The sympathising tear.

D. Melling

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