

# The SCRIPTURE STANDARD

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

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## READY, WILLING AND ABLE

As medical science continues to make steady progress, a doctor, on this morning's radio, reminded us (again) that great financial and logistical problems are being caused nowadays by people living longer. Life expectancy (which, of course, varies from country to country and can be as low as 30 years in some parts of India) is usually perceived to be the Biblical three-score-years-and-ten. Certainly medical science has been keeping people living longer. Heart/lung transplants are now becoming regular events while heart, kidney and liver transplants are quite commonplace. Fantastic advances are being made yearly with new investigative machines, new surgical techniques, new drugs and new medical developments of all kinds. Illnesses, fatal fifty years ago, can now be easily dealt with. When we remember that, a little over a hundred years ago, very few patients survived an amputation, and when we remember that the stump as cauterised with a red hot iron and the patient was anaesthetised with a few swigs of whisky, then we realise that we have come a long way. Indeed I remember, as a boy of 8 years, having an operation to cut a piece off the end of my poisoned thumb, and this was done on the kitchen table and the anaesthetic consisted of some drops of chloroform on a gauze on my face. We don't see much of that kind of thing nowadays, but memories of it make us sympathise with the poor unfortunates of other lands, like Africa and India, where anaesthetics and drugs are in short supply, or even non-existent.

And so, *ordinary* physicians can add a few years to the average life-span. In this article I would like us to consider an *extra-ordinary* physician who can not only enhance our life-span, but give us life-everlasting itself. This is indeed the physician who said, "He that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. And whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die." (John 11:25). I refer, of course, to the Great Physician.

The New Testament nowhere describes Jesus as 'The Great Physician' but the *implication is in Matt. 9:12* where Jesus chided the smug self-righteousness of the Pharisees and said, "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick . . . For I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." We note from this statement that Jesus not only implied that He had come *as a physician*, but that He had come to deal with the sickness of SIN, and to call *sinners to repentance*. Physicians are mentioned early in the Bible (Gen. 50:2) where, apparently, part of their duties was to embalm the dead, but, surprisingly, very few references (only four) are made to such an important personage through-out the scriptures. Asa, king of Judah, as he lay dying from gangrene is criticised for consulting his physician and not the Lord (2 Chron. 16): Job talks of his physicians of "having no value" (not an uncommon

complaint) and Jeremiah asks "Is there no balm in Gilead, is there no physician there?" These constitute the only references to physicians in the entire O.T. which is surprising when we consider that every king, and indeed every man of any substance, would have a personal physician. Perhaps you have wondered, as I have, if the physicians of those early ages had to contend with maladies and diseases *similar to the ones we have with us today* and certainly it seems that, apart from some modern industrial diseases and illnesses brought on by our 'modern living', the ancients had to cope with most of the serious ailments common to us. The Ebers papyrus, found in a tomb at Thebes in 1862, and written about the time of Moses, lists sixty or seventy diseases prevailing at that time, and many Egyptian mummies have provided evidence of gallstones, arthritis, mastoids, cancer, dental caries, pneumonia, smallpox, bubonic plague, tuberculosis, etc. etc. On the other hand the Bible mentions such things as leprosy, dysentery, dropsy, ulcers, tumours, ague, piles, consumption, fever, palsy, boils, epilepsy, scurvy: etc. etc. Thus we can see the need for many physicians (from Genesis onwards) and the challenge which confronted them. Robert Burns said, "Many and sharp the numerous ills inwoven with our frame" and truly there seems no limit to the things which can go wrong with the *human body*, let alone the *human being* (mind and spirit).

### BODY, SOUL & SPIRIT

Modern physicians, while undoubtedly fully pre-occupied with the ills of the *human body* are, I think, becoming increasingly aware of a distinct relationship between body and mind, and that many bodily symptoms have their roots in spirit and mind, so much so that we now have, from Freud and Jung, Psycho-analysts who investigate the effect our mental processes have on our lives. This relatively recent recognition that man is more than a human animal was, however, acknowledged about 2,000 years ago by Paul in his first epistle to the Thessalonians when he prayed that their "**whole spirit and soul and body**" be preserved blameless to the coming of the Lord. Jesus is "The Great Physician" in that He is able to secure the well being of *the whole man* - spirit, soul and body.

When Jesus dealt with the *ailments of the body* He demonstrated a skill which can never ever be surpassed. He had no books, no medicines or drugs, no surgical instruments, no operating theatre - He did not even have any bandages and did not need to use anaesthetics yet He cured a man blind from birth - a cure which even his deadliest enemies had to concede. Indeed He restored sight to many of the blind; He cured the dumb and even deaf mutes; He healed a blind and dumb demoniac and restored other demoniacs to their right mind; He healed the ten lepers; He restored the ear of Malchus; the woman with the issue of blood; the man sick of the palsy; the man with the dropsy; the man with the withered hand - and these *are but a few examples*. He merely said, "**Lift up thy bed and walk**" to the man whose limbs had been a tangled mess from birth. No matter how advanced our medical knowledge may become no modern physician will ever come close to the wonders performed by "The Great Physician".

Wonderful as these cures were it must be true to say that Jesus was more concerned with the spiritual state of mankind - more with man's *spirit and soul* than with his body. After all, the body is but a temporary vehicle in which to carry the soul. Even if our physician rescues us from various forms of distemper and illness we will, in the end, have to acknowledge that life is temporary and that after, '**threescore years and ten**' we may well be called to '**our long home**'. The soul is, on the other hand, the eternal part of man and as such will far outlive the body. Yet, "**The soul that sinneth, it shall die**". Thus the reason for Jesus being more concerned with sin than with sciatica; more concerned with abominable deeds than with abdominal needs; more worried about evil

than about emerods; more vexed about lies than about livers; more disturbed about depravity than about dysentery; more dismayed with disobedience than with diabetes. The preferential regard for the soul, over bone and sinew, is expressed many times in the N.T. and is surely embodied in Christ's words to His disciples (in Matt. 10:28) - **"And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear him which is able to destroy both body and soul in hell,"** or in Paul's remarks to Timothy (Chap. 4:8) **"For bodily exercise profiteth little; but Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come"**. We should not be surprised, therefore, that Jesus pronounced *the Kingdom of Heaven* in preference to a National Health Service, that He produced *His Church* in preference to a 'Fitness Farm'; and promoted *congregations* in preference to clinics. If we were all as interested in the condition of our souls as we evidently are in the health of our bodies we would, I suppose do well. Truly Jesus was a physician of great compassion and we read that as **"His fame went throughout all Syria: they brought unto Him sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were lunatic, and those that had the palsy; and He healed them all"** *yet it must be emphasised* that He came to save souls rather than salvage sanity, and to save sinners rather than to fight fevers and heal hernias.

#### NOT ONLY ABLE, BUT WILLING

Any self-respecting physician must be able to:-

- (1) *Correctly diagnose* the disease.
- (2) Be *properly qualified* to treat that disease.
- (3) *Prescribe the effective cure* for the disease.

How does Jesus shape up as The Great Physician with respect to these 3 propositions?

#### ACCURATE DIAGNOSIS

(1) Jesus correctly diagnosed man's true enemy as being SIN. The very term 'Physician' implies a disease. Why did Jesus have to die a terrible death if there was nothing dreadful to be saved from? **"Christ died for our sins, according to the scriptures."** We need to be rescued from not only the guilt of sin but also from its consequences. There are others in the world who diagnose the cause of a troubled world differently, ascribing it to bad living conditions, poverty, ignorance, insecurity, distrust, etc. etc. but Jesus attributed all our troubles to Sin. Naturally, 'Sin' is a very unpopular word even from the pulpits and has been replaced with such terms as "blunders, mistakes, and misunderstandings". We may try to water it down in this way but the reality remains - **"If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."** (1 John 1:8). Sin is *universal* and is as likely to be found in the Royal Household as in big business; as likely in the Vatican as in your local branch of the Mafia. **"For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God"** (Rom. 3:23). Sin is of *epidemic proportions* and touched us all. Not only is it an epidemic but it is also *very contagious* - it spreads like a plague and involves everybody. A rotten apple in a barrel is certain to adversely affect the rest. Jesus said, **"A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump"**. A child is born in a perfectly innocent condition but few men going to the grave can claim that same innocency. Sin is also incurable by man and very fatal. **"The soul that sinneth it shall die"**. **"The way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."** Surely no one can say that Jesus 'fudged' the issue, or 'Shilly-shallied'" (as some doctors do), on the diagnosis of the root-cause of man's malady. **"But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin and when sin is finished, it bringeth forth death."** (James 1:13).

### ABLE TO SAVE

(2) Is the Great Physician qualified to cope with sin? If we remember that Jesus was **"God manifest in the flesh"** we shall experience no difficulty in believing that Jesus can cure the ravages of sin. The wages of sin is certainly death **"but the gift of God is eternal life"**. (Rom. 6:23). Jesus came so that we would not only have life but have it more abundantly. The writer to the Hebrews says, **"Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing that HE ever liveth to make intercession for them."** (Heb. 7:25). Why is Jesus able to save all men to the uttermost? Because *He ever liveth*, i.e. is not, like other Physicians (and Priests) subject to death, or likely to die tomorrow. Jesus not only personally conquered sin (proving the possibility of a sinless life) but vanquished death itself. Death, as we know, is Satan's ultimate sanction on mankind but Jesus has conquered even there. Death is swallowed up in Christ's victory. Jesus has not only mastered sin but **"hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel."** (2 Tim. 1:10). Jesus is not only *able* to deal with our sin but has also given expression to *His willingness* to do so, in such invitations as **"Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden"** and **"Behold I stand at the door and knock."** Truly Jesus is able and willing.

### CERTAIN CURE

(3) Has the 'Great Physician' prescribed an effective cure? His remedy is foolishness in the eyes of the worldly-wise. **"For the preaching of the cross is, to them that perish, foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God."** The Jews require a sign and the Greeks seek after wisdom: **"But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness"** (1 Cor. 1). These words were penned 2,000 years ago but things haven't changed. The Jews are still looking for a sign and the Gentiles still look upon the gospel as foolishness. The politicians wring their hands in agitation at the threat of war and industrial unrest; Social workers wring their hands at marital and drug problems; Police Chiefs wring their hands at the increase in violence and rising crime rate - even clergymen wring their hands at falling church attendance, but the answer to these difficulties is rarely sought in God's Word. Like King Asa, they consult their 'physicians' rather than the Lord. Ever since the 'League Of Nations' men have thought that a solution can be found in politics but the present 'United Nations' has proved to be just as ineffectual as ever was the 'League Of Nations'. There is no political answer to evil; neither is the answer to be found in philosophy; or science; in education; or better living-conditions; in prison-reform or even in the arts. The answer is to be found only on the lips of the apostles as they preached the gospel of Christ. The gospel, foolish though it may be to many, is the only power of God unto the salvation of man (Rom. 1:16). If, perchance, all men were today, to obey the gospel, and follow the directions prescribed by The Great Physician, the world's problems based on racism, greed, indifference, violence, intimidation, and poverty etc. etc. would vanish overnight. Not only would *the world* be better but we would all be *better individuals* with pardon from our own personal sins, and we would all be caught up into a wonderful reconciliation with our Maker. The simplicity of the remedy will, it seems, always escape the attention of the Powers-That-Be and they will go on with their Committees Of Enquiry and their Royal Commissions and get nowhere. The *gospel is simple* notwithstanding the efforts of 'theologians' to make it difficult. It portrays Christ as God's only Son who 'died in our stead' but who rose again, triumphant over the grave, and asks us to place our complete faith and trust in Him. It also calls upon us to repent from our past way of life and to, in future, walk in the steps of Jesus, and to stay therein (to the best of our ability) to the end of our lifetime. It also requires us to start off in this new life *with a clean sheet*; this being accomplished by our immersion in the water of baptism from which we rise to walk in newness of life, and wherein we **"put on Christ"**. (Acts 2:38; Rom. 6; Acts 22:16; Gal.

3:27). The remedy is useless *unless we apply it*, just as the medicine which remains in the bottle can never revive us. Seekers after help should however, beware for there are many 'physicians' in the religious market-place today who are but dangerous 'quacks' and should be avoided. By far the best course is *to read, for ourselves*, the prescription penned in the pages of the N.T., and to listen *only* to the instruction of Jesus and His apostles. The Great Physician is able to heal us; is willing to save us **but we must humbly implement His remedy**. No man is so bad that he cannot come; no man is so good that he can afford to stay away.

Paradoxically, the world, (though quite excited about a brief and sometimes feeble, extension to our earthly life-span) seems strangely unenthusiastic about life everlasting.

EDITOR.

## LOVE - THE SOURCE OF ALL EVIL

Often when one feels that he has finally grasped the full import of a vital Biblical theme, concepts may be discovered which put it into an entirely different perspective. This is what makes Bible study so fascinating and rewarding. Love is one of those elusive concepts. Love is a power motivator. Love can be mismanaged and it can be misunderstood. Not all people who speak about love really understand what real love is all about.

According to the Bible, love is the source of all evil. Yes! *Love* is the source of all evil. It is also the source of all good. Sounds strange, doesn't it? If love is the root of all evil, how then can it be the root of all good? Well, love is an attitude of heart. Spiritually speaking, it originates in the mind of God and it originates in the mind of man. If man has love for evil, his life will tend to be evil. If a man has love for God and is willing to yield to His will, then his life will tend to be righteous. It is apparent that different kinds of love and different objects of love must be considered when we speak about love. The Bible dictionary or lexicon will give us the quality or kind of love which is under consideration in a given passage of Scripture. The object of love is more apparent and easily found within the context.

### THE OBJECT

The Bible clearly teaches that the wrong kind of love will condemn the soul. The wrongness or rightness of love as viewed from God's vantage point depends upon the object of love. The degree or quality of that love may be small at first, but given time it will grow. The love that will condemn the soul is misguided or misdirected toward the wrong object. It comes from the same mind, but is centred on a different object.

Paul wrote to Timothy and pointed out that "**the love of money**" is at the root of all evil (1 Tim. 6:10). It is not money that is at the source of the problem, rather it is **the love of the heart upon the wrong object**. *Love of the world* does not originate with God, but in the fleshly desires of man himself (2 Tim. 4:10; 1 John 2:15-17). Someone has written, "When a man falls in love with himself, he has no competition." This concept is Biblical (2 Tim. 3:2). *Love of self* prevents one from really loving anyone else. *Love of pleasure* prevents one from loving God (2 Tim. 3:4). *Love of errors and lies* is a sure indication of a lack of love for the truth of God (2 Thess. 2:10). In fact this will cause one to miss heaven (Rev. 22:15). *Love of evil* hinders one from doing right (Micah 3:2). *Love for this present world and life* will cause one to miss not only the meaning of life, but also the future life (John 12:25).

The religious leaders of Jesus' day were strongly motivated by love. They loved the praises of men more than the praises of God and it caused their own spiritual demise (John 12:43). They loved to be seen in prayers, but not to pray sincerely (Matt. 6:5). They loved the uppermost places at the feasts, they loved to go about in long robes and

to be greeted in the marketplaces with titles of honour (Mark 12:38). Love was very apparent in their lives, but it was for the wrong things. So we speak about love, we need to be careful to define our terms in relationship to the objects of love.

The kind of love which God approves is seen in a genuine respect for and submission to the will of God as it is revealed in the Bible. Anything less than this is not genuine love.

### REAL LOVE

Genuine love grows in the faith and from the faith which comes from God (Gal. 5:6). It is proven by both quality and quantity of service given to God and man (2 Cor. 8:8,24; Gal. 5:13). Genuine love is a fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22). It is the root and ground from which true Christianity springs (Eph. 3:17). It is forbearing with those who are weak, but it will not let one sit back when error is being advocated even if it means that others may consider him unloving. The saints in Galatia apparently gave Paul the impression that they considered him an enemy because of the stand he took (Gal. 4:11-16). God who is love and the source of love, is willing to risk that love in order to correct man when he goes astray (Rev. 3:19; Heb. 12:6). Paul said that contention for the faith, rebuking and correction are a part of gospel preaching (2 Tim. 4:1-5). He also pointed out that it is a function of the Scriptures (2 Tim. 3:16-18).

Genuine love is a way of life (Eph. 5:2). It is equated with faith in Titus 3:15; Ephesians 6:23; 1 Timothy 1:14; 2 Timothy 1:13). It is just as vital as truth (2 John 1,3,6; 3 John 1). Genuine discipleship demands love for Christ (John 13:35). It also demands love for his word (John 14:15,23,24; 1 John 5:2,3). And it demands sacrifices for the sake of others )1 John 3:14-18).

We must choose wisely *the objects* of our love. We cannot have both God and Satan in our lives - one must go! Only one can remain. This is what the gospel of Christ is all about. God wants to be the object of our love. The gospel is the power to escape false objects of love and turn it to God in response to His love for us. The Holy Spirit provides the power for the Christian to keep the wrong kinds of love and the wrong objects of love out of his life.

Love has many sides which need to be investigated. It is not a mere emotion or "holy feeling." It is an outgrowth of faith produced by the Holy Spirit within.

Smile - God loves you and so do we!

E. LEWIS

## GOING THE FIRST MILE

"A great many people talk about going the second mile when they haven't gone the first," said Peter Lord. You cannot go the second mile until you have completed the first. It is possible to understand basic fundamentals in our relationship to God. Going the second mile is a wonderful concept. **"Whosoever shall compel you to go a mile, go with him twain"** (not by train, as the little girl said, but twain, two) (Matt. 5:41). Yet we have got to concentrate *on the first mile* before we can go the second mile.

How easy it is for religion to be separated from reality, and in the name of an inner spiritual awareness, actually forget what Christianity is all about. How tragic to think that going to church, preaching and singing, teaching and learning, constitute the essence of our Christianity. If God is not in what we do on Monday, then we do not worship Him on Sunday. **"Whatsoever ye do in word or deed,"** writes Paul, **"do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God, the Father by him."** How tragic to allow words like secular and sacred, doctrine and duty, to fight with one another rather than to join hands and cause us to go the first mile.

To be a Christian means to place Christ first in life. It means hearing the gospel,

believing it, obeying it and behaving it. Being baptised into Christ is not the first mile; it is only starting on a new way of life. That new life is to fulfil God's purpose.

### **FULFIL YOUR PURPOSE**

The purpose of a pencil is to write. It is successful only when it fulfils its purpose. You would rather have a cheap pencil which would write than an expensive pencil which wouldn't; that is, if you want to write. The main purpose of an automobile is transportation. It is to get you where you want to go, and it is a successful automobile only when it fulfils its purpose. You have been created by God and for God. And you are successful only when you fulfil the purpose which God has in mind for you.

Paul began the Galatian letter with this reference to Christ: "**who gave Himself for our sins that He might deliver us from this present evil world according to the will of our God and Father.**" For a man to know he is inside God's purpose for his life - according to the will of our God and Father - brings a sense of direction, the assurance of belonging to the permanent scheme of things.

### **WHAT ABOUT YOU?**

As a Christian, I need to think of myself in order to fulfil God's purpose. **How do I treat my body?** When Paul asks: "**Know ye not that ye are the temple of God and that the spirit of God dwelleth in you?**" He is not talking about the church building. He is talking about your body. Are you a glutton? Are you a Mr. or Mrs. Five-by-Five? Is your body wasting away because you don't move, you don't exercise? I have known people - I am in that company - who would be horrified at the idea of contradicting "He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved;" but although able to exercise, they sit in a chair or climb into bed and stay there until they die.

**What about your growth intellectually?** Will Durant, on his 90th birthday, said his advice to young people is "Don't give up. Your ancestors wrote *Hamlet*, the 'Hallelujah Chorus,' and built the Parthenon." To think lofty thoughts and to grow mentally is going the first mile. To grow in our prayer life and in the knowledge of the Bible is all part of our basic responsibility to ourselves.

**How do I treat my family?** This means what about my parents? What about my partner? Homes are breaking up all over the country to such an extent that our society is about to fall apart. What am I doing to maintain a vital and viable marriage relationship? It is not enough to say, "Thou shalt not commit adultery." The Bible teaches, "Thou shalt be kind, considerate and compassionate."

**What about my relationship to my children?** How much money is spent on Christmas each year as a bribe to soothe a guilty conscience because we do not spend time with our children and show loving concern for them? What about my relationship with my parents? Those of us who are fortunate enough to still have our parents - do we show that we still love them and care for them? Going the first mile is doing what we should do in the family, what God wants us to do in all our family relationships.

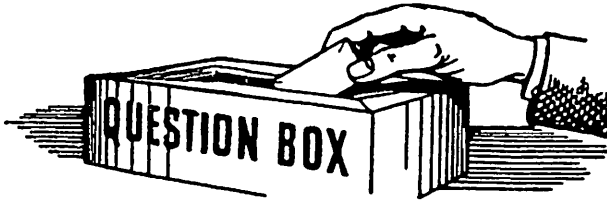
**What about my job?** How do I come off with the people that I associate with every day? Can they tell that Christ is in me? Do they see Christianity in a practical demonstration? What about the kind of work I do? Is it thorough? Do I do it with all my might? Is it an expression of my faith in God? What about the money I make as a result of my job, or that I do not make? Am I honest, do I recognise that all I have comes from God?

It is so easy for us in this day of emotionalism and sideshow evangelism almost to sprout wings and fly out of our church buildings, but actually to return to a dull and boring life because we have never gone the first mile. We get ourselves psyched up for a moment but soon get over it because our relationship to God does not include all of life.

Dedicating our whole life to God is pleasing Him in all that we do in relationship to

ourselves, our families, and to our work. This gives meaning and purpose for every day. Human effort must never be dismissed as insignificant and unimportant. You have got to go the first mile before you can go the second.

C. ELLIS.




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Conducted by  
Frank Worgan

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*"I have heard that there are many designs of baptism. What are they?"*

I wonder what the questioner means by the use of the phrase, 'many designs of baptism'? It is the use of that word 'designs', which is intriguing. Is this a question about the many 'purposes' of baptism? Or are we being reminded of the fact that there are certain religious bodies which claim that there are many 'modes' of baptism, and who say that the act of baptising may be carried out in various ways, including the sprinkling or pouring of water on the head of the one coming to baptism? We need to clarify this particular point before we proceed any farther.

#### MODES OF BAPTISM

First; the assertion that there are many *modes* of baptism is quite erroneous because the word, '*baptizo*,' 'to baptise,' which occurs 76 times in the Greek New Testament, has to do, without exception, with an immersion in, and an emergence from something. In other words, with the act of 'dipping.'

The practice of 'sprinkling' comes from a quite different Greek word. It is the word '*rhantizo*,' 'to sprinkle,' which is found just 4 times in the New Testament scriptures, in a cluster of verses in **Hebrews, chapters 9 and 10.**

The word 'pouring' is derived from the word '*ekcheo*,' which means 'to pour out.' In the form of '*ekcheuno*,' it occurs in Acts 10:45, where it describes the '*pouring out*' of the Holy Spirit in the house of Cornelius, and, in the form of '*katacheo*,' in Matt. 26:7 and Mark 14:3 it describes how the Lord Jesus was anointed by the woman with the alabaster flask of ointment, which was '*poured upon*' His head. None of these words is ever used with reference to believer's baptism, nor have they the significance of baptism.

The conclusion is obvious. There is no linguistic authority for regarding either sprinkling or pouring as the baptism about which we read in the New Testament.

Without entering into a prolonged discussion of the origin and spread of the substitution of sprinkling or pouring for true baptism, it deserves to be said that both practices were quite unknown to the early Church. They were declared to be '*alternative modes*' for baptism by the Council of Ravenna in the year 1311, and neither was normally practised in this country until after the Reformation.

In 1556 a book recording John Calvin's approval of 'infant sprinkling' was published in Geneva. It authorised the priest to '*take water in his hand and lay it upon the child's forehead*,' and 'Protestants' who had fled to Geneva to escape the persecution instigated by Queen Mary, carried this practice back to Scotland in 1559. It soon found its way down to England during the reign of Elizabeth the First - (who, it might be noted, was herself immersed) - but it was not until 1643 that the Westminster Assembly, after prolonged debate, decided on the strength of the casting vote of Archbishop Lightfoot who presided over the Assembly, to admit sprinkling as a form of baptism.

It is important to understand that biblical scholars have never denied that immersion



is true New Testament baptism. What these churches did was to introduce sprinkling and pouring as '*permissible alternatives*,' but it is an acknowledged fact that all biblical scholars agree that the baptism practised by the early Church was, without exception, immersion in water. I suggest that preachers and teachers of the Word should be very careful to avoid the use of the word 'mode' when speaking about baptism and should rather speak of the '*action*' of baptism.

### VARIOUS BAPTISMS

Let us bear in mind that the word 'baptism' only describes the action. It does not define the '*design*,' or '*purpose*' of the action. This must be determined by the context in which the word is used.

1) Hence we find reference to '*the baptism of John*' Matt. 21:25. This was, of course, the baptism carried out by John the Baptist, and in Matt. 3:7, it is even referred to as '*his baptism*.' This was a baptism declaring repentance, with a view to receiving the forgiveness of sins at the coming of the Messiah whose approach John was proclaiming. Mark 1:4, and Luke 3:3-6. This baptism ceased to be valid when the Christian age began and baptism was performed 'in the name of Jesus Christ.' Act 19:1-5.

2) In Luke 12:50, the Lord Jesus Himself says, "*I have a baptism to be baptised with*," and Mark 10:38 reveals that He was speaking about His forthcoming death, which might be called His '*baptism of sorrow*.'

3) There is also the '*baptism with (in) the Holy Spirit*,' which Jesus promised His apostles, Acts 1:5, and which they received on the Day of Pentecost, Acts 2:1-4.

4) The same word - '*baptismo*' - is used to describe '*the washing of cups*' and other objects, by the Pharisees in their effort to avoid ceremonial defilement.

5) In 1 Cor. 10:1-2, Paul describes the experience of the Israelites at the time of the Exodus. He states that, under the cloud which overshadowed them and passing through the sea, they were '*baptised unto Moses*,' He is referring to the fact that, in this figurative and symbolic 'baptism,' the people identified themselves with Moses, God's appointed representative and accepted his leadership.

6) Paul also wrote to the Corinthians in Cor. 15:29, about certain people whom he describes as being '*baptised for the dead*.' We must leave a full discussion of this phrase for another time, but regardless of what 'Mormons' may claim, it does not refer to a special kind of baptism, but to the fact there were people at Corinth who were denying the possibility of resurrection - (thus, denying the resurrection of Christ Himself). Their baptism, therefore, was a '*baptism on behalf of a dead Christ*.'

7) In Heb. 6:2, the writer uses the phrase '*the doctrine of baptisms*,' again using the word '*baptismos*,' where it has to do with the various 'washings' by means of which both people and objects were cleansed.

8) *The baptism which concerns us*, however, is that to which Paul refers in Eph. 4:4-6, where he states that there is '*one baptism*.' This immersion in water upon the confession of faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God, in accordance with the command of the Lord Jesus Himself in Matt. 28:18-20 and Mark 16:15-16.

### THE 'DESIGN' - (PURPOSE) - OF BAPTISM

Baptism has, indeed, as the question states, 'many designs.' Among the reasons for submitting to this command of the Lord we may mention the following.

1. To be identified with the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. Rom. 6:3-5.
2. To receive the remission of sins. Acts 2:28.
3. To be saved. Mark 16:16.
4. To be born anew. John 3:5.
5. To be added to the Body of Christ, the Church. 1 Cor. 12:13.
6. To 'put on Christ.' Gal. 3:27.
7. To receive 'the gift' - 'dorea' - free gift of the Holy Spirit.

How sad it is, then, that people who make so much of the sprinkling of water on the head of a helpless, spiritually unconscious infant, fail to understand the real beauty and significance of the ordinance, which the Lord Jesus Himself commands!

*(Questions please, to Frank Worgan, 5 Gryfebank Way,  
Houston, Renfrewshire. Scotland. PA6 7NZ.)*

## WET FEET

Peter Marshall told the story of "The Keeper of the Springs." It concerned a little village that sat right down at the foot of a large mountain. Flowing down through the middle of this village was a stream that was in essence the very life of the village because it watered farms and gardens, turned the wheels of the mills, swans swam in it and children played on its banks. Every day the spring keeper would go out and clean the leaves, silt and debris from the springs on the mountain because as their waters flowed down the mountainside they all came together to form the stream that flowed through the village.

But one day the leaders of the village decided to build a reservoir to catch the waters from the springs, thus providing the town with water, and to fire the spring keeper. They built their reservoir. It filled up with water. But somehow the water did not seem as clear as before. It was not too long before a green scum formed on top of the water and it clogged the wheels of the mills. The swans left. The children could not play on the banks anymore. An odour began to befoul the air. Sickness entered the homes of the village.

The village leaders met again and decided that they had made a mistake. The spring keeper was asked to return to his job, which he very joyfully did, and before long the stream was again flowing, sparkling clean through the village and life was restored to it. You see, that man had become a spring keeper which that little village could not do without.

Our world is being polluted, not ecologically but morally and religiously. Our world stands in desperate need of a group of individuals who will take it upon themselves to become the spring keepers of the world! Persons who will undertake to bring the world back to the only person who can give it life - Jesus Christ!

### GO YE THEREFORE

In Matthew 28 we find our Lord giving the commission to the world's spring keepers, "**Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptising them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.**" The commission expressed great faith in the potential of men such as Peter, who had denied him, and as John, who was introduced to us as a "Son of Thunder."

This confidence is seen in that the word "go" is not an imperative, not a command. It is a participle, which can be translated "going." The command in verse 19 is "**make disciples.**" A fair translation might be, "**As you are going make disciples of all the nations.**" Our Lord had faith that not only would the *eleven* be already going but that *we* also will already be going with the word. So he gives us a command of what to do as we are going.

Our Lord had enough insight into human nature to know that actions such as he was wanting might cause a little anxiety, a little fear in us. So he adds that very comforting phrase, "**And lo, I am with you always.**"

"I'll be with you. I, the Son of God, the Chief Shepherd, your elder Brother will be right on your side, as close as your elbow. As you knock on that first door; as you talk to your work-associates or schoolmates; as you call on visitors to the assembly I'll be with you."

That is even more comforting than a small child having his father say, "It's alright. I'll ride the roller coaster with you." With this promise of Jesus we can have confidence in going and not disappointing Him who is assuming that we will be going with His message.

**FISHERS OF MEN**

Mark 1:17 contains both a command and a promise to the spring keepers of the world. "Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men." The command was not to be fishers of men but it was to come after him, just as in Joshua 3 the priests were commanded to walk into the waters of the Jordan. The promise was that Jesus will "make us to become" fishers of men, just as God promised to make the waters of the Jordan "stand in one heap" when the sole of the priest's foot touched the water.

Jesus promises to make us into fishers of men. In John 9 he took dirt mixed with spittle and made clay which he used as an instrument to show his power through healing the blind man. The clay had no power in and of itself but Jesus used it. We may have no power in and of ourselves, we may think we have no abilities but Jesus can use us and "make us to become."

A story recorded in Mark 5 shows us the *why* and the *how* of personal evangelism. The demoniac man was healed and wanted to go with Jesus, but our Lord said in verse 19, "Go to thy house unto thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and how he had mercy on thee."

*Why* engage in personal evangelism? "How great things the Lord hath done for thee." *How* does one do personal evangelism? "Tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee" and share with them how they can have the same blessings.

The surest sign you are carrying a full bucket is wet feet! No vessel is really full until it begins to overflow. If you are only a thimble you are not filled with Jesus Christ until you overflow with him. If you are a 55-gallon barrel you are not filled with Jesus Christ until you over-flow with him. Both the proof and the value of the Christ-filled life is the overflowing into the lives of others! The outflow proves the inflow! No gift or blessing from God is meant for our hearts alone. There is no profit to ourselves, to the world nor to God if our lives are centred on Christ if we do not overflow to those around us!

O fill me with thy fullness, Lord,  
 Until my very heart o'erflow  
 In kindling thought and glowing word,  
 Thy love to tell, thy praise to show.

G. GRADY

**SCRIPTURE READINGS**

June 7	Jeremiah 9:12-24	2 Cor. 10
June 14	Genesis 3	2 Cor. 11:1-15
June 21	Joshua 2:1-16	2 Cor. 11:16-33
June 28	Psalms 31:1-18	2 Cor. 12

**2 CORINTHIANS  
 CHAPTER 10-13**

Many commentators have pointed out that chapters ten to thirteen are dif-

ferent in tone from chapters one to nine. Indeed, some hold to the view that chapters ten to thirteen constitute a different epistle. C.K. Barrett has written: "There is a unity in 2 Corinthians, and a unity of treatment; but there is a change in atmosphere, a change in the mood of Paul's response, and also a change in the response that he appears to expect from his readers . . . The only adequate explanation of the new tone in x-xiii is that Paul heard further news from Corinth - not that the situation had

changed completely but it had developed. Such news could have arrived while he was writing; he could have decided to let what he had written stand and simply add a supplement . . . it is more likely that he had already sent i-ix. He could not call these letters back . . . but a new letter was called for".

There was undoubtedly a feeling of resentment against Paul by some of the members of the Corinthian Church. It appears that this resentment was stirred by visitors. Who were they and what were they about? My view is that they were Hebrews (11:22), probably from Jerusalem, who brought credentials signed by the Jerusalem leaders. They were intruders who looked to impose the authority of the mother church over the Christian world. "The interlopers argued that no teaching could be validated unless it was authorised by Jerusalem. If Paul acted in independence of Jerusalem, he lacked the commission of Christ which was primarily vested in Jerusalem and which they accordingly inherited; to cut oneself loose, as Paul did, from the source of spiritual authority was to 'walk according to the flesh' (10:2). If the church of Corinth wished to enjoy the blessings of the Spirit, it must acknowledge the authority of Jerusalem" (Bruce).

So these visitors to Corinth could best be described as intruders, interlopers, usurpers, boasters, etc. who thought they were superior to the apostle Paul. Yes, they were messengers of the Jerusalem church, but things had gone to their head. Here they were undermining the authority of a true apostle of Jesus (apostle Paul), who had been specially chosen by the Master to take the gospel to the Gentile world and whose whole ministry bore the stamp of Divine approval. In fact, by their actions, they were usurping the authority of all the apostles. No longer were they servants of God, but servants of Satan. Paul's warning to the Corinthians was clear. "For apparently you cheerfully accept a man who comes to you preaching a

different Jesus from the One we told you about, and you readily receive a spirit and a gospel quite different from the ones you originally accepted" (11:4, J.B. Phillips).

#### PAUL - A TRUE APOSTLE

Once we have an appreciation of the background to this section of the epistle then we can understand better many of Paul's remarks. For example, he had endured far more hardships in the discharge of his ministry than the boasters had done. ". . . in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Three times was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, three times I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by my own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the seas, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Beside those things that are without, that which comes upon me daily, the care of all the churches" (11:23:28). Some might boast of coming to "visions and revelations of the Lord" (12:1). But Paul can produce more impressive ones (12:2-4). In addition he could write: ". . . for in nothing am I behind the very chiefest apostles, though I be nothing. Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds" (12:11-12). Further as one commentator put it, "If they assert their authority among the Corinthian Christians by lording it over them and living at their expense, Paul will exercise his apostolic freedom by tending his converts with paternal care and spending and being spent for them".

#### PAUL'S THORN IN THE FLESH

Paul wrote: "And lest I should be exalted above measure through the

abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord three times, that it might depart from me. And He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for you: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me" (12:7-9). What exactly was this "thorn in the flesh"? The answer is that we do not know because the Bible does not reveal it. However, there has been much speculation about it. Epilepsy, severe headaches, eye trouble, malaria are just some of the suggestions from commentators. Any one of them would certainly have been a severe handicap to the faithful apostle. Paul prayed earnestly that this "thorn in the flesh" might be removed from him. But God answered the prayer, not by taking the ailment away, but by giving him strength to bear it. The same thing could be said of Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane.

### SATAN

Satan should never be underestimated. He is cunning, deceitful and destructive. Paul saw him as a reality, as did Jesus Himself. Paul knew what he was up against with the devil. May we also never be ignorant of his devices (2 Corinthians 2:11).

We must never make a peace-pact with our enemy, the devil. We are involved in a continuous war with him. We might be a small minority, brethren and sisters in the Lord, but make no mistake about it, we are going to win! The book of Revelation is clear on this - and I am certain I read it correctly! Paul wrote: "And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light" (11:14). This is the art of ultimate deception! We must be on our guard, therefore, every step of the way, every minute of the day. If we allow our guard to drop then we can be assured he will be there to get us. "Be sober, be

vigilant: because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walks about, seeking whom he may devour: whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world" (1 Peter 5:8-9).

I think Christians do not pay enough attention to the devil. His influence and deeds in the Scriptures should be carefully studied and analysed so that we are better aware of this machinations. He has used the same strategies throughout history. We do not need to break some impossible cipher to learn of his plans and purposes. They are all clearly revealed in the Bible. What is also clearly revealed is his downfall. Michael Green has written: "The early saints knew that Satan was a defeated foe. They knew that the cause of Jesus Christ could not be stopped. They knew that whatever the reverses they encountered, whatever the suffering they endured, whatever the death meted out to them, the Lord God omnipotent was reigning, the Lamb once slain was in the midst of the throne of God. And therefore they could rejoice. And therefore they could overcome. And so can we, if we are prepared to pay the price!"

IAN S. DAVIDSON,  
Motherwell.

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### CHRISTIAN LIVING

The characteristics of Christian living can be summed up in the following statements of Jesus. He said, "Come unto me"; "Follow me"; "Abide in me" and "Go ye." Simple words indeed. Today we tend to worry over the things we must not do, to the neglect of the things we should be doing.

The requests that the Lord makes of us are so simple, so straight-forward, so unmistakable in meaning that even a child can understand. It would appear the difficulty does not lie in trying to decipher *the meaning* of Christ's commands, but in believing *with a sincere heart*: that seems to be the trouble. I am sure we pray often: but do we pray

believing, not just hoping; expecting, awaiting the force of the Holy Spirit? It seems not brethren. We fail in this, taking things for granted. God relates to those who are mighty in prayer; they will be used and blessed of him.

#### "COME UNTO ME"

To hear and respond to the call of Jesus, creates a new Christian, and praise the Lord, that's good. The more we go to Jesus, the closer our fellowship with Him will be. Our experience in the Lord will reach new heights. We must realise that Jesus says "Come unto me" not once but often.

#### "FOLLOW ME"

When we come to Jesus we find a friend with power, influence and wisdom: such as no earthly friend can ever hope to have. Earthly friends can, at times, let us down: but Jesus, never. In Him all things are possible. We need to believe this. Many of us tend to falter. We need to follow on in the footsteps of Jesus, in close company. Failure results in sorrow.

#### "ABIDE IN ME"

To be in union with Christ is of the most importance. We must be in fellowship with Him, we must be working with Him. Jesus says, "I am the vine ye are the branches." Christians take note; no branch, no fruit. It is through the Church the good news is to be preached, in all its facets. Through the Christian the good news is to be made known. For this we need to abide in Christ, for strength, for guidance, for help and for success. We must ever be aware of the possibility of failing in this by, standing on past laurels. To "abide in the Lord" means success in all things; that is the promise of God.

#### "GO YE"

To answer Christ's call of "GO", one needs courage, honesty and a stout heart. If truly abiding in Christ, these things can be ours. The Spirit will help you, guide us, direct us and care for us. A possible failing of the Christian may be that strict adherence to the first three commands create a neglect of the fourth

"Go ye", to the hurt of the soul. "Go ye", Christ says, but we stand static! "Go and preach the gospel," but we respond, "I can't do that, it's not very convenient." Attend meetings; go to the soul that needs comfort; go to the brother that needs help; go to the person that is house-bound. In this dear reader, you are helping to preach the gospel. It may be hard to understand this, but a static Christian is of no consequence. A Christian on fire for the Lord, can soon set alight a flame somewhere else, to the glory of God. We have to share the faith. If you really can't go then send a card, a note, an invitation, a tract, advice, help. We can all go, brethren, in some way or another. If not, help others to go. Be about the Lord's business in your own small way.

May the Lord bless us all, in the work He has set before us.

A. P. SHARPE,  
Newtongrange.

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*(The following was sent in by Sister Ruth Coles, hoping that it will be of interest to those who have lately been contributing to aid for our brethren in PNG. Ruth received the letter from Ming Paul Lee whose daughter has evidently been nursing in PNG recently. Ed.)*

## Student nurse writes from New Guinea

*"Travel is fatal to prejudice, bigotry and narrow-mindedness. Broad, wholesome, charitable views cannot be acquired by vegetating in the little corner of the earth." Mark Twain.*

From the remote, primitive village, on the highlands of Papua New Guinea, Suganya Jennifer Lee of Nanoose Bay, a fourth year student of the University of British Columbia e-mailed her parents, about her "Bush Nursing" . . .

"Well, we just got back from a small village, Umba, in the mountains. It was a great experience. Makes one really appreciate the conveniences and comfort of home.

"The weather was cool and the view in Uмба was amazing. We (Velma, another Canadian nurse and Speck, a native man and my self) were there for a week and held a clinic. In four days that we worked, we saw just over 500 persons. Many children suffer from treatable and preventative illnesses and diseases.

"The people of Uмба were so wonderful and they were so hospitable to us. The children were wonderful and so cute. It was like something out of National Geographic and the children loved having their pictures taken.

"One unfortunate thing for me was that my glasses were washed down the mountain river rapids while I was bathing. For part of the week it was a somewhat blurry outlook. But then again with anywhere you visit, you always leave something of you behind. I just didn't think I would do it literally.

"When we left, beside the vast amount of vegetables that were given to us, gifts were also given to me and they are not only wonderful but also extremely interesting. They consisted of several necklaces and two of them are made of fur, reeds, seeds and other bits of animal I would rather not know too much about. They are part of their traditional dress.

"Many children have never seen the white/fair skin people and are often afraid of the 'outsiders.' because the mother, attempting to discipline their children, often threaten the kids that the white/fair skin visitors, 'outsiders' will take them away and beat them. Often there are the common tribal wars. In recent years, there was a long spell of drought and many families still face much hardship.

"Having spent two summers ('93 and 94) in Croatia teaching English, helping refugees and being involved in fund raising for the orphanage. Hope and Home For Children in Lipik, Croatia, one can quickly learn to be very thankful and appreciative to live in Nanoose Bay and the ample opportunities for

young adults in Canada. Attitude of gratitude becomes reality as one travels around in our wonderful world."

## TEST YOUR BIBLICAL KNOWLEDGE

1. What did king Asa burn by the brook of Kidron?
2. Who were chosen to carry the Ark of God?
3. This priest was demoted and sent to his own fields by king Solomon.
4. This father and his three sons fell in the same battle.
5. What mother made her son a little coat?
6. An angel appeared unto this woman and forbade her to drink wine.
7. He was the murderer of James, the brother of John.
8. In this city Jesus brought great joy to a widow's heart.
9. This man is unstable in all his ways.
10. Half of his goods he gave to the poor.

## GHANA APPEAL

In December 1989 we sent money to the second church that we began to help in Ghana and they bought their land by February 1990. The church I refer to is Koforidua. Their building programme has very slowly progressed over the past eight years. There have been problems. In 1995 when they were ready to roof the building the materials were lost in a tropical storm. Recent money sent to this church was spent on purchasing roofing sheets. Roofing sheets are subject to inflation whereas timber is not greatly affected. The secretary of the church has written me a letter requesting aid to complete the roof as they are expecting to be evicted any day now from the place where they have been meeting for the past nine years. They

need money to buy the timber for the roof trusses.

There is also another in the same situation. In the April 1990 Scripture Standard I mentioned that Koforidua had bought their ground and that we had sent two other churches £500 each, Odumasi and Patriensa. Odumasi completed their building last year and have solar light as this is an area without electricity. Patriensa are now ready for a roof. They meet in their building with a cloth over their heads to protect against the sun. Koforidua and Patriensa were new congregations which have been growing for the past nine years and they have been very patient in waiting for the gift to help them complete their meeting places. It would be good if we completed both these buildings this year.

The Church continues to grow in Ghana with another two added last month, Obo-Kwahu near Nkawkaw and Kyelayebiase near Patriensa. All the glasses, clothes and books received in the past two months have been sent out to Ghana to villages where we thought they could make the best use of them. Thank you for your continued support. I hope to purchase the necessary "Where there is no Doctor" books and have these sent out to new families added to the Church this month.

Please make cheques payable to

"Graeme Pearson (Ghana Appeal)" and send to Graeme Pearson, 13 Fairways, Dunfermline, Fife, KY12 0DU. Tel: (01383) 728624.

P.S. IMB thank you for you cheque for £100 it was received 9th April and the receipt number is 969.

**COMING EVENTS**

**BUCKIE SOCIAL**

Saturday, 2nd May, 1998  
at 3.30 p.m.

Speaker: Bro. J. Nisbet  
All Welcome

**TRANENT SOCIAL**

Saturday, 16th May, 1998

- 10. Zaccheus (Luke 19:1-19).
- 9. A double-minded man (James 1:8).
- 8. Nain (Luke 7:11-16).
- 7. King Herod (Acts 12:1-2).
- 6. Wife of Manoah (Judges 13:1-5).
- 5. Hannah - Samuel (1 Samuel 2:19).
- 4. Saul (1 Chronicles 10:1-7).
- 3. Abiathar (1 Kings 2:26-27, 35).
- 2. The Levites (1 Chronicles 15:1-2).
- 1. His mother's idol (1 Kings 15:11-13).

**ANSWERS**

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