

PERCEPTION



Teaching them to observe all things
whatsoever I have commanded you:
and lo, I am with you always, even
unto the end of the world. Amen.
Matt. 28.20

SPRING 2013

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Cover Picture: Looking across Lake Buttermere to Fleetwith Pike, the Lake District.

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It is with the deepest regret that we have to announce the passing of our beloved friend and first Editor of Perception, Mr J. R. Broome on February 14th 2013. Whilst our loss is exceedingly great, his gain is immeasurably more, as we believe he has entered the rest which remaineth for the people of God in its fullness. He has left a gracious testimony of loyalty to the truth and love for the Lord's people, especially younger friends in whom he

took a great and prayerful concern and in whose interest Perception was first instigated. We would seek the prayerful interest of our readers as we consider the future of Perception. If the Lord will our readers will be further informed in the next issue of the magazine.

G. D. Buss

(Chairman of the Magazine Committee of the Gospel Standard Society)

EDITORIAL

“And, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world”

(Matt. 28. 20).

God is either with us or against us. What a solemn truth this is. He is eternally against the ungodly, but He has loved His people since before the foundation of the world. But they, in the days of their unregeneracy, born sons of Adam, are born in sin and shapen in iniquity and are against God; witness the Apostle Paul. It requires the

mighty power of regeneration to change them and bring them, like the Apostle Paul, to their knees. The Lord said to Ananias, "Behold, he prayeth." The Lord had loved him from all eternity and in his rebellious days. The Apostle wrote in his epistle to the Romans, "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. 5. 8). The Lord was always with him. But now He brought him to know it. The sharp arrows of conviction had entered his heart, the work of the new birth had been accomplished and he who had been without hope and without God in the world, once far off, was now brought nigh through the blood of the Cross. Now he knew that the Lord was with him and would be with him to the end of the world and in a never-ending eternity.

So when the Lord told his disciples before He ascended to glory, "Lo, I am with you alway", on what basis did He say this? He said to them, "peace I leave with you." It was a peace between God and the sinner through the sacrifice of Christ on the Cross and it was peculiarly His peace, for in the shedding of His precious blood He had atoned for their sins and truly He could say, "Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more" (Heb. 10. 17). They were redeemed with the precious blood of Jesus Christ and knew the truth that Peter knew when he wrote, "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree" (1 Pet. 2. 24), and also the Apostle John who wrote, "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1. 7). This was peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

The question is, how do we each stand in the light of these great gospel truths? Can we look back to a day when we knew Him not, and said, "We will not have this man to reign over us"? Can we trace a change, that effectual call, which halted us in our mad career, when we were afar off and were brought into the experience of His people? "But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ" (Eph. 2. 13). To those in whose hearts the Lord has begun, He says "Lo, I am with you alway, *even* unto the end of the world." In every step of the way, He watches over His children: in darkness; in temptation; in unbelief, that besetting sin; in tribulation; in bereavement; in afflictions of body and mind. He sends the Holy Spirit the Comforter to them; they know the comforts of His presence and enjoy the blessedness of the promise, "Lo, I am with you alway, *even* unto the end of the world" (Matt. 28. 20).

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CURRENT ISSUES

The Continuing Work of the Savannah Education Trust

By P. Ramsbottom

The Savannah Education Trust is a charity that was set up about eight years ago to help some of the poorest children in West Africa by building Christian schools in the area around Lawra – in remote and rural northern Ghana.

Our first school was opened in a village called Bagri; that first cohort of children is now reaching secondary school age. A new building has been built to form what is known as a ‘Junior Secondary School’, allowing the children to stay at school until the age of fourteen: the age at which the national examination is sat.

In the article in Perception in 2011, readers may recall that we were thankful that funds had been provided to build two new schools in nearby villages called Gberi and Pavuu. These schools are now open and have many children happily attending each day.

Both schools were commissioned when trustees visited at the end of 2011. The openings took place during one very full day: Gberi in the morning and Pavuu in the afternoon. They were both memorable occasions.

The drive to Gberi is only some four miles from the regional town of Lawra, but the charity’s robust vehicle was never more necessary. With no proper road, the approach to the village passes through long grass. Between the straggly green grass we had glimpses of a brilliant blue: the new school. As we arrived we were surrounded by a large crowd of women from the village and the harmonious sound of their song as they danced towards us.

Events at the two villages followed a similar format. We sat under a large canopy on armchairs in front of a table thoughtfully draped in a Union Jack flag. In the burning heat, there were sixteen or seventeen speeches and short performances by the children (looking neat in their blue uniform).

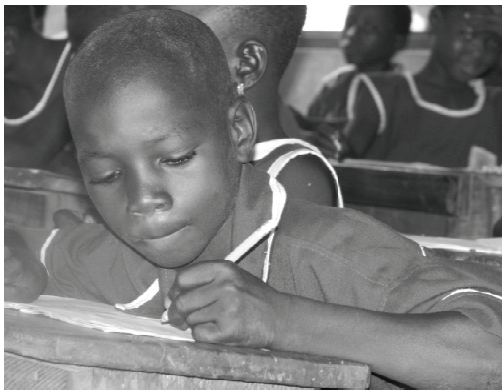
Both occasions were graced by the Paramount Chief of Lawra. He sat under a huge umbrella in his full ceremonial dress including a large medallion from colonial days bearing the head of George V. The government was also well represented with officials from the regional office.

We spoke last, directly before the unveiling of a plaque. It was an opportunity to express many of our heartfelt feelings: thankfulness to God, gratitude to our kind supporters and shared excitement with the children and villagers. The opening ceremony at Pavuu followed a very similar format, and we pray that the schools will prove a blessing to the children who attend.

We are very thankful to report that we have also relatively recently received a pledge of funding to build a further school in a village called Metoh: another village with no school, and in great and abject need. When we visited the village recently, it was noticeable that the children were thin and malnourished with wasted bodies. But they were also excited and enthusiastic: a Savannah school is being built in their village. Building work has been ongoing during 2012, and by the end of the year had reached roof level – with a view to opening formally in 2013, if the Lord will. Of course, with the opening of each school the responsibilities and ongoing costs also increase – and so the decisions are not made carelessly or without careful thought and prayer.

While there are children like Bernice who could benefit from the help of Savannah Education Trust we do not feel that our work is finished. Some of the trustees met Bernice when they visited Ghana again in September 2012 (the costs of these important visits, I should perhaps add, are kindly funded by one of our supporters). We visited Bernice's village of Bagri and pulled some chairs into the shade created by our blue school. We listened to her story. Both of her parents died while she was young, leaving Bernice and her seven brothers and sisters as orphans. But her eyes were bright as she told how a Christian school had changed her village – and how the school had improved her life.

Now she is well dressed, receives a meal each school day and enjoys an education. "If you have no school", she concluded, "the community cannot develop". When Bernice arrives home after



A student learns to write

school her work is not finished. In the absence of parents she takes responsibility for many of the household jobs, including helping to cook a meal for her brothers and sisters. But when we asked what the charity might do to help, she didn't ask for more food or other assistance – simply for a torch to read her text books during the evening in this remote village where dusk brings total darkness.

We are thankful to God for all of the progress that has been made since our small beginnings and especially for all of the kind donations that have been received and the hard work and diligence of our workers in Ghana. There are many, many hundreds of children – like Bernice – now being helped. There are too many to remember all of their names but we trust that they sit in our hearts and that the education will prove a blessing to them as the work continues to expand.

See: www.savannahtrust.org for more information.

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Science and Religion

By N. Christie

Today, many scientists are atheists and do not believe that science and religion can go together. Many worldly people believe that religion, in particular Christianity, has hindered the progress of science. The example of Galileo is often used to demonstrate this. However, the history of science shows that Christianity has not hindered science; in truth Christianity has led to some of the most important discoveries in science. Many of the most famous scientists of the past were professing Christians, and their religion influenced their work.

The Natural Philosophers

Before the word scientist was 'invented', the men who studied nature and tried to work out how things happen were called 'natural philosophers'. One definition of natural philosophy is 'the study of God's creation' – the aim of many natural philosophers was to study nature as part of God's wonderful creation, and they felt that they were honouring God by studying what He had created. Natural philosophy went hand in hand with theology. The term 'scientist' is actually a relatively recent term, coined by William Whewell (the Master of Trinity College in Cambridge) in 1833, and was used to describe the people studying natural philosophy. Many modern scientists do not

realise, or like to think, that modern science emerged from such beginnings as natural philosophy.

The study of natural philosophy by Christians has taken place for a very long time, beginning with the early Christians. I am going to look at one early Christian in particular – Augustine of Hippo – before moving on to look at some of the leading scientists of the Scientific Revolution of the seventeenth century, namely Johannes Kepler, Robert Boyle and John Ray.

Augustine of Hippo and the ‘early Christians’

Initially, many of the early Christians thought that the study of natural philosophy was dangerous, being a subject studied by the pagans, in particular the Greeks. However, some of the early Christians realised that it could actually be of use to them. It was useful in the defence of the faith (many Christians suffering persecution at the hands of the pagans). The subject was also useful in the study and understanding of Scriptures. Many early Christians, for example Augustine of Hippo (354-430 AD), viewed nature and its study as the ‘handmaidens of theology’.

Augustine had a full classical education, and was converted to Christianity at the age of thirty-two. He was a natural philosopher and recorded that he studied music, rhetoric, logic, arithmetic and geometry. He wrote over 100 works which still survive. In one book, titled *De Ordine*, he developed a system of education which included the mathematical sciences. Augustine used natural philosophy to warn people against astrology, using both theological and philosophical arguments. In the *Literal Commentary on Genesis* and *The City of God* he used analytical arguments to refute astrology.

Augustine believed that Christians should not expose themselves to ridicule by their ignorance. In his work *Literal Commentary on Genesis*, he wrote:

Even non-Christians know something about the earth, the heavens,... the motion and the orbit of the stars, and even their size and relative positions, about the predicable eclipses of the moon... about the kinds of animals, shrubs, stones and so forth... Now, it is a disgraceful and shameful thing for an infidel to hear a Christian, presumably giving the meaning of Holy Scripture, talking nonsense on these topics; and we should take all means to prevent such an embarrassing situation, in

which people show up vast ignorance in a Christian and laugh it to scorn.¹

However, Augustine believed rightly that knowledge should be used but not loved, saying that Christians should set their hearts on celestial and eternal things rather than the earthly and temporal. He wrote that there was no need to worry if people did not have any knowledge of Greek philosophy and nature; it was far more important to know that God was the Creator.

Augustine was not the only early Christian to study nature. Many of the so-called early fathers of Christianity studied Greek philosophy. Science was not pursued for its own sake, but for the use that it could have in the interpretation and understanding of Scripture. Origen, another early Christian, wrote that the Christians who used Greek philosophy were like the Israelites in captivity in Egypt. They borrowed Egyptian gold and silver when they left, as commanded by God. According to Origen, the Egyptian gold was like Greek philosophy – it was spoiling the valuables of non-Christians for the use of Christians.

The Middle Ages

The Middle Ages were a dark time for both religion and science. Catholicism dominated Europe. Science was monitored by the Catholic Church, which was committed to the Aristotelian system of philosophy. Aristotle was a Greek philosopher who believed that nature was alive, and that everything in nature happened randomly. A natural object could change using internal powers in order to make it more perfect. This would mean that the world is constantly and unpredictably changing, and therefore cannot be understood by mathematical laws. Put simply, this basically means that all objects have a mind of their own, and can do what they please – there are no rules to govern them. Aristotle also believed that the earth was at the centre of the solar system (heliocentricity), and that the heavens (sky and planets) were perfect. This was why Galileo and Copernicus, (who believed that the sun was at centre of the solar system), came up against so much opposition from the Catholic Church.

The Reformation

With the Protestant Reformation, begun by Martin Luther in 1517, the theological, political and academic landscape was radically

¹ Augustine *The Literal Meaning Of Genesis*

transformed. Natural philosophers could break free from the restrictions of the previous centuries, and start looking at nature in a new way. This new way was called ‘mechanical philosophy’. Mechanical philosophers did away with the old Aristotelian ideas. Instead, they believed that all matter was passive, and did not move randomly or by chance, but that objects are subject to external forces from outside the object. These external forces are governed by the ‘laws of nature’, which we are familiar with today. Examples include gravity, or Newton’s three laws of motion. Mechanical philosophers believed that these laws of nature were ordained by God. This new approach paved the way to the ‘Scientific Revolution’ – the beginnings of modern science as we know it today. Most of the natural philosophers or ‘scientists’ of the scientific revolution believed in God and creation. They believed that all knowledge came from two books – the Bible and the ‘Book of Nature’. They studied the Book of Nature (which was nature itself) in order to honour God and understand His creation. Studying nature led to experimentation, one of the foundation stones of science.

Johannes Kepler

Johannes Kepler (1571-1630), a German astronomer and mathematician, was a Calvinist. He is famous for discovering Kepler’s Laws of the motion of the planets around the sun. Together with Sir Isaac Newton’s later work they form the foundation for modern astronomy and physics.

Kepler’s Calvinistic beliefs often caused him problems, due to persecution from the Roman Catholic church, and he had to move location several times because he would not convert to Catholicism. It cost him his position at the University of Graz, which led to him working for Tycho Brahe, the famous astronomer, at his observatory near Prague. Kepler’s works *The Cosmic Mystery*, *The New Astronomy* and *Harmony of the Worlds* are said to have begun the process that replaced superstition with reason, and formed the foundation of modern science.

Kepler studied nature and the planets because they were part of God’s creation. He wrote, “God is the beginning and end of scientific research and striving”. Throughout his scientific writings, you can see his beliefs – in the *Harmonics* he wrote:

O Thou, who by the light of nature increases in us the desire for the light of Thy mercy in order to be led by this to Thy glory, to Thee I

offer thanks, Creator, God, because Thou hast given me pleasure in what Thou hast created and I rejoice in Thy handiwork.²

Kepler was one of the greatest scientists, but atheists gloss over this side of him. He had wished to be a theologian, but lack of money led to him becoming a mathematician. In later life he wrote: “For a long time I wanted to become a theologian...now, however, behold how through my efforts God is being celebrated in astronomy”.³ His legacy in astronomy still lasts to this day, but he always remained humble, desiring to, “Let my name perish if only the name of God the Father is thereby elevated.”

His dying words were said to have been: “Only the merits of our Saviour Jesus Christ. It is in Him, as I steadfastly testify, that there rest all my retreat, all my consolation, all my hope.”

Robert Boyle

Robert Boyle (1627-1691) is sometimes called the ‘Father of Chemistry’ and was a pioneer of the modern scientific method. He is most famous for discovering ‘Boyle’s Law’ which shows the relationship between the pressure and volume of a gas. He did many other experiments too, on things like crystals, hydrostatics, electricity and colour. Boyle was one of the founding members of the Royal Society – a prestigious society for eminent scientists which received chartership from Charles II – and he popularised science by performing demonstrations. He was a proponent of the ‘mechanical universe’ – that is, a world governed by the ‘laws of nature’.

Boyle devoted a lot of his time to theology, writing that, “The vastness, beauty, orderliness of heavenly bodies; the excellent structure of animals and plants; and other phenomena of nature justly induce an intelligent, unprejudiced observer to conclude a supreme, powerful, just, and good author.”⁴ He also contributed liberally to missionary societies, strongly believing that the Bible should be in the people’s own language, and financed the printing of the Bible into Irish.

John Ray

John Ray (1627-1705) is considered to be the father of modern natural history in Britain. His work on classification and his studies of

² Kepler *Harmonics*

³ Kepler in a letter to Mastlin

⁴ Boyle *The Excellency of Theology* (1674)

nature were the building blocks for Linnaeus's classification of nature (which we use today).

Ray was born in Black Notley in Essex, the son of a blacksmith. He attended a grammar school in nearby Braintree, before going on to the University of Cambridge, where he studied at Trinity College and St Catharine's College (which still has a scientific society named after him). Ray wrote on botany, zoology and fossils and gained a fellowship at Trinity College in 1649. He had to give this up in 1662 when his Puritan sympathies led to him refusing to sign the Act of Uniformity – which prescribed the rites and ceremonies of the Church of England and established *The Book of Common Prayer*. After leaving Cambridge, Ray continued his studies of nature, writing books about the natural history of Europe, publishing systematic lists of birds, animals, plants, fish and insects. In 1667 he became a member of the Royal Society.

Ray believed that everything was created by God, and he looked at nature in order to worship God and marvel at creation. In 1660, he wrote, "There is for a free man no occupation more worthy and delightful than to contemplate the beauteous works of nature and honour the infinite wisdom and goodness of God." The infinite detail of living organisms was evidence of a Divine Creator, and in 1691 he wrote his popular and influential work, *The wisdom of God manifested in the works of Creation*. Ray believed that nature was a worthy subject for study: "Let it not suffice to be book-learned, to read what others have written and to take upon trust more falsehood than truth, but let us ourselves examine things as we have opportunity, and converse with Nature as well as with books."⁵

In Conclusion

There are many more scientists and natural philosophers who I could mention; I have merely scratched the surface in looking at just four men. There were many more men like them – I could have included James Clerk Maxwell, Tycho Brahe, Leonard Euler, Christiaan Huygen, Anton van Leeuwenhoek, Thomas Bayes and many more. Although not perhaps not clear on all doctrines, these men believed in God, and their work was influenced by their strong religious beliefs. Many may feel that this list is incomplete without a mention of Sir Isaac Newton, who many believe was one of this country's greatest

⁵ John Ray *The Wisdom of God* 1691

scientists and a very religious man who studied the Bible intently. However, many people do not realise that he was an Arian – someone who denies the existence of the Trinity. Newton did not believe that Christ was part of the Trinity. Newton had to keep this a secret, because it was heretical and he could have been severely punished for his views – at the least having his position at Cambridge taken away.

As can be seen, religion and science have not always warred against each other. The rise of modern science was not due to a separation of religion and science, but to a joining together of the two. Modern science would have never arisen if it had not been for the natural philosophers who looked at nature in order to understand creation and honour God. Many of the advances in science were due to a group of Christian men, and Christianity has never formed a stumbling block for science – instead it has been a great influence and help. However, we must bear in mind that science and knowledge are not the most important things. In their right place they are useful, but we should not get taken up with the pursuit of learning.

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BIOGRAPHY

Henry Fowler (1779 – 1838)

By J. R. Broome

Henry Fowler was born at Yealmpton in Devon on 11th December, 1779. He was one of five children. His father died when he was five. At the age of eleven he was apprenticed in Dartmouth, but as his employer was a Nonconformist and he himself had been brought up Church of England by his mother, he developed a dislike for his employer, and eventually persuaded his mother to let him change his apprenticeship and move to Plymouth. There he got into bad company and though he had been taught the Scriptures by his mother and did not come from an utterly Godless background, he developed the practice of using foul language. When he was seventeen he met a poor shoemaker who asked him to read parts of *The Pilgrim's Progress* to him and while Fowler was reading the old man explained the meaning to him. In what he felt to be a quite unaccountable way, except as explained spiritually, this encounter and the reading of the book, influenced the course of Fowler's life. He felt when he left the old man,

that he was in a very dangerous state spiritually, and from this time he became more moral. He now tried to turn to God, made a vow to serve him, obtained some ready-made prayers and tried to use them. Finding these did not express his feelings before God, he attempted to pray himself using such expressions as, "Lord teach me Thy way", "Show me Thy mercy", "Save Lord I am lost", "Pardon Thou my sins." Sometimes he felt a little melting of heart, but at other times great horror and trembling came over him and he appeared to himself to be the vilest of sinners. He attended the Church of England, but he received little help in the services and the preaching did not touch his felt need; so he took to reading an old copy of Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*, which was left in the Church, during the sermon, and he found in this experiences which meant something to him.

At length he was directed to go and hear Dr Hawker, a gracious minister who preached at Plymouth at that time. The occasion was never forgotten by Fowler. The whole discourse touched his case, outlined his condition and experience and showed him the suitability of Christ to his needy soul, to such an extent that he left with the conviction that he would never be satisfied until he knew Christ for himself. Now he began to read his Bible carefully and any religious book he could find, not all of which contained the truth, though at this stage in his experience he was not entirely aware of what was truth and what error. The light that shone in his heart and upon the Bible astonished him and he felt like a hind let loose. He found the Lord Jesus to be very precious in all His names, characters and offices. He also found much liberty in prayer and told the Lord that he could not live unless He blessed him. Sometimes he thought he had gone too far in his freedom with the Lord, when passage after passage would be sent into his mind, until he stood amazed at the sovereign love of God manifested in Jesus and in his heart also. This experience lasted for several months. Jeremiah 31, verse 3, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee," was made very precious to him. He felt a great love to Dr Hawker and to other saints of God whose conversation he enjoyed. He now felt a strong desire to preach Christ to poor sinners, and the light which God had given him encouraged him to think that He would also qualify him for the great work of the ministry.

In 1799 he left Plymouth to go to London. His intention was to walk! He covered sixty miles on the first day. He records that while walking

up a long hill on that first day, he took out his copy of Watts's *Hymns* and lighted on the one which begins, "Bless'd are the souls that hear and know, The gospel's joyful sound" (Gadsby's No. 58). He records that the Lord blessed the lines of verse two,

His righteousness exalts their hope,
Nor Satan dares condemn

to his soul with great power. He says, "I stood awhile overcome with a sense of the love of Christ and I sang and I wept for joy and blessed and praised the Lord for His tender mercy towards me. And these words, 'His righteousness' appeared grand indeed. When I arrived at the summit of the hill, I felt as if I must return again in order to tell my friends who feared God, what he had done for my soul. All around me seemed to look gay, for God had turned 'the shadows of death into morning.' I stood awhile leaning on the top of my staff, hesitating whether I should go forward or return. At length I came to the conclusion to go forward, trusting in the Lord to prosper my way...I had not had so clear a discovery of my acceptance in the Beloved and my full and complete salvation by His justifying righteousness as I was favoured with at this time...So I went on my way rejoicing." At the end of the second day he twisted his ankle and on the following morning it was so swollen that he was unable to continue walking. But the Lord put it into the heart of a coachman to give him a lift for a small sum of money and then put in a word with another coachman whom he knew, until in the providence of God Fowler reached London, carrying with him the effect of the great blessing he had had on the way, and his foot rested by the journey in the coaches.

In London he was surrounded by many snares and temptations, but the Lord preserved him. Work being short, he went to Bristol for a few months but soon returned to London again. In the Summer of 1800 he records that he felt in much bondage of spirit, having lost the sweetness of his previous blessing. He had hoped in London to be able to hear many godly ministers of religion but he could not find any that understood his case. At last he resolved to go and hear John Newton at his Church in Lombard Street (St. Mary Woolnoth). He felt in a despairing condition, realising more and more of the corruptions of his own heart, which he had hoped he might have left behind him. He was greatly tempted that his religion had not started right and that he had not ever been properly convicted of his sin. In this state he went to hear

Newton whose text was Jonah 2. 7. Newton showed in his sermon that trials were for the children of God their natural course to heaven. But he also showed that the Lord Jesus Christ sympathised with them in it. The service was made a special blessing to Fowler, a time of liberation to his soul. He was shown that the gospel was the perfect law of liberty and that Christ had delivered him from the bondage of the law. Following this blessing, Fowler was taken very ill and his life was in danger. But now he had no fear of death or hell and his only desire was to live to preach the gospel. In this illness a gracious friend repeated to him the words, "Has not God said, 'I will never, never, leave thee nor forsake thee'." This the Lord powerfully applied to his soul and it marked the turning point in his illness. He wrote of it, "Oh how sweet are the visits of Jesus Christ in a time of real need." He was out of work at the time he was recovering, but though in these straits, the Lord was pleased to give him peace of mind. In late October 1800 he decided to leave London and go to Portsea. He left by coach from Charing Cross and felt very blessed in his own soul at the mercy of God to him. He sat alone at the back of the coach and says, "as we passed along Westminster Bridge, I sang with inexpressible pleasure that well known hymn, 'Guide me, O thou great Jehovah!'" (462, Gadsby's).

He stayed at Portsea for a couple of months and while there was very tempted in his soul with atheistic thoughts and felt very rebellious about it. In looking back later in life he felt that it was on account of the Lord's purpose to set him in the ministry that he had to undergo such peculiar temptations, that he might be of real use in the work to those who suffered in a similar way and be able to comfort them. In December 1800 he sailed from Portsea for Plymouth Dock (Devonport) and after a fairly rough passage and twenty-three hours at sea he arrived there safely back in his "home country". He was just twenty-one at the time and already had been taught much of the tribulation through which the children of God are called to enter the kingdom (Acts 14. 22).

Having returned home, one day he went to see some of his relatives, who with a few friends met together for prayer and preaching. As there was no minister one of the older members asked Fowler to read a chapter and if anything struck him to tell them about it. He did as he was requested and continued speaking for about half an hour. This was his first attempt to speak in the Lord's name. Soon he was asked to speak elsewhere, at the Old Tabernacle at Plymouth. He felt anxious in doing so, but went. His text was Zechariah 9. 11. He felt the sweetness

of the words of his text, "As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein *is* no water." His fears were in a great measure removed and he was given freedom of the Lord to speak. He says, "I had by experience known what the pit was, and what it was to be a prisoner in the pit, and how God delivered me, even by the precious blood of Christ, applied by the Holy Spirit to my sin-burdened soul." Now he was frequently employed in preaching in Plymouth and the surrounding villages. While there he wrote a number of hymns which were inserted in the *Gospel Magazine*. He was very tried about preaching, but the Lord helped him in it and taught him some lessons when he could not feel His presence and felt in bondage of spirit before the people.



Henry Fowler

In 1801 he went to Kingsbridge to see some relatives and eventually preached in the Countess of Huntingdon's Chapel there. The first time he preached feeling help in his own soul; but on the second occasion he was tempted to use the outline of another man's sermon and after fifteen minutes he was brought to confusion and had to sit down. This taught him the great lesson to rely always for his text and matter utterly upon the Lord. In this period he grew to know Dr Hawker better and had many conversations with him and attended the meetings at his church. One day having felt the Lord's presence in his soul he went in the evening to the Prayer Meeting and thought that if called upon he would be greatly blessed in prayer before the people and they would see how much the Lord was with him. But it turned out exactly the opposite to his expectations. He felt darkness, could only pray for a short while and learnt, "that the Lord's hand was in it to humble my proud heart." He learnt more by this experience, painful as it was at the time, than if the Lord had granted him the desire of his heart to be helped in prayer. Many were his trials and temptations. Few if any understood him, but he felt the Lord had a purpose in it to drive him to Himself. He says speaking of these years of spiritual teaching, "I was a

dull scholar, and still am.” And all the time he was still exercised as to whether he was rightly in the ministry.

In March 1803 he was married. It was his intention after marrying to go back to London. He describes his leadings to it beautifully, showing with what care and caution he took the step. “A thought for the first time struck me, that I should like, if it was the Lord’s will to alter my condition before I left Plymouth, that I might have a home, and a friend to share our joys and sorrows together. I had serious thoughts on the subject and well considered the matter; which I fear, is not always done even by God’s people. The words, ‘In all thy ways acknowledge him,’ at this time, as well as on many former occasions, were impressed on my mind; for if a believer be not guided by the Lord, he will make a wrong choice and that to his sorrow. The desired object was cast in my way without my seeking; and on March 14, 1803 I entered the honourable state of marriage, with the intention to go forthwith to London; ‘but man’s goings are of the Lord, how then, can he understand his ways’.” The way never eventually opened for him to go to London. Then Fowler got into a lukewarm condition spiritually, and, concerned with his business and family, he was left to give up his preaching for a year, satisfying himself that he could not be expected to bear the threefold burden. But the Lord rekindled the desire in his heart, opened a way for him to commence the work again and gave him the grace and strength to take up the threefold burden of ministry, family and business. His work in these days was mainly in the villages, though for a couple of years (1810-1812) he preached every fortnight at Ivybridge and, in the absence of the minister, at Devonport. Often he had to walk eleven miles on the Sunday morning, preach three sermons in the day and walk home, and this after working late at his business on a Saturday evening. On one occasion feeling very weary with it all and ready to give up, he sat down to rest, when half way there on the Sunday morning, feeling like Elijah under the juniper tree, “It is enough...take away my life; for I *am* not better than my fathers.” Suddenly the Lord arrested his attention with the words, “Death worketh in us, but life in you,” and he felt constrained to continue his journey. New strength was given him and though he arrived late at the chapel and the service had already started he continued the service, preached from the words “It is good for me to draw nigh unto God”, and felt liberty and sweetness after his bitterness in the early morning.

In 1813 he visited Bristol, preached there and felt great liberty in preaching. It was on his mind at the time to leave Plymouth; he was also exercised about giving up his business and living wholly off the ministry. He stayed at Bristol and preached for the next three Sundays. While there he received an invitation to supply at Birmingham. He stayed in Birmingham three weeks and was given a call to the pastorate. The haste of the church worried him, but he learned in conversation that they had been in much prayer for a pastor and that in his first sermon he had taken up the exact exercises and promises which the Lord had given to some of the people there. Eventually he felt led to accept the call, moved to Birmingham with his family, and took up the work of the ministry as his full-time occupation. On entering Birmingham he was very tempted that his ministry would soon come to an end, that he had made a mistake and that his family would suffer. But it was one of the enemy's temptations, for in the outcome, he experienced liberty which continued with him, while he preached to his congregation of about an 100 mainly poor people. In Birmingham he came to know John Warburton and William Gadsby. He was never a Baptist himself, being more of an Independent, but he had a very close friendship with many of the Particular Baptist ministers. He also knew Brewer, the writer of the hymn, "Hail, sovereign love, that first began" (134), who was a near neighbour of his.

In 1819, Fowler received an invitation to supply at Conway Street chapel, London. This chapel had been opened for some of the hearers of the late William Huntington. He was given a call to the pastorate, which he accepted, and moved to London in October of that year after a new chapel had been built for him in Gower Street. This chapel was only recently demolished and was, of course, the forerunner of the old Gower Street Memorial Chapel in Shaftesbury Avenue. Fowler was pastor of Gower Street Chapel for nearly twenty years until his death on 16th December 1838. He preached the truth, but was never a Strict Baptist, and the church did not become a Strict and Particular Baptist cause until some years after his death. Most of this account of his life has been taken from his book, entitled, *Travels in the Wilderness*, which he wrote and prepared for publication just before his death. It was published in 1839. His hymns were first published in 1818; in 1824 he published a second volume. In 1836 he published a *Selection of Hymns* which included about five hundred selected from various authors. In 1838 he printed a small volume called, *Sighs and Songs*,

which were prose and verse compositions, written during a severe illness in the winter 1837-38. In this volume is the well-known hymn, "Jesus, o'er the billows steer me" (769). Others of his hymns in Gadsby's are, "Ye pilgrims of Zion, and chosen of God," (350) the last verse of which is,

Surrounded with sorrows, temptations, and cares,
This truth with delight we survey,
And sing, as we pass through this valley of tears,
The righteous shall hold on his way.

Also: "Holy Comforter, descend" (754); "Save me, O God, my spirit cries" (954); "Not one of Adam's race" (1026); "What a polluted world this is" (1027); "Come hither, ye by sin distressed" (1028), of which verses two and three are,

Come hither, ye whose rising fears
Forbid you to exalt and sing;
Whose moments pass in sighs and tears,
Feeling your guilt a dreadful sting.
Does Satan tempt you to give up,
And call no more on Jesus' name?
Cast not away your little hope;
Come hither, and *behold the Lamb*.

"Come, Saviour, quickly come" (1029); "Lord, what a wretched, wretched heart" (1030); "What a vile, deceitful heart" (1031); "How shall I give thee up?" (1032); "In Jesus combine all the riches of grace" (1033); "Jesus, my soul's athirst for thee" (1034); "Return, my wandering heart" (1035); "Seek ye my face, the Saviour cries" (1036); "Days of darkness and distress" (1037).

Fowler wrote and preached from felt experience. We should like to close this article on him with the testimony of Dr D. A. Doudney, Editor of *The Gospel Magazine* in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Writing concerning the year 1826, when he was fifteen, he says, "Some fortnight or three weeks after this, the late Henry Fowler came to Southampton, where I then lived, and preached on a week-day evening. I do not, at this distant day (1878) recollect the text, nor anything that was said, yet I do remember that the word came with such unctuous, life-giving power, that the secret language of my heart was, with the woman of Samaria, 'Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did.' It seemed as if he knew all I had been exercised

with all that had been passing in my mind. ‘Well,’ thought I, ‘I never heard such preaching as this.’ I could not help thinking someone had told him about me; yet my name had never been mentioned. Oh it was ‘face answering to face, and the heart of man to man’ indeed; and most blessedly did it put the confirmatory stroke upon all that the Lord had been doing for me – blessed be His name!” (*Retracings and Renewings*, by D. A. Doudney, page 10).

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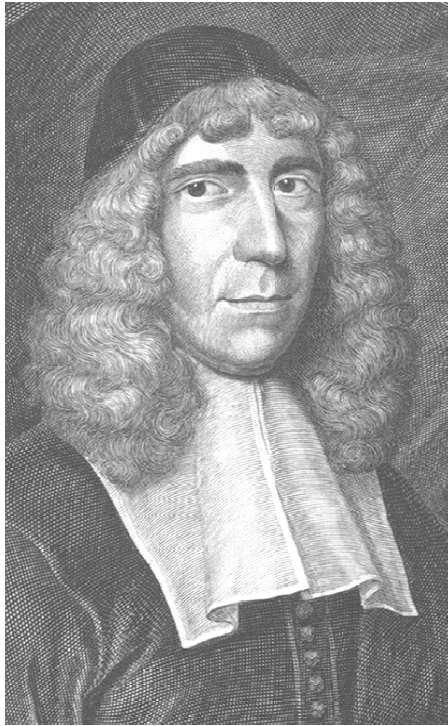
John Owen (1616 – 1683)

By J. R. Broome

John Owen D.D. was born at Stadham in Oxfordshire in 1616. His father was the vicar of the parish. John Owen was a brilliant boy, who gained entrance to Queen’s College, Oxford, at the age of twelve, and completed his Master of Arts Degree in 1635 at the age of nineteen. He was a keen student, and almost ruined his health by only allowing himself four hours’ sleep a night for several years. His principal object in life was to raise himself to some distinguished career in the Church or the State. Later in life, he was willing to confess that at that time he had no desire to know the will of God for his life. He stayed at Queen’s College until he was twenty-one. In these years, momentous events were taking place in the nation. William Laud had become Archbishop of Canterbury in August 1633. He was a High Churchman, and with the permission of King Charles I, he began to force his High Church views on the nation, the enforcement being done with judicial persecution, which, together with other factors, brought about the situation which sparked off the Civil War which began on the 22 August 1642. In the years from 1635 onwards, John Owen had begun to receive impressions of God upon his soul. We know nothing about how this happened, or exactly when. What is clear is that, when Archbishop Laud, through the Chancellor of Oxford University, began to impose High Church Rites upon the University under pain of expulsion, John Owen had by then received such light that his conscience would not allow him to submit to these impositions. When this became obvious, many of his friends left him, branding him as a Puritan (a man who desired a purer and simpler form of worship without ritual), and he was forced to leave Queen’s College.

This happened about 1637. Together with the anxiety of having to give up his University career, he was also brought into great concern about his soul. For three months he avoided all conversation, and was in great darkness of mind. Although the extremity of this lessened, it was nearly five years before he felt to obtain any settled peace in his soul. It was a time of trial and temptation to him, which no doubt, later on, he was able to look back on as those years in the wilderness in which the Lord was preparing him for the work of the ministry.

When the Wars broke out in England, he joined the Parliamentary side. Before the commencement of the War, he had been Chaplain to a Royalist. When this man joined the Royalist Army, John Owen left his service and went to London, and took lodgings there in Charterhouse Yard. While staying here, he went one Sunday to Aldermanbury Church, hoping to hear Mr Calamy preach. This eminent minister was unable to be present, whereupon many of the congregation went elsewhere. Owen, however, stayed in his seat, until a country minister came to take the service. He prayed very fervently, and took for his text, "Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?" (Matt. 8. 26). The very reading of the word surprised John Owen, who secretly put up a prayer to God that He would be pleased to speak to his condition, and the Lord was pleased to hear his prayer, for in that sermon the minister was directed to answer those very objections which Owen had commonly formed against himself; and though he had previously given the same answers to himself without any effect, yet now the time had come when God designed to speak peace to his soul; and this sermon was blessed for the



John Owen

removing of all his doubts, and laid the foundation of that solid peace and good hope, which he afterwards enjoyed (E. Middleton, *Biographia Evangelica*). It is remarkable that John Owen was never able to find out who this minister was, though he made many enquiries. While staying at Charterhouse Yard, he wrote a book called *A Display of Arminianism*. This was published in 1642 at a time when the error of free-will was spreading itself in the nation, it being the doctrine of the High Church party led by Laud. It brought Owen to the notice of the Committee which at the time was purging the Church of England of unsuitable ministers, and as a result, he was offered the living of Fordham in Essex, where he stayed for about a year and a half. His ministry was made a blessing to many in the neighbourhood who came to hear him from other parishes, and through the hand of the Lord, many were converted. Soon after coming to Fordham, he married, and had several children. In 1644, he published a book entitled *The Duty of Pastors and People*.

About the same time, he gave up the living at Fordham, and became vicar at Coggeshall, a market town about five miles away, where he had a large congregation, frequently as many as two thousand. Gradually he became well-known in the nation. On April 29, 1646, he was called to preach before Parliament. He preached from Acts 16.11, and pleaded with the members to grant liberty of conscience in the nation, and show moderation towards men of different religious beliefs. In 1643 he had published his well-known book entitled *The Death of Death in the Death of Christ*. He says in the preface that this book was the result of more than seven years' serious enquiry into the mind of God about these things. About this time Colchester was besieged by the Parliamentary Army, and the General, Lord Fairfax, became acquainted with Owen. He also met Oliver Cromwell, who heard him preach, and enjoyed his ministry. In 1649, when Cromwell went to Ireland to put down the rebellion there, he asked Owen to accompany him, but he refused, saying he must stay to look after his Church at Coggeshall. Cromwell then commanded him to go, whereupon Owen, after consulting several brother ministers, who advised him to comply, went out to Dublin, where he stayed about six months, and then returned to England to Coggeshall.

He had not been home long when he was called to preach in Whitehall. In September 1650, Cromwell asked him to accompany him on his expedition to Scotland. Again he refused, but Cromwell procured

a Parliamentary order, and he had to go. He stayed in Edinburgh about six months, and then returned to his people at Coggeshall again. He hoped now to spend the rest of his days amongst his people, but by the express wish of Parliament, in 1651, he was appointed Dean of Christ Church College, Oxford, and then in 1652 was chosen to be Vice-Chancellor of Oxford University, a position he held for about five years. Also in the year 1652, he was granted the Degree of Doctor of Divinity. His influence as Vice-Chancellor over the University was considerable. He allowed Presbyterians, Independents and Anglicans to worship in their own way, kept good discipline and order in the University, and was very moderate in his exercise of power. He preached every Sunday at St. Mary's, and often at Stadham, and other places in the country. He also wrote a number of books in this period, including *The Saints' Perseverance* (1654), and *The Mystery of the Gospel Vindicated* (1655).

He gave up his position as Vice-Chancellor in 1657, and his position as Dean of Christ Church in 1659. The times were now serious for him, as Cromwell had died in 1658 and in 1660 Charles II was to return to the throne. He retired to Stadham, his birthplace, where he possessed some property, and lived quietly there for a while until the persecution increased, and he was forced to move from place to place, until at last he came to London to settle. Even in this period, he published some tracts. In 1665, in the face of constant persecution, he made plans to go to America, where the New England Colonists had invited him to come out to preach to them, but in the providence of God, he was diverted from this, and stayed to witness the awful judgment of God on the nation in the Great Plague and the Great Fire of 1665 and 1666. After these solemn events, he preached to large congregations of people who had been awakened to eternal issues through them, and the persecutions tended to lessen for some time.

In 1668, he published an exposition of Psalm 130. In the same year also, he published the first volume of his exposition on *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, and three other volumes followed, the last coming out in 1684. Persecution increased again in the 1670s. In 1678, Owen published his work on *The Holy Spirit*. In the previous year, he had published a book on *The Doctrine of Justification by Faith through the Imputation of the Righteousness of Christ*. Towards the end of his life, on one occasion he was called into the presence of the King, who told him how conscious he was of the injustice which had been done to

Nonconformists during his reign, and gave him a thousand guineas to distribute among those who had suffered in the persecutions. Owen must have wondered what was in the King's mind in this strange behaviour, but did as he was asked, and distributed the money.

In the last few years of his life he was often ill, and frequently could not preach, but he continued to write. In 1679, he published *A Declaration of the Glorious Mystery of the Person of Christ, God and Man*. As his health grew weaker, he was forced to retire into the country. He lived at Kensington for some time, and then went to Ealing, where he had a house of his own, and where he died at the age of sixty-seven on the 24 August 1683. On the day of his death, his last great work *On the Glory of Christ* went to the press. When told by a friend that it was being printed, he replied, "O brother, the long looked for day has come at last, in which I shall see that glory in another manner than I have ever done yet, or was capable of doing in this world." He was buried in Bunhill Fields just off Moorgate in the Dissenters' Burying Ground, and lies there along with other of his great contemporaries such as Thomas Goodwin and John Bunyan.

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DOCTRINE AND TRUTH

Discerning the Way We Should Go

By Dr M. J. Hyde

It is often a concern as to how we may know God's will in a matter; what is the right way for us; or how we should best act in a situation. Discerning the right way is not always easy, and will often cost the most experienced of the Lord's people much prayer. The Lord's people come to realise the truth of the word: "The heart is deceitful above all *things*" (Jer. 17. 9), and because of this it can be difficult to discern a true exercise from a false one regarding the way we might want to go. It is a solemn word: "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof *are* the ways of death" (Prov. 14. 12). This is not therefore a question which can be lightly set aside, so what pointers can we take then in whether a way is right or not?

First, at the start, we must emphasise the right way will never be contrary to Scripture; it will never bring us into sin. God may permit

man to go the wrong way, to enter into sin; at last like Jonah to bring him out, and use the experience for the furtherance of the Gospel; but that is God overruling man's sin, and not God leading into sin. Perhaps the clearest test in this section is, can you ask the Lord's blessing on the way? If you can, and it is a right way according to Scripture, then you may have some hope that it may be the Lord's way for you.

Secondly, the Lord may give us a clear word of direction. This may be given under the ministry; it may come in the daily reading of the Bible; it may come through private conversation with another Christian. However, we need some caution: anybody can take a word of Scripture, sometimes even out of context, and apply it to themselves. Such self-application can lead to all kinds of error, and wrong moves. You may find yourself fearful of self-applying a word of Scripture, and this may result in you doubting even the seemingly clearest word of direction. What are the marks that a word of direction is really from the Lord? Four things come to mind: i) the word will come with some power – it will be distinct to your soul, it will stand out from the verses, and words, which surround it; ii) it may be given express context which fits your situation – the minister may exactly describe the case you are in from the pulpit, and then add the word of promise to it; iii) the word will have an effect on you – you will be made willing in the day of His power; iv) it will come to pass – the word of the Lord will not return unto him void, it will be fulfilled. That said, solemnly these marks may appear present and yet it prove eventually that it was not a true word of direction from the Lord.

Thirdly, sometimes we may not have an express word of direction. When we know that there is nothing in Scripture that suggests the way is wrong, we may rightly venture. We have to live our lives here; we have been given clear instructions in the Word of God as to how we should walk in life. Express direction for day to day things is not always given – but we can, and should, still commit them unto the Lord in prayer. Some want a word of direction for everything, but we are not promised this luxury. At other times, even at larger junctions in life, we will have no clear word of direction, doors will simply be clearly opened for us. Perhaps you are seeking a job, you make a number of applications, and go to several interviews, but only one post accepts you – the door is opened. We need to be careful about trying to open doors that are closed. If after many applications for a job in a particular line, we still have no success, the door may be closed – it may be the

Lord is saying, this is not the way for you. Sometimes doors open in a remarkable manner; or doors which seemed resolutely closed open at the “eleventh hour”. In these cases we may trace the hand of God in the matter so clearly, that another word of direction is not needed.

Fourthly, leading from the last point, we may see in remarkable providences the Lord’s will clearly set forth. God’s way of working is generally i) orderly – it has the hand of God in it, everything dovetails together. You can see how every little thing has been necessary and in a perfect order, to bring to pass the event. ii) God’s timing is perfect in these things. Generally He does not provide a new post while we are still in the old; nor all our food today, and none for tomorrow, although at times the Lord may do just these things in His sovereign purposes. Day by day He provides what we need, at exactly the time we need it. Sometimes we have to wait for Him, but in the end we have to acknowledge, “He never is before His time, He never is behind.” *“As for God, his way is perfect.”*

Fifthly, what is our spirit in the matter? If it is the right way, our spirit will i) be prepared, in measure, for the path we are to walk in. Just as we need training for our job, so God prepares us each for what He would have us to do. If we have known no preparation for the way, we may rightly ask if it is the right way. ii) God will give submission, or acquiescence to the way. He makes His people willing in the day of His power. We may be unwilling, we may seek to go another way, but in the end he will bring us to the place where we are ready and happy to go. If the way before us is not what we would have once chosen, but now we feel happy to give up things to walk in it, it is some evidence that we have been prepared for it, made submissive to it, and that it is the Lord’s way for us. iii) We may be given some access in prayer about it. If we find we cannot pray about a matter, we may fear it is not of the Lord. Where true freedom is given to our spirit to commit our way unto the Lord, and faith to trust also in Him, it follows that He will surely bring it to pass. iv) There will be a measure of praise given concerning, and in, the way we are called to walk – This is the Lord’s doing, it is marvellous in our eyes.

Sixthly, is it wrong to seek tokens from God that it is indeed His way for us? The answer must be no – it is Scriptural. Think of Moses, Gideon, and many others. But note, a) they did not always dictate to the Lord what the sign, or token, was to be; b) some have prayed that a minister might take a certain text, or that it might stop raining, and we

would be careful to judge, but just consider Gideon for a moment – he, directed by the Lord, asked something that seemed impossible: the fleece wet, the ground dry, and vice versa. We may need as much wisdom and grace in asking the Lord for a right token as we do in discerning the Lord's way for us. c) What is our spirit, or reason for asking a token? Because we don't want to go in the way everything is pointing to? Because we don't believe the signs and evidences already given? Or because we have to say with the man in the Gospel: Lord, I believe, help Thou mine unbelief? Our spirit may be honourable and gracious in this; it may spring from the sin of unbelief. May we be enabled, by grace, to discern the motives within our heart in these matters!

Seventhly, we may also draw some comfort that it is the Lord's way, if it is opened up in answer to prayer. We have a prayer hearing and prayer answering God, and if we have prayed for something, for a way to be made, we should not doubt when it is answered! – Yet how often we do, left to ourselves!

Eighthly, there are cases left on record, in Scripture and Christian biography, from which we may derive some comfort. We should hesitate at following their steps exactly, or gaining direction from them; but sometimes it is helpful to know we are not the first to walk this path, and it may encourage us that if the Lord helped His people in time past, that He will also help and guide us today.

Ninthly, and perhaps most importantly: Do we feel the Lord's presence with us in the way we go? Joseph Hart wrote:

The way I walk cannot be wrong,
If Jesus be but there.

If we are in the dark, and find none of the Lord's presence and blessing with us, we may rightly fear whether we have lost our way. That said, the right way is not always in the light; plants need light and dark to grow properly, and so do the Lord's people (Isa. 50. 10,11).

Finally, in closing; this is not in any way an exhaustive directory. There are times when we cannot clearly discern the Lord's way for us, and we have to simply venture in faith. Hart again wrote:

Could we see how all is right,
Where were room for credence?
But by faith, and not by sight,
Christians yield obedience.

The Lord's ways are often past finding out. It is our comfort that He does know the end from the beginning, even when we cannot see it. The Lord's people may draw comfort from this too: "I will bring the blind by a way *that* they knew not; I will lead them in paths *that* they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them." If that is not enough, we read of the way the Lord leads His people in, that the wayfaring man, *though a fool*, shall not err therein. The Lord's people may make many wrong turns, left to themselves, but they will most surely reach the city of habitation safe at last.

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Separation

By J. R. Broome

What is union of heart and separation from the world? One of the earliest experiences of those in whose heart the Lord works is to have to leave worldly companions and realise a union of heart to the people of God. Eli Ashdown, a godly minister of the last century, buried in Dicker cemetery, when the Lord called him by His grace, felt so unworthy to be with the Lord's people and so unable to enter their company, that he listened to the services outside the windows of Hadlow Down Independent Chapel. Separation is a vital part of the work of God in the hearts of His children. In our own case it was the application with power of the words, "Come ye out from among them, be ye separate, touch not the unclean thing", that separated us in our student days at Leicester from college sports teams, music concerts, the cinema and theatre, public houses, playing cards and other worldly activities such as play readings. Never did we have to ask the Lord what was involved in that separation. Nor do we believe that any child of God will have to seek the Lord, as to whether a matter of this kind is His will. Conscience will speak under the convicting influence of the Holy Spirit, though it may be some time before all the entanglements are left behind. The child of God will feel union, perhaps at first unspoken, with the Lord's people, His servants and, as the weeknight services are attended, with those who speak in prayer. What a wonderful blessing if there is a union with God-fearing parents. What a joy for them to see the footsteps of their child changed. The football matches left behind on a Saturday afternoon and time found willingly

for the house of God as often as the doors are open. Well do such, “made willing in the day of His power”, come within the blessing contained in the words, “Them that honour me, I will honour”. What prosperity, right prosperity, will attend their lives. In the desire for a partner in life, prayer will attend the step and divine guidance. The sorrows of a divided home will be unknown and the union of heart will be extended into the burden of the family life. The solemn consequences of broken marriages, and divorce, with all its dreadful consequences, will not be experienced. The children of such a union will be brought up “in the nurture and admonition of the Lord”, and the scriptural admonitions of the Lord, “Wives obey your husbands in all things as unto the Lord”; “husbands love your wives and be not bitter against them”, and “children obey your parents”, will in their fulfilment lead to a stable family life around the morning and evening readings of the Word of God, and attendance in the house of God on the Lord’s day. And such parents, with such a union of heart, will long for the salvation of their own children and pray earnestly for it daily. Much prayer will go up for the children at the throne of grace. What a mercy, as sometimes happens, if the Lord takes them when young, perhaps in a road accident, to know that they are with Him. As we write these words, we think of dear aged parents, who have known such bereavement, and also such persuasion of the eternal welfare of their young ones. Here is “union of heart” and its fruits. Here also is a “right separation”. The home will be both a place of union and an example of separation.

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LETTERS, ADDRESSES AND SERMONS

A sermon preached by Mr J. Raven, at Shaw’s Corner, Redhill, on Lord’s Day evening, 2nd July, 1950 (Part 1)

“But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ” (Eph. 2. 13).

One cannot but be impressed by the number of times we have in this epistle such expressions as “in Him,” “of Him,” “through Him,” and so on, in reference to the Lord Jesus Christ; and I have thought how essential it is for us that the Lord Jesus Christ should have that place in our religion, in our faith, in our affections, that He has in

this epistle, that He had in the religion, the faith and the affections of His servant the Apostle. The Apostle declared, "Christ is all, and in all," and all the blessedness that the people of God are ever to know is theirs in Christ Jesus and Him alone. Everything connected with their salvation is secured to them in Jesus Christ and only in Him, and so here the Apostle says, "But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ."

The Apostle has just referred to the solemn state that these Ephesians were in before Christ came to them. They were dead in trespasses and sins. I do not know whether we can fully appreciate all that that means, "dead in trespasses and sins." Dead to God, dead to everything that is holy and spiritual and heavenly, dead in trespasses and sins, bound hand and foot by the cords of our sins, immersed in the pollution of sin, the enemies of God by wicked works. The Apostle goes on, "Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others"; and there is not one in this little assembly of whom these words are not true. As in a state of nature, as unregenerate, these words are true of us. Then in the words preceding our text he says, "At that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world." Peter says, "Ye were as sheep going astray." What a hopeless, helpless thing a straying sheep is! It cannot of itself find its way back to the fold and to the shepherd. It must be sought after and found. "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way". Without Christ. How very solemn a thing it is when one is brought to feel that this is one's case, "without Christ;" to be faced with this as one's condition, "without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world." I remember how this was impressed upon my heart and conscience as being my own state, "without Christ," alien, "having no hope, and without God in the world." What a condition to be in! A condition in itself hopeless, a far-off condition, a helpless condition. O how utterly helpless one feels when this condition is made a reality, unable to do a single thing to rectify it, far off from God, unable to take one step

towards Him. Then the Apostle says, "But God, who is rich in mercy." O, is not this attractive to some of us? "God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved)". "Behold, what manner of love!" O, the wonder of it, that God should have such love to sinners, to ungodly wretches! As Rutherford said, "O that such lumps of sin should get such love for nothing!" We are by nature hateful and hating one another, full of enmity to God, and, if the enmity does not burst out into open hostility, it is there; it takes the form sometimes of sheer indifference. I remember a young woman coming before the church where her own father was the pastor, and in giving in her experience she said how that often she had heard her father speak of sinners in a state of unregeneracy being filled with rage and enmity against God. "But," she said, "that was not the case with me. I was too indifferent even to feel rage and enmity," and I think it taught her good father a lesson. I believe it is often true of many people in these days that they are too indifferent even to manifest enmity. The attitude of some people is just a good-natured sort of indifference to the things of God and to the gospel of Jesus Christ, but it is enmity; it is enmity in a very subtle form.

Then the Apostle says, "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) and hath raised *us* up together, and made *us* sit together in heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus". It pleased God to give His people an interest in Christ. He blessed them in Christ, and blessed them in His own divine purpose before the worlds were made. All these blessings are secured to them in the person of Jesus, and when Christ was manifest in the flesh His people were virtually in Him as their covenant Head and Representative. All He did in His obedience to the law and in His suffering even to the death of the cross, was for their sakes as their Surety and their Representative. He "bare," said Peter, "our sins in his own body on the tree". Well, this was the love of God and His rich mercy flowing towards His people. He Himself provided this precious channel of mercy, His dear incarnate Son, that mercy might flow down to sinners in a rich and copious stream. "God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins". O think of it! While "we were yet without strength...Christ died for the ungodly." "While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us," said

the Apostle in Romans 5. Even when we were dead in sins, He pitied us; when enemies He pitied us, when following ungodly courses, when fighting against Him, when we hated His truth. O, if we are His, He loved us then, and “hath raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.” Thus, when Jesus died, His people died in Him, but He rose from the dead and ascended to heaven, and they rose in Him. Such is the union between Christ and His people; when He took His seat in heaven they took their seat there in Him virtually, “and hath raised *us* up together, and made *us* sit together in heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus: that in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in *his* kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God”. You see, it is entirely of His grace, and grace in the very nature of things excludes all idea of human worth and human merit. If human merit had a hand in it, it would be no more grace; if the works of the creature had some hand in the matter, it could not be of grace; but “by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves”.

I have been glad of this word, “and that not of yourselves”, because had I been told that faith was something which I must produce, that I must work myself up to a kind of believing, this was what I could not do. I found in my heart nothing but black unbelief, infidelity and atheism, but faith is the gift of God, His precious gift. “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast.” And it is remarkable how the doctrine here so clearly stated has stirred up the enmity of the human heart; how proud men, self-righteous men, hate to hear it. I have had it said to me, “I cannot believe it and I will not believe it.” But when men have said and done all, the truth still stands – “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God.” Grace saved the Apostle Paul, and his, humanly speaking, was an impossible case. Who could have saved that proud Pharisee, but the God of all grace? Ah, the Apostle had reason to exult in the word that he wrote, “But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ”. How he declares emphatically, “By the grace of God I am what I am”. “The grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.” “Not of works, lest any man should boast.” The Apostle renounced all his own works. “Not by

works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us.” “For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.” And this is true of every true believer, “We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.” “Wherefore remember, that ye *being* in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; that at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: but now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.”

=====

Poetry

“Let him trust in the name of the LORD” – Isaiah 50v10

When darkness reigns within my soul;
 When I am lost, and poor, and blind;
 When sins heap up, and weigh me down;
 When Jesus Christ I cannot find;

 When human help is nothing worth;
 When past experience’s useless, vain;
 When prayer I dare not e’en attempt;
 When all is blackness, sorrow, pain;

 When God is silent to my soul;
 When Satan says that I am lost;
 When I feel useless, dead, and cold;
 When all my plans and schemes are crossed;

 When earthly matters weigh me down;
 When things of time torment my mind;
 When blessings past are all forgot;
 When real faith I cannot find;

 Lord, then, when th’eye of faith is dim;
 When gloomy doubt the battle’s won;
 Then, Lord, then come, and shine within;
 Oh, make a way, where there seems none.

CURRENT EVENTS**2011 Census Return**

The 2011 Census (published December 2012) shows a steady decline in the social and moral structure of our society in England and Wales over the last ten years, since the census of 2001.

Fewer than half the population in England and Wales are married. The percentage has fallen from just over half in 2001 to 45%. This is the first time since 1801, when Census Returns began, that married couples have been in a minority. With the Coalition Government set on changing the whole structure of marriage, it presents a stark situation for the nation.

The percentage of people living together unmarried rose from 9.8 % in 2001 to 11.9% in 2011. More than five million unmarried people live together compared with four million in 2001. What an awful reflection this is of the decline of any moral standard, that living together unmarried has become socially acceptable and is not frowned upon. In the Lord's sight it is a great evil.

Eleven million people (a quarter of the population) are single, and it is an ever increasing number, as many prefer not to marry. The number of divorces is constantly increasing. The Census shows that 3.8 million are divorced or separated. 50% of children aged fifteen are not living with their birth parents. It is a known fact that family breakdown is more likely to happen if parents are not married. Equally, children tend to fare worse if they do not grow up with both their parents. They are more likely to fail at school or develop problems with drugs and alcohol or resort to crime. These figures go a long way to explaining the disruptive behaviour of many young people in school and in society.

The number of professing Christians in England and Wales has fallen by four million since 2001 and is heading to fall below 50% within six years, if the decline goes on at the present rate. The number giving Christian as their religion fell by 12% since 2001 and stands at 33.2 million or 59% of the population of England and Wales, so six out of ten people claim to be Christian. 14 million say they have no faith, representing about 25% of the population.

The figures reflect the causes of the breakdown in our society. The laws of our land are no longer based on biblical principles. Sin and evil are taking over in our secular society and the Coalition Government is pressing ahead with its purpose of destroying the marriage union as we understand it. Professing Christians are becoming a despised and persecuted minority and, unless the LORD intervenes, the situation can only get worse. The Lord's judgments are heavy upon the land.

No wit or will of man,
Or learning he may boast,
No power of reason can
Draw sinners unto Christ;
So fallen is nature, such her flaw,
None come except the Father draw.

His Spirit must disclose
The deadly plague within,
Uncover all our woes,
And show the man of sin;
And feeling thus our ruined state,
We humbly fall at Jesus' feet.

The Comforter must teach
The Saviour's toil and smart,
And with conviction preach
Atonement to the heart;
Then sinners gaze with ravished eyes,
And feast upon the sacrifice.

The Spirit, too, must show
The power of Jesus' arm,
To vanquish every foe,
And guard the soul from harm;
Believers then grow strong in faith,
And triumph over sin and death.

So let my heart be drawn
To Jesus Christ the Lord,
And learn to feast upon
His person and his word,
Feel sweet redemption through his blood,
And give the glory all to God.

John Berridge 1795

PERCEPTION

A Quarterly Magazine for Young People



The sea is his, and he made it: and
his hands formed the dry land.
Psalm 95.5

SUMMER 2013

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NOTICE

New Acting Editor

Following the passing of our late editor, Mr. J. R. Broome, the Magazine Committee of the Gospel Standard Society is thankful to be able to announce that Mr. Trevor Scott, deacon of the Church at Bethel, Luton, has agreed to become Acting Editor of Perception for the three remaining issues of this year, whilst the longer term future of the magazine is prayerfully considered. All correspondence relating to the magazine should be addressed to Mr. T. H. W. Scott, address on previous page. All queries regarding subscriptions should continue to be addressed to Mr. D. J. Christian.

(G. D. Buss - Chairman of the Magazine Committee)

EDITORIAL

“If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?” (Psalm 11. 3).

Not far from the border of Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire lies the Luton Hoo estate. There has been a house on the present site since at least 1601, although the present mansion house (now a hotel) was built in the late 1700's. (The Queen and Duke of Edinburgh spent part of their honeymoon here.) Bounding the east side of the estate is, or rather, was, a substantially-built brick wall, a mile and a half in length. Exactly when the wall was built we do not know. We suspect it was built when the property was bought by Sir Julius Wernher in 1903.

The motorist driving past the wall will conclude that this was once a fine structure, adding much to the prestige of the estate. Sadly,

he will also observe that much of the wall has now fallen to the ground, and has deteriorated to the extent that it is a danger to the public.

However, one of the most interesting points concerning the wall is that, whilst most of the wall is in a bad state, there remain parts which are almost as good as the day they were built. Why should this be? The only explanation seems that the wall was built in sections. Each section is about 15m in length. Could it be that some sections were built on a better foundation than others? It seems reasonable to conclude that different gangs of men were working at the same time on different sections of the wall. Some gangs were doubtless more conscientious than others. They resisted the temptation not to dig so deep. (We read in Matthew of the man who “dugged deep” in order to ensure he built on a good foundation.) It was hard, but necessary, work. Or perhaps the gang-leader was a master of his trade and insisted the work was done properly. Well, whatever the reason, some of the workmanship has stood the test of time and some has not.

How are we to relate this to the situation in our country today? Many walls that once stood firm have been broken down. Think first of God’s holy law. Once, the ten commandments were prominently displayed in all our parish churches, learnt by heart by children in our day schools, and were generally known and respected. Here is a wall that has been broken down!

Next, we think of the Word of God, the Holy Bible. Again, a generation or two ago most English schools in their morning assemblies would read a portion from God’s word. Your editor well remembers a new, beautifully bound Bible in blue leather being presented for use at the school. The headmaster said, “Boys, this Bible should last a hundred years.” We often wonder where it is today. Possibly at the back of some cupboard, or, worse still, completely discarded. Another wall broken down!

And what of the Lord’s day? Thirty years ago, only in exceptional circumstances (e.g. seaside resorts) were shops permitted to open. Today, our shopping centres are as busy as, or busier than, any weekday. Another wall broken down!

In drawing attention to this, we do not imply that men’s hearts

were different then than today. There was, however, in our country that “righteousness that exalteth a nation,” that general acceptance that there was a God in heaven.

We cannot help thinking of the days of Nehemiah, when Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, sent a great army and broke down the walls of Jerusalem. When they left, the city lay in ruins. Nehemiah, who had once lived in the city, but had been carried away as a prisoner, had been allowed by Artaxerxes (a much kinder king) to return to the city to see for himself. Under cover of darkness he made his way into the city. What he saw made him very sad. He was in great distress. Everything around him was destroyed, everything burnt, everything knocked to the ground.

But what did he say? He said, “Come, let us build up the wall.” What did the men with him say? They said, “Let us rise up and build.” This was the gracious resolve of Nehemiah and his men, to be accomplished through “the hand of my God which was good upon me.” May we, with God’s help, be equally concerned for the honour and glory of God in these godless days, however little we may feel we can do.

“So they strengthened their hand for this good work.”

WILLIAM TYNDALE - A FAITHFUL TRANSLATOR

It is agreed on all hands that the English of the Authorised Version is, broadly speaking, the work of William Tyndale. His one desire was that the Scriptures might be available to all, even the humblest: “If God spare my life, ere many years I will cause the boy that driveth the plough to know more of the Scriptures than you.” He was scrupulously faithful in his translation work: “I call God to record, against the day we shall appear before our Lord Jesus Christ to give a reckoning of our doings, that I never altered one syllable of God’s Word against my conscience, nor would to this day, if all that is in the earth - whether it be honour, pleasure, or riches - might be given me.”

A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

Feel free to make contact

The Editor will always be pleased to hear from our readers. If you have any particular matters which you would like to be addressed in the magazine, or questions you would like answered, we will do our best to meet your requests. We realise that young people today sometimes have difficult or perplexing things to cope with and our desire, through the blessing of God, is to be a help.

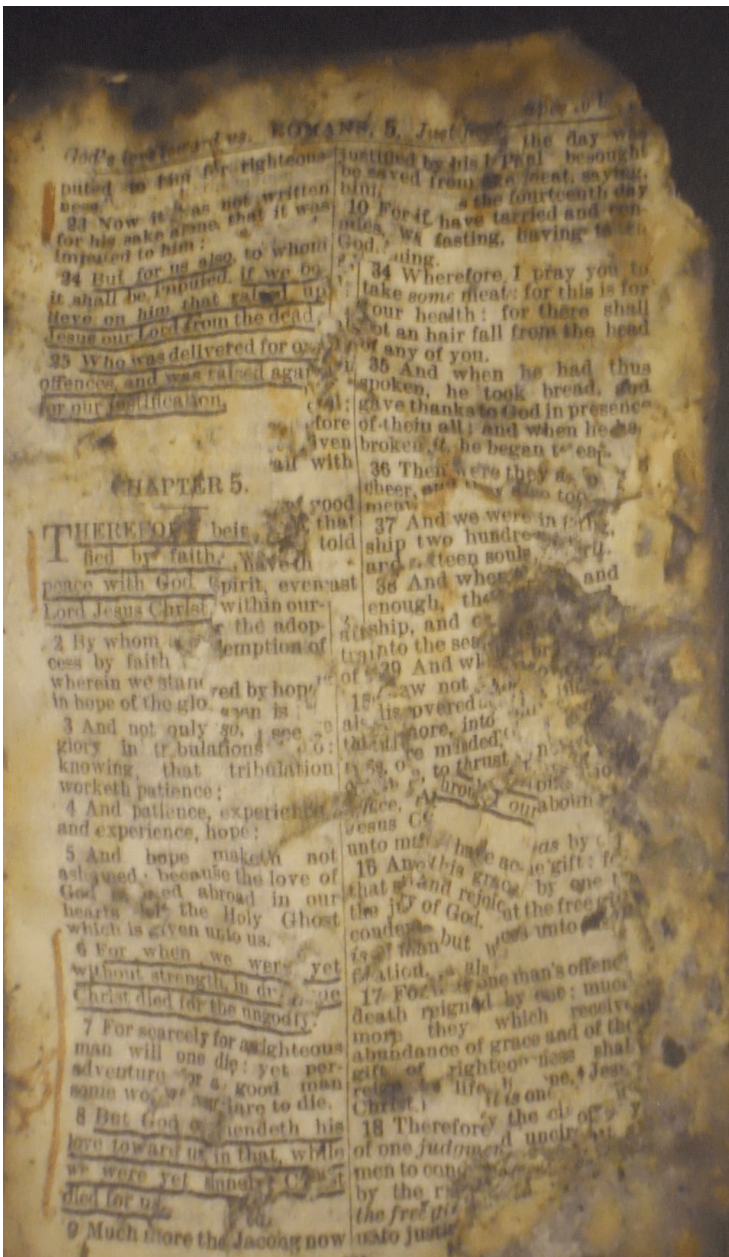
You can write or email to the address shown on the inside front cover.

THE FROMELLES' BIBLE

An unknown soldier's Bible

The Battle of Fromelles took place in France on 19-20 July 1916, during the First World War, when British and Australian soldiers attacked and attempted to capture a division of German soldiers. The battle was a disaster. The British and Australian soldiers suffered terrible casualties in a matter of minutes, and by the time the assault was called off the next morning over 7,000 men had been killed.

Where were they buried? For many years no one knew. Only recently have archeologists found and uncovered the graves of the men, who were hastily buried by the Germans. This followed much detailed research, when eventually a mass grave was located on the edge of Pheasant Wood, near Fromelles. Uncovering the graves was a dangerous task due to the possibility of unexploded shells. Mechanical diggers moved in first, but stopped about 20cm above the buried men. Then the archeologists moved in with small hand tools, until the skeletal remains of the men were reached. Among the items found buried with the men was a Bible. It was open on Romans Chapter 5. There were markings in red ink in the margin, and verses 1, 6 and 8 had been underlined. The identity of the owner is not known.



The open page of the Fromelles' Bible

HAS THE LORD TOUCHED YOUR HEART?

*Part of a sermon preached by Mr. J. R. Broome
at Lamberhurst Strict Baptist Chapel on 7 September 2012*

Text: “Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever” (Hebrews 13. 8).

The apostle is speaking of the Lord’s servants. In verse 7 he says, “Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.” Then he speaks of what the end of that conversation is: “Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.” No servant of God can speak of Jesus Christ in the ministry without himself knowing Him, and knowing something about Him. My late father, when he sent me to preach in 1969, at the church meeting said to me, “Let Christ be the beginning of your sermon, and Christ the middle, and Christ the end.” I have never forgotten those words.

The question I put to you tonight is a simple one but a searching one: What do you know about Jesus Christ? What a mercy if, in your heart’s experience before a holy God, you have a yesterday, when the Lord spoke to you and called you by His grace. We are here tonight separated. Either we are called by grace or we are not called by grace. You know, there is one thing that lies in that ‘yesterday’ and that is power. It is not necessarily the earthquake that the Philippian jailor knew; it may well be that still small voice of God that Elijah knew. It may well be that gentle word that Lydia knew when the Lord touched her heart and she attended to the things that the apostle had spoken.

But I ask you, has the Lord touched your heart? Have you a beginning? How vital! Sometimes in Scripture it is hard to trace the beginning. Nicodemus is a case in point. Jesus said to him, “Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?” Well, it is quite clear that he was favoured with Joseph of Arimathaea to take the body of Jesus to the grave. You know, the Lord preached that sermon to him in John 3, and it is a very blessed sermon. “The wind

bloweth.” I ask you tonight concerning ‘yesterday’ in your experience: Has the wind blown? Has the power of the Holy Spirit been manifested in your life? “The wind bloweth where it listeth: ... so is every one that is born of the Spirit.” You may be greatly troubled as to your beginning. You cannot perhaps put your finger exactly on this point, where did He begin with me? Where does my ‘yesterday’ begin? But, you know, Scripture is so beautifully clear. “By their fruits ye shall know them.” I do ask you, even if you cannot put your finger on a beginning, can you go back into the world?

What did that call by grace do to you? You know, there is one word that stands here, power. His call is effectual. When we look back in our pathway, wandering far into the world - deeply into it - then to be called out of it. For the apostle, it was the road to Damascus, that was the point at which the Lord met him, that was his first contact with his God. And what was in it? Power, mighty power, and the Lord separated him for ever. It had a gracious effect. “The things,” he said, “I counted gain I now count them but dung.” He could not have used a more extreme expression. He heard His voice, and he knew the power that separated him from this world, and brought him out of a false and empty profession.

I do say to you tonight, Jesus Christ, what do you know about Him? You know, we do not like to be searched too much. We live in a strange sort of Zion today, it does not fulfil the word of Scripture by any means, and you may know what I mean. “Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to the other.” When did you last speak to anyone of what the Lord has done for you in your soul? Is your mouth tightly shut? Can you not say anything? You know, one of those precious times in the church of God in the earth is the church meeting, when a candidate comes before the church to speak tremblingly of those things that the Lord has done for them, fearful that they will not be received. But, you know, it is one of the most precious times, (and I have chaired many church meetings) when those have come forward, and we listened to what they have had to say and there is a bond of love and affection. It is not how much you say, it is the reality of what you say. It may be only two or three things. I shall never forget a church meeting at our little chapel in

Trowbridge when a dear godly man came forward at the age of eighty. He said one or two things and having said one or two things, he suddenly said this, "Friends, I cannot say much but I can say I believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God." He said it with such sincerity and such a blessedness, such a sweetness, there was such a union and the Lord's servant, Mr Kinderman, who was in the chair, when he went out, looked up and all he said was, "Friends, what more do we need?" O the reality of 'yesterday' in the heart of a poor sinner, it cannot be hidden, it cannot be concealed. There will be a time to speak and a time when the lips will be opened. "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another," blessed word, "and the Lord hearkened, and heard it." There was a sweet power known, a calling out of this world into the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord.
To be continued

ASLEEP IN JESUS

*An account of Frederick Clarke, of Leicester, who died on
 31 December 1883 aged 13 years, from particulars
 recorded by his mother*

Frederick was always a very loving, obedient, and truthful child, and also a very sensitive child. He never appeared to delight in associating with sinful companions, but seemed given to study, with a view to being useful when he was grown up.

For some years he attended Zion Chapel, Erskine Street, Leicester, where he was a scholar in the Sunday School. God was pleased to bless the means to make him see and feel himself a sinner in the sight of God, and also to make him see that Christ alone was the Saviour and Friend of sinners.

Although he was always very attentive at chapel and Sunday School, it was not before thirteen months prior to his death that his mother discovered the appearance of a work of grace in his soul. This was observed from his prayers and conversation. His mother, after he had gone to bed at night, heard him express to the Lord what

a sinner he felt himself to be, and begged the Lord to wash his never-dying soul with His precious atoning blood. She also heard him earnestly entreat the Lord to bless not only the family, but also a kind friend to whom he felt a great union. Also, sadly, he would ask the Lord to give a change of life and conduct to his father, who was frequently found in a state of drunkenness. When in that state he was often very unkind to Frederick and the family.

Frederick was never a strong boy, but it was not thought that his life would be so short. But very soon, grave symptoms indicated that consumption, of which he died, was at work in his left lung. Becoming acquainted with this fact, and having heard his prayers, his mother felt an especial interest in the welfare of his soul, and frequently put questions to him relating to spiritual things, but for a long time she found it difficult to get him to answer them.

However, one morning, soon after he rose, about four months before his death, he told his mother that the night before he had begged hard that the Lord would appear to him and satisfy his mind. In the morning, soon after waking, the Lord seemed to speak to him, and say, "Be of good comfort and good cheer."

At another time, he spoke to his mother in the evening of the day, about two months before his death, and said he wished the dear Lord would take him to Himself before morning. She asked him whether he felt fit to stand before the Lord; to which he replied the Lord had forgiven his sins.

Previous to this, he often seemed oppressed with the thought of death and eternity. He used to say his Sunday School teacher had brought these matters so forcibly before the minds of the children in the class.

All through the last year of his life, the disease seemed to be fast spreading, and he himself sometimes said that probably he would not live very long. Five weeks before he died, several doctors expressed the opinion that his life would be very short indeed; so that from that time he was kept at home, and for three weeks was confined to his bed.

During this time, his teacher and his much esteemed minister, Mr. Hazlerigg, frequently visited him, as did several friends from the

chapel. He was always pleased to see friends, and especially looked forward to his teacher's visits, because he said his prayers seemed to do him so much good.

Psalm 103, he told his friends, was very sweet to him. They read it together, and he commented a little upon it. He told friends and his mother of many lines of hymns that had come to his mind with sweetness. Amongst them were several he had marked in his Sunday School hymnbook, *Hymns for the Sunday-school*:

No. 206 "If Christ is mine, then all is mine."

No. 156 "There is a Friend whose matchless love
 Surpasses all beside."

No. 317 "There is an hour when we must go
 Beneath the gloomy wave."

Also "Sinners who on Jesus rest,
 Must eternally be blest."

During the last few weeks he was often harassed by Satan; but once, after a time of prayer, the Lord appeared in an unusual but blessed manner. He said he had seen the Saviour in shining garments, the brightness of which nothing he could think of would compare with. The Saviour had said, "Trust thou in Me to the end; and when thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee, and never forsake thee; and I will keep thee, to sing the triumphs of thy King." This visit seemed to brighten his hope for eternity; and Satan was not again permitted to harass him.

His sufferings were great. He was often heard to ask the Lord to give him patience to bear his pains, and not to leave him, but be with him to the end. A few days before his death was Christmas. He said, "I am a great deal happier this Christmas than last." His mother remarked to him, "You were not ill in bed last Christmas." He replied, "No; but now I know my sins are all forgiven; and *that* I did not know last Christmas."

On the Saturday night two days before he died, a friend called to

see him, and he said the 15th chapter of John's Gospel had been very sweet to him.

The last day he spent upon earth he was very restless; and although still quite conscious, it seemed certain death was not far away. Some few hours before he died, his sufferings were exceptionally great; and he cried out, "O mother! these pains are so bad!"

He seemed conscious that his end was very near, for he said, "O mother, let me love you once more!" His mother asked him if he thought he would go to heaven; to which he replied, "I hope so." And again, upon being asked if he could trust in Christ, and Christ alone, he said, "Yes."

He became too weak to speak; but having been asked to raise his hand or turn his eyes if at the very last Christ was all he was longing for and trusting in, he turned his eyes twice, evidently wishing to convey to his mother that such was the case. He then fell asleep, as is firmly believed, in Jesus, aged 13 years.

Asleep in Jesus! blessed sleep!
From which none ever wake to weep;
A calm and undisturbed repose,
Unbroken by the last of foes.

Asleep in Jesus! O, for me
May such a blissful refuge be!
Securely may my ashes lie,
Waiting for the summons from on high.

* * *

[In reading this account of one taken home at a tender age, we remember what is sometimes said from the pulpit: "The old *must* die, and the young *may* die." How we need to be prepared for a never-ending eternity! - Editor.]

THE ROCHESTER MARTYRS

Four martyrs are associated with Rochester, the best known being Bishop Nicholas Ridley.



Rochester Cathedral

Rochester is a historic city in Kent on the River Medway, with a fine cathedral and a Norman castle. Associated with the city is Nicholas Ridley, Bishop of Rochester 1547-1550. We are told that “to his sermons the people resorted, swarming about him like bees.” But after Queen Mary came to the throne, he was soon committed to prison, first in the Tower of London, then at Oxford city gaol. This gentle, patient man was cruelly burnt to death on 16 October 1555 at Oxford, at the age of 55. With him suffered the aged Bishop Hugh Latimer, whose last words to Ridley as they were chained to the stake were: “*Be of good comfort, brother Ridley, and play the man; we*

shall this day light such a candle by God's grace in England, as I trust shall never be put out."

We think of the words of Peter: "Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death" (Luke 22. 33). These three brave men and one woman "loved not their lives unto the death" (Rev 12.11).



Bishop Ridley 1550-1555



Commemorative plaque on front of Baptist Chapel near to the Cathedral

GEORGE WHITEFIELD*A brief account of this remarkable preacher*

“Lying, filthy talking, and foolish jesting I was much addicted to, even when very young. Sometimes I used to curse, if not swear. Stealing from my mother I thought no theft at all, and used to take money out of her pocket before she was up. I have frequently betrayed my trust, and have more than once spent money I took in the house, in buying fruits and tarts, to satisfy my sensual appetite.”

* * *

Unpromising material indeed! Could this possibly be the boy whom God one day was to use as the most powerful preacher ever known in England?

Let him tell us in his own words a little about his early days.

“I was born in Gloucester, in the month of December, 1714. My father and mother kept the Bell Inn. It would be endless to recount the sins and offences of my younger days. They are more in number than the hairs of my head. But such was the free grace of God to me, I can recollect very early movings of the blessed Spirit upon my heart, sufficient to satisfy me that God loved me with an everlasting love, and separated me even from my mother’s womb, for the work He afterwards was pleased to call me.”

It seems that from his earliest days he was fond of being a clergyman. He frequently imitated ministers reading prayers and preaching. However, his mother was very careful of his education, for which he was ever thankful.

“When I was about twelve, I was placed at a grammar school called St. Mary de Crypt. During the time of my being at school, I was very fond of reading plays, and have kept from school for days together to prepare myself for acting them. I must always acknowledge my particular thanks to my schoolmaster, for the great pains he took with me and his other scholars, in teaching us to speak and write correctly.

“Before I was fifteen I one day told my mother I judged it best not to learn Latin any longer. She at first refused to consent. However, my mother’s circumstances being much on the decline, I from time to time began to assist her occasionally in the public house, till at length I put on my blue apron and my snuffers, washed mops, cleaned rooms, and, in one word, became a common drawer.

“After I had continued about a year in this servile employment, my mother was obliged to leave the inn. My brother, who had been bred up for the business, married. It was agreed that I should continue there as an assistant. But God’s thoughts are not as our thoughts.

“By His good providence it happened that my sister-in-law and I could by no means agree; and at length the resentment grew to such a height, that my proud heart would scarce suffer me to speak to her for three weeks together. But notwithstanding I was much to blame, yet I used to retire and weep before the Lord, little thinking that God by this means was forcing me out of the public business, and calling me from drawing wine for drunkards, to draw water out of the wells of salvation for the refreshment of his spiritual Israel. I at length resolved to go away. Accordingly, I went to see my elder brother, then settled at Bristol.”

It was while at Bristol the work of grace in his heart was deepened. He tells us once, in St. John’s church, he was “given great foretastes of His love, that I was carried out beyond myself.” He felt “great hungerings and thirstings after the blessed Sacrament.” He tells us he was always impatient till the bell rang to call him once more “to tread the courts of the Lord’s House.” He first partook of Holy Communion at the age of seventeen.

A full account of how God prepared him for the ministry can be read in his *Journals* (published by The Banner of Truth Trust), which we highly recommend as interesting and profitable reading.

The Bishop of Gloucester declared he would not ordain anyone under the age of twenty-three. In the case of George Whitefield, he made an exception. He ordained him at the age of twenty-one.

Another old and worthy minister of Christ said he believed, if St. Paul was then at Gloucester, he would ordain him too!

We include three short extracts from the early days of his ministry, as told in his Journals.

* * *

At Bristol (1737, aged 22)

I preached, as usual, about five times a week; but the congregations grew, if possible, larger and larger. It was wonderful to see how the people hung upon the rails of the organ loft, climbed upon the leads of the church, and made the church itself so hot with their breath, that the steam would fall from the pillars like drops of rain. Sometimes, almost as many would go away, for want of room, as came in; and it was with great difficulty that I got into the desk, to read prayers or preach.



George Whitefield in his more mature years

Persons of all denominations flocked to hear. Persons of all ranks, not only publicly attended my ministry, but gave me private invitations to their houses. A private Society or two were erected. I preached and collected for the poor prisoners in Newgate prison twice or thrice a week; and many made me large offers if I would not go abroad.

During my stay here I paid another visit to Bath, and preached three times in the Abbey Church, and once in Queen's Chapel. People crowded, and were affected as at Bristol; and God stirred up some elect ladies to give

upwards of £160 for the poor of Georgia.

June 21st, I took my last farewell at Bristol; but when I came to tell them it might be, that they would “*see my face no more,*” high

and low, young and old burst into such a flood of tears, as I had never seen before. Multitudes, after sermon, followed me home weeping; and, the next day, I was employed from seven in the morning till midnight, in talking and giving spiritual advice to awakened souls.

About three the next morning, having thrown myself on the bed for an hour or two, I set out for Gloucester, because I heard that a great company on horseback, and in coaches, intended to see me out of town. Some, finding themselves disappointed, followed me thither, where I stayed a few days, and preached to a very crowded auditory.

At Cheltenham (1739, aged 24)

Being earnestly invited by several of the inhabitants, I came hither, attended with about a dozen friends, by five o'clock. The use of the pulpit being refused me, I preached on the Bowling Green belonging to the Plough Inn.

When I came in, the town I perceived, was alarmed, by the people standing at their doors. At the first, I found myself quite shut up. My heart and head were dead as a stone, but when I came to the inn, my soul began to be enlarged. I felt a freedom in my spirit, and was enabled to preach with power to near two thousand people. Many were convicted. One was drowned in tears, because she had said I was crazy; and some were so filled with the Holy Ghost that they were almost unable to support themselves under it. This, I know, is foolishness to the natural and letter-learned men, but I write this for the comfort of God's children. They know what these things mean.

Wednesday, April 18. Preached this morning with power to a much larger congregation than we had last night. Several servants of God said they never saw the like before. We shall see greater things than these; for almost every day persons of all denominations come unto me, telling how they intercede in my behalf. And it shall now be my particular business, wherever I go, to bring all the children of God, notwithstanding their differences, to rejoice together. How dare we not converse with those who have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?

At Baskinridge [Basking Ridge?], USA (1740, aged 25)

Wednesday, Nov. 5. Set out at eight in the morning, and got to Baskinridge, the place where Mr. Cross exercises his stated ministry, about one o'clock. At the house where I waited in the way, a woman spoke to me under strong convictions, and told me "she was deeply wounded by my last night's discourse." When I came to Baskinridge, I found Mr. Davenport had been preaching to the congregation, according to appointment. It consisted of about three thousand people. I had not discoursed long when, in every part of the congregation, some one or other began to cry out, and almost all were melted into tears.

A little boy about eight years of age, wept as though his heart would break. Mr. Cross took him up into the waggon, which so affected me that I broke from my discourse, and told the people that, since old professors were not concerned, God, out of an infant's mouth was perfecting praise; and the little boy should preach to them. As I was going away, I asked the little boy what he cried for? He answered, his sins. I then asked what he wanted? He answered, Christ.

After sermon, Mr. Cross gave notice of an evening lecture in his barn, two miles off. Thither we went, and a great multitude followed. Mr. Gilbert Tennent preached first: and I then began to pray, and gave an exhortation. In about six minutes, one cried out, "He is come, He is come!", and could scarce sustain the manifestation of Jesus to his soul. The eager crying of others, for the like favour, obliged me to stop; and I prayed over them, as I saw their agonies and distress increase. At length we sang a hymn, and then retired to the house, where the man that received Christ continued praising and speaking of Him till near midnight.

My own soul was so full that I retired, and wept before the Lord, under a deep sense of my own vileness, and the sovereignty and greatness of God's everlasting love. Most of the people spent the remainder of the night in prayer and praises. It was a night much to be remembered.

J. G. PAVLIK

Not long ago, we were speaking to one of our elderly ministers. In the course of conversation he said, "I shall soon be gone, and shall soon be forgotten." He said it with sadness in his voice. He died a few weeks later.

We do not wish the Lord's servants ever to be forgotten, and our desire is to provide the experience of some of the ministers we remember, beginning with the life and experience of Mr. J. G. Pavlik. He was, he tells us, "fetched from the country of His martyr John Huss to your Island to bear witness to the truth as it is in Jesus." The country of John Huss was, of course, Czechoslovakia. Strangely, in his writings nowhere does Mr. Pavlik say when he was born. Can anyone help with this?

Mr. Pavlik was very afflicted. His spinal condition caused some deformity and stunted his growth, so that it was necessary for him to stand on a stool in the pulpit when preaching. (Editor)

Early life

My parents both originated in the church of Rome. At the time of their marriage my father was an agnostic. However, being obliged to marry in the Roman Catholic Church they agreed to remain nominal members themselves, while their children should not be influenced in this matter but left to make their own choice later in life.

I had an elder brother, also a sister, but she died at the early age of seven years of infectious tuberculosis. We were not allowed to receive any religious instruction at school, but in other respects we were brought up in a good family home where high moral virtues, self-discipline and ambition were impressed on our young minds.

Serious illness

When about twelve years old I became ill with diphtheria, which was followed by a cardiac complaint. This left me very weak, and under the doctor's orders my mother kept me much indoors. The protracted illness took another turn when avitaminosis set in and caused phosphate salts to be leached out of my bones. This affected my spine and I had pain in my back. My parents feared that this pain

was a sign of tuberculosis and were afraid that I might die of it as my sister did. The doctors could not find any trace of that disease, however. They recommended good food and fresh air. So my parents sent me to my uncle in Southern Bohemia, who had a farm near a little town, called Protivin.

First hears the Gospel

Whilst there, I attended the local grammar school where I formed a friendship with one of the boys named Scribor. He was of a poor family and, being an orphan, was brought up by his two aunts and grandfather. Having no other friends at school and my being a stranger there, we had something in common. One day he invited me to go with him to chapel and Sunday school, to which I agreed, and that was how I first went and heard the Gospel preached.

Having been brought up in ignorance of God and anything pertaining to religion, it not only made an impression upon me, but it was the opening of the eyes of my soul.

The people at the chapel were rather different from others, and the atmosphere imposed an awe upon my spirit. One text I do not think I shall ever forget - the Word being a sharp sword dividing the precious from the vile: "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" (Jeremiah 17. 9). The minister told me of my ignorance of myself and of the damnation which awaited me. I went home rather distressed and told my friend that this was the first and also the last time that I would go with him.

During the week that followed I could think of nothing else, that if the minister was right and I had a never-dying soul, and if there was such a God as he spoke about, and if there was a hell, it was there that I should one day be.

Attends chapel again

Through the week I tried to put these thoughts from my mind, but I could not. I felt I wanted to know more of what the man in the pulpit had been speaking of when he said: "There is only one way of salvation."



Mr. J. G. Pavlik

On Saturday my friend Scribor asked me if I would go with him to the chapel again. I still remember him saying: "You must not take our minister so seriously. He is not always so harsh. You will get used to him in time." (Poor Scribor! After several years we parted. I do not know if he was ever brought to a saving knowledge of Christ.) I had longed for this invitation and only with difficulty could hide the fact that I was pleased to be asked again. But the second Sunday I

spent at chapel brought more sorrow and distress to my mind and soul.

I was about sixteen years old when awakened to this solemn realization that I had a guilty conscience and that I was a sinner. The words eternity, sin, guilt and punishment were made hard realities to me. As the weeks went by I felt I wanted to know more about the strange dark unknown, about God and my own soul. Well, I went and went again. My soul was in real trouble. I felt that hell was opening its mouth to swallow me up. I began carefully to watch myself and to walk, as I thought, more uprightly than before. I began to "be better" and yet the Word of God condemned me again and again. Finally I saw that I could never attain to the holiness and righteousness that God required. There was something lacking in me.

A lost sinner

I was without hope and without God in the world, a lost, completely lost, sinner. I tried to pray but there was no answer. I read the Bible and heard many sermons. I knew that Christ had compassion upon poor sinners but He took no notice of me. Would He leave me to perish? I felt I justly deserved it yet I could not cease to pray for mercy and pardon. It was a time of cutting down and

bringing low; pride and self-conceit had to be destroyed, natural plans and schemes overthrown, so that the Lord's purposes and mind might be established. This work was not completed in a few days, neither was it finished when the Lord in His mercy condescended to reveal Himself to me, but is still being carried on. It was also a time of instruction, "precept upon precept, line upon line, here a little, and there a little," and as my ignorance was revealed, and sin became exceedingly sinful, I was made to cry unto God for mercy and grace.

For a long time I was held in this solemn place, in bondage, a lawful captive who looked for liberty and yet felt so little hope that I would ever be delivered.

Avitaminosis sets in

Two long years passed away and my physical condition deteriorated, so that whereas at first the doctors could not see what was the matter with me, now the symptoms became plain as acute avitaminosis set in. I was sent to the university clinic in Prague where I spent forty-six weeks on a traction frame. The first part of this time I felt to be on a downhill road with little prospect of ever being restored, but my affliction was not only the physical disease but rather my trouble of soul.

After several months I became so weak that the doctors were ready to give me up. One day, I overheard a doctor saying to my mother (and they talked freely, thinking I was asleep): "It would be better if he died." My poor mother arrived the next day clothed in black, expecting the worst, but she did not know that there is a greater Physician than any man. That night was a favoured night. The nurse as usual read to me a small portion from my Bible. Haphazardly she opened upon Ezekiel chapter sixteen and read a few verses from it. It was like a balm to my troubled heart: "And when I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live."

Raised to a sweet hope

The nurse did not know what she read, but I felt a power in the application of this word; I felt divine life in my soul. O the power

and sweetness of that word! I begged the Lord to say it again and He said: “Live.” Free pardon, undeserved mercy was mine. What peace filled my heart and soul, raising up a sweet hope, not only that I would live naturally, but also, through mercy, eternally, in the presence of Him who loved me and gave Himself for me.

The next day I said to my mother: “Weep not, I shall live,” but she did not believe me; she could not understand. But I am here to record the Lord’s goodness and mercy; for all my sins were removed and I felt free. Soon after, I began rapidly to improve, but I often look back on that favoured time; it falls in line with the Lord’s declaration to His people: “I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction.”

Comes before the church

When I left hospital I ventured before the church; a few poor simple souls, yet I felt drawn to them, seeing the grace of God manifested in their lives and feeling a sacred union to them. O, how I liked to hear them speak of what the Lord had done for them. Now I could say: “What the Lord has done for *me*.” But this brought much opposition from my parents. My father felt it a disgrace that his son should keep company with such people, as he wanted me to move up in society.

My poor mother, under the influence of the Roman Catholic priest, feared that the worst would happen to me, as he told her that I should go to hell, and that I would bring God’s displeasure on the whole family. This culminated in the doors of my home being shut against me for two years. Many were my cries unto the Lord that He would keep me close to Himself, and I felt what the hymnwriter says:

“I could from all things parted be,
But never, never, Lord, from Thee.”

The Lord’s goodness and mercy preserved and kept me and led me about. My all was cast upon Him. It was a sweet time of childlike faith and confidence in God who had said unto me: “Live.” He was my guardian, my all and in all. My father did not withdraw all his financial support from me, which allowed me to continue at the

public school to get my maturity certificate. In other respects I had a hard time because my uncle and aunt also objected to me going to chapel. Often I had no breakfast and no supper, yet the Lord provided for me.

Enters university

The two elders of the little church at Pisek which I had joined had it laid on their minds that I should 'separate myself for the ministry of the Gospel.' To my shame I refused, though inwardly I felt I ought to have obeyed. But there were my parents and I knew that this would break the last connections with home; and besides that, there were other things which attracted my youthful mind.

Today I see, however, that it was disobedience, for I said in my heart: "I shall do with my own life as I please," and wilfully disobeyed the solemn warning which was given to Barak: "Seekest thou great things for thyself? Seek them not." (Jeremiah 45. 5).

In my foolishness I entered University to study medicine, but soon another trial came upon me.

The political situation in Europe deteriorated and war was imminent which caused my parents to relent. I had thought they would be pleased that I was training for a medical career. However, the war commenced and German forces occupied Prague. Then, after the demonstrations of 28 October 1939, the Nazis closed the Czechoslovakian universities, rounded up the students and sent them to forced labour in Germany. After several days of interrogation I was taken on the train to Berlin.

Spends four years at Kassel

In Berlin we were first housed in guarded compounds and again interrogated. After this, we were divided and sent to different places.

I found myself with two other boys sent to Kassel where I spent four years. With the drainage of qualified Germans from industry for the Armed Forces, the opportunity was made for us to do some laboratory work of a responsible nature, but my superior did not like it. I had a very bitter experience with him because he persecuted me without a cause. I could never do anything right for him.

During the last week of my stay there we heard that one of his sons was killed on the Russian front; and he, having a violent temper, took revenge on me whenever he could. On the last day, a Thursday, when he came to his office and I reported to him, he threw the notes that I had given him into my face and with insults threatened he would get rid of me. I was instantly dismissed.

A letter was typed for me to take to the head office with a recommendation that I should do manual work. With a heavy heart I left for the town and boarded a local train. It had not gone very far when the sirens started howling; then the bombs came down and the factory went up in flames. I trembled at the thought of the word: "Surely the wrath of man shall praise Thee: the remainder of wrath shalt Thou restrain," which I had yet to prove. The train did not stop at the next station but continued for some time.

Arrives in Prague

When it finally stopped, a train for Prague was on the opposite platform. Without hesitation I changed to it; there being nothing to go back for. The police generally checked documents on the trains between Germany and the Czechoslovakian frontier, but there was no inspection on that train. I safely arrived in Prague and the great question came: 'How was I to get out of the station without a ticket and without any documents?'

As I was pondering this I saw a railwayman whom I knew who said to me: "What are you doing here?" After telling him that I had just arrived but without a ticket, he guided me through the railwaymen's canteen and the back of the railway station into the street, so I was safely back home.

Deliverances

This was not the only deliverance in providence granted to me. The second occasion was very wonderful and manifested the providential care of the Lord. In Prague, I was sent first to work in an armaments factory but later was able to transfer to the local civilian hospital. I was then living in a flat in the main square; and this instance I narrate transpired on 6 May 1945.

On that beautiful Sunday morning the American troops moved into the city. Everywhere was peaceful and quiet; and the local population was quite happy that peace had at long last arrived. As my custom was, I went to our little chapel in one of the back streets. Suddenly during the service the quietness was disrupted by gunfire, and not only small arms but soon heavy guns were employed. We thought that this might be just a last show of resistance by units of the S.S., as the German army was surrendering.

The firing continued for over an hour and then quietly died down. We were able to leave, and I ventured back to my flat. It was obvious from the patrolling in the streets that the American army expected some more trouble. Anyhow, I got safely to the main square and arriving at the house I met the people next door who were surprised to see me, asking: "Where have you been?" Soon I realised what had transpired. I could not see above, but when I got on the stairs I saw some soldiers carrying out what appeared to be 'dead and injured.' My flat was a shambles. Instead of two windows there was only one big hole, the separating part being blown out by the heavy artillery employed. Very little could be salvaged, but the wonder of it was my life had been spared.

Whilst at the chapel service some German soldiers had entered my flat and fired from it down onto the Americans, who retaliated. I could not but praise the Lord for taking me away from dangers I could not foresee and never dreamt of, for had I been there I am sure I would not have been able to escape.

Exercises regarding the ministry

After the war ended I began to have fresh exercises with regard to the ministry, as the elders of the little church to which I belonged still felt that I should go into the ministry. In particular, one aged elder told me: "You will have to go sooner or later. If you disobey you will only bring trouble upon yourself." However, I could not bring myself to it; I felt so ignorant and so helpless that it would have been presumption on my part if I had done so. Instead, I went first to Prague and then, finding the university full, moved to Brno, in Moravia, to continue my medical studies. I tried hard to put the

ministry away from my mind, but all the while I knew that the time would come that I should have to go. As the years proceeded and I was coming to the end of my studies, working in the University hospital, I felt somewhat easier, and thought: ‘Well, perhaps I have been, and others have been, altogether mistaken; as a medical man I could do more for our people than if I preached the Gospel.’

To be continued

MAY I BE BAPTIZED?

B. A. Ramsbottom

Question 1: How do I know whether I should be baptized?

We have the scriptural answer, for this is what the eunuch asked (Acts 8. 36). The answer given is: “If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest” – in other words, faith in the Lord Jesus and a whole-hearted belief in Him. The ordinance has always been known as “*Believers’* Baptism” – and it is a command to them, not something optional.

The whole of the Word of God makes it clear that this is not just a historical faith – merely believing Jesus lived, and died, and rose again – but a sinner brought to feel his need, and relying entirely on the Person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

When we have a person wishing to be baptized, we ask them how they were brought to feel their need of a Saviour, and how that need has been met in the Lord Jesus.

It may be suggested that the qualification in Acts 10. 47 is different: “Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?” But there is no contradiction. Those who are born again and taught by the Holy Spirit are those who feel their need and flee for refuge to Jesus; and those who *do* feel their need and have no hope but in the Saviour are those the Holy Spirit has graciously taught.

Sometimes the question is asked: “Is a full assurance required?” It is right that a sinner should seek for the full, sweet assurance of faith, but we cannot see that this is necessary before being baptized.

Yet surely there must be some measure of assurance, even if small, and invariably there is the constraining of the love of Christ.

In practice, we have found over many years that hardly any come to their pastor saying, “I want to be baptized,” but usually to tell what the Lord has done for them, and that they must speak about it. When asked, “Then, do you wish to follow the Lord in baptism?” the answer is, “Yes,” but sometimes, “If you think that is right.”

Question 2: Does baptism necessarily mean church membership?

We can see that baptism does not make a person a church member, and that there can be certain cases where a person baptized cannot join a church. The case of the Ethiopian eunuch is an obvious case. He was returning to his own country where there *was* no church. A present-day comparison could be with a godly person in Holland, feeling constrained by love to be baptized by immersion, but having no sovereign grace Baptist church with which to unite in his own country.

But normally, surely baptism should be followed by church membership. Why not? If baptism is an open profession, constrained by the love of Christ, then that open profession requires uniting with the brethren in church fellowship. On the one hand, the Word of God requires the follower of Jesus to take his responsibilities, and on the other hand, what is most needful, to put himself under the authority of a church – not to be a law unto himself. We wonder *why* any baptized person should not wish also to be in church membership.

We imagine the reason for this question is that today quite a number in evangelical circles are baptized but do not become members of any church. Yet even there we find that the better evangelicals, who practise a measure of open communion, require that a visitor wishing to join on that occasion with them at the Lord’s table must be “in good standing with his own church.”

LEAVING HOME

G. D. Buss

One of the most traumatic and far-reaching experiences a young person may have to pass through is leaving home and going out to face the world with all its snares and pitfalls. For the most part our young people have been privileged to have the benefit of a home where the name of God has been revered, the Word of God has been regularly read, where prayer has been a central part of home life, and worship amongst God's people an essential part of the life they have been living, the Lord's Day being set apart as a day of rest and worship.

Immediately on leaving home for university, college or work there can be a tremendous culture shock. The vast majority of young people in our generation are now brought up in homes where the Bible is never read, let alone believed. Prayer is an alien concept, the name of God is mentioned only in blasphemy, and the Lord's Day accounted as a day like any other for either leisure or work. Any accountability to God as our Creator is either denied or ignored. Young people from a truly Christian home find themselves face to face with the powers of darkness which are controlled by the Prince of the power of the air, Satan, who is the very essence of anti-Christ.

Is there any advice or guidance which may be given to our young friends at this critical stage in their life? Leaving home is one of the most challenging tests of character which will be faced in life, and sadly one which not a few seem to fail in.

* * *

Firstly, may you always remember the short but expressive word: ***"Thou God seest me"*** (***Genesis 16. 13***). You will now be out of sight of your parents but never out of God's sight. We say that God is "omnipresent" meaning *everywhere present*. May you be ever conscious of that eye and not seek to resist the pricks of conscience which may come from this solemn awareness. Many years ago there was a plantation owner in India who had one good eye, but the other he had lost in an accident, which had been replaced by a glass eye, which he could remove at will. His workmen were notoriously lazy

and would only keep at their jobs if they knew he was watching. One day he had to go away on business. To keep his workmen on their toes while he was away, he took out his glass eye and placed it on a pole where it could be seen by all. When he left the men, for a little while they worked well thinking of the eye ‘watching’ them. However after a while they wanted to relax so one of their number took a hat and put it over the eye so that it could not see them! Sadly many of our young friends are as foolish as these men in thinking that by putting a cover over God’s word they somehow are then no longer under the obligation of its law and precepts.

Always remember that the evil world which now confronts you, which your parents have tried in measure to shield you from, is but a reflection of what is in your own heart by nature. Though you may have been kept by parental restraint from these sins you now see around you, the root of those same sins dwells deep in your nature too. The prayer of the psalmist is so apposite in this. ***“Hold Thou me up, and I shall be safe” (Psalm 119. 117).*** I remember a saying that our good friend Mr. J. K. Stehouwer of Grand Rapids often uses in speaking to the young. “Pray that if the temptation be there, the opportunity may not be there; and if the opportunity be there, may the temptation not be there.” It is then that we are most vulnerable, when both the temptation and the opportunity are there. Then how the cry is needed ‘to be kept.’ The strength to say “no” at the first challenge to sin is of great importance. Even the ungodly will respect you more if you are able to be consistent in your behaviour in this respect. For this, grace is needed and will need to be continually asked for day by day. Above all, each of us needs a new heart and a new spirit to overcome the world within us and the world without. The psalmist said: ***“Thy Word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against Thee” (Psalm 119. 11).***

If you should somehow wrongly feel it is impossible to serve God where you are, remember such men as Joseph, Obadiah, Daniel, Nehemiah and the church in Caesar’s house, all of whom were enabled by God to serve Him in the most uncongenial of environments. Jesus said to His disciples when they marvelled if any could be saved: ***“With God all things are possible” (Mark 10. 27).***

“The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations” (2 Peter 2. 9). Nehemiah once said when faced with temptation: ***“...so did not I, because of the fear of God” (Nehemiah 5. 15).*** God’s promise in Jeremiah is one to be pleaded by young people: ***“I will put My fear in their hearts, and they shall not depart from Me” (Jeremiah 32. 40).***

* * *

Secondly, keep good company. “A man is known by his friends” is a true saying. The psalmist could say, ***“I am a companion of all them that fear Thee, and of them that keep Thy precepts” (Psalm 119. 63).*** Choose your close friends carefully and seek the company of God’s people whenever possible. How many of us can look back with great thankfulness to God for the welcome His people gave us in their homes, especially on the Lord’s Day so that we never had to spend a Sunday in Hall. Some years ago, a young lad from one of our chapels in the Midlands went to study at Leeds University. He arrived to enroll on the Friday. The next day he walked the city to find out where the chapel was to be found, so that he could worship there the next day. His father told me what a comfort it was to him that his son should have made that his first priority. It is important that you seek to work or to study in a place where you can hear the truth preached and where God’s people are to be found.

In your studies or work you will however have to mingle and work with those who do not fear God, and who may be antagonistic to the principles you have been brought up to believe are right. In this respect we should take the advice of one good man who said that his necessary contacts with the world were like a man doing business in the street in the rain. As soon as the business was concluded he would make for the shelter of his home. We read of the disciples that ***“being let go, they went to their own company” (Acts 4. 23).***

* * *

Thirdly, remember that if by God’s grace you are helped to live as His Word commends and commands you must expect to be a speckled bird! The prophet Isaiah said that ***“he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey” (Isaiah 59. 15).*** ***“Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution” (2 Timothy 3. 12).*** Notice in that verse the use of the word ‘will.’ We need God to

give us the will, because it is not natural to us to take paths which we know will bring opposition. The words of the Saviour to Peter in the Garden of Gethsemane are very apposite, ***‘Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak’ (Matthew 26. 41).*** Temptations will abound on every hand but seek grace not to enter into them. Remember also you are not only being watched by the all-seeing eye of God, but those around you are watching. Often our behaviour speaks even more clearly than our words.

* * *

Fourthly, remember the two great weapons God has given us to use in the conflict with the world. These are the Word of God and prayer. In God’s holy Word there is sufficient guidance for every conceivable need or situation that may arise. Read God’s Word day and night. A consecutive and prayerful reading of the Word has often proved very helpful to many, as in the providence of God chapters are read just at the time when their instruction is most needed. The other great weapon, of course, is prayer. Just as God is everywhere present, so He is always and in all places approachable at the throne of grace.

Remember the warning of one good man who said, “A life without prayer is like a house without a roof, subject to all the elements.”

The words of John Warburton senior to his son John at Southill are very apposite:

“You have a Bible at Southill, and so have I at Trowbridge. You have a throne of grace at Southill, and so have I at Trowbridge. There is a God at Southill, the same at Trowbridge: that is the only place I have to go unto for directions for my family, for my soul, and for all church matters; there I counsel you to go. The Lord give you wisdom in all things.”

It is also a great blessing to have the prayers of those who have our eternal welfare at heart behind us. I remember after I had been at university for a year, meeting one of God’s people at Clifton chapel, who said how concerned they had been lest I should leave the ways

of the Lord. Until then I did not realise fully how vulnerable I was and how concerned others were that I should be kept. This was a very humbling but salutary experience.

* * *

Finally, remember the warning of God to Eli concerning his sons, which sadly they rejected: “... *for them that honour Me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed*” (*1 Samuel 2. 30*). Most of you have come from godly homes, and with that privilege much is required of you. Deliberately to turn your back upon the God of your parents is a very solemn matter indeed, and one that God will not look upon lightly.

However, may you ever remember that of the Lord Jesus it is said: “*Him that is able to keep you from falling...*” (*Jude 24*).

A NEW POPE

Dr. Matthew J. Hyde

The world was startled on 11th February 2013 by the announcement of the resignation of Pope Benedict XVI. It was the first time a pope had resigned since Gregory XII in 1415. We then watched with interest the election of Cardinal Bergoglio of Argentina as pope in one of the shortest conclaves in history.

On his election on 13th March, Bergoglio chose Francis as his regnal name, taking his inspiration from Francis of Assisi. Francis of Assisi has the dubious honour of being the creator of the nativity scene, and being the first man to bear stigmata – replicas of the wounds of Jesus in his hands; and is patron saint of animals. The name Francis might thus seem a strange name to have been chosen, but we are told the reason for the choice is work Francis of Assisi did amongst the poor, something the new pope seems intent on emulating.

Indeed since his election the apparent humility of Francis has been striking; we say apparent, because true humility can only be produced in the soul by the Holy Spirit. Nevertheless, outwardly he

has elected to live in the Vatican guesthouse, rather than the papal palace; his choice of robes are much plainer than those worn by his predecessor; and the day after his election he returned to the hotel where he had stayed prior to the conclave personally to pay his bill.

His humility appears to extend to a “spiritual level,” asking the crowds to pray for him after his election. To many within the Roman Church this was surprising; in reality it shows how far removed Rome is from the spirit of Peter and Paul, the first who said, “Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord” and the second who wrote: “Brethren, pray for us.”

Of Francis’ theological standing we wait to see what his tenure at the Vatican brings forth. He is the first Jesuit pope; the Jesuits, or the Society of Jesus, being a religious order of the Roman Church. The Jesuits were particularly influential in the Counter Reformation, or the attempts to suppress the fledgling Protestant Church, particularly in the persecution known as the Inquisition. They were implicated in the plots to overthrow Elizabeth I as well as the Gunpowder Plot. It is not without good cause they have been called “the elite troops” of the Papacy, and the very sound of their name has always been associated by Protestants with Rome at her cruellest and most feared. How a Jesuit pope will shape Rome remains to be seen.

Meanwhile the Argentinian evangelist, Luis Palau, a keen friend of Francis, cites him as being a “Bible believing Christian,” affirming most Evangelical teaching. What this means we do not know, although on moral grounds – often confused with “Evangelicalism” – Francis appears to have strong convictions and has argued robustly against same-sex relationships.

To the world it may appear that Francis is a humble man who has the poor at heart. In reality this only makes him more dangerous. A pope with popular appeal is a pope to beware of. We need to remind ourselves that the Papacy remains at heart Anti-Christ. Neither Francis nor Rome have much in common with Truth as revealed in the Scriptures. No humanising, however appealing reaching out to the poor and disadvantaged may be, can change the errors of the Roman Church.

FUNERAL OF BARONESS MARGARET THATCHER

Prime Minister 1979-1990

The funeral service of Britain's first woman prime minister took place at St. Paul's Cathedral, London on Wednesday, 17 April 2013. The first lesson, Ephesians 6. 10-18, was read by Baroness Thatcher's 19-year-old granddaughter, Miss Amanda Thatcher, described as an Evangelical Christian. In an interview, a close friend of Amanda is reported as saying: "What being an Evangelical Christian really means is that you have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. It is not about belonging to a denomination. It is about realising that we need a Saviour because we are sinners. That informs how you are and everything you do." We feel this to be a good, and necessary, definition. It was pleasing that all Bible readings at the service were from the Authorised Version, which was Baroness Thatcher's personal request.

THREE-PARENT BABIES

Babies born with the DNA of three parents could be made legal

The UK is on the way to becoming the first nation in the world to legalise the creation of genetically-modified babies who have three genetic parents.

It is claimed that the majority of Britons support a change in the law to allow mitochondrial replacement i.e. children conceived with the help of DNA donated by a second "mother." However, we have grave doubts that those polled understand what they are supposed to be supporting. A substantial 44% were "very" or "fairly" negative, or were undecided or unsure.

Defects in mitochondrial DNA give rise to a range of potentially life-threatening diseases, including a form of muscular dystrophy and conditions leading to the loss of hearing and vision, heart problems and bowel disorders.

The Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA) is leaving it to ministers to decide whether they should ask Parliament to agree to the procedures.

We do not profess to have any expertise in these matters. However, one thing we are sure of, that the will of God is that the procreation of a child is to be through *one* man and *one* woman united in the loving and secure bond of marriage.

THE ISLAMISATION OF THE WEST

Since the 1960s large numbers of Muslims have been migrating to the West. Although still a minority in the West, their growth rate has been dramatic. In Western Europe, there were only about 50,000 Muslims in 1900. By 1970 the number had grown to 3 million, and by 2008 it exceeded 25 million. One Islamist radical states: “Every western woman in the EU is producing an average of 1.4 children. Every Muslim woman in the same countries is producing 3.5 children. By 2050, 30% of the population in Europe will be Muslim.”

In Belgium, the city of Brussels has sworn in two municipal officials from a new Islamic party that wants to implement Sharia law. One of them told a public radio station: “The agenda is still the same, but our approach is different now. I think we have to sensitise people, make them understand the advantages of having Islamic people and Islamic laws. And then it will be completely natural to have Islamic laws.”

Sharia law defines the faith of most Muslims, who submit to it as God’s will. In the West there is increasing pressure to have parts of Sharia law added to the secular legal system. As a result of Muslim demands, various public bodies, including the police, hospitals and the prison system, allow Muslims to follow certain Sharia regulations.

*This hymn was sung at the funeral service of the late editor,
Mr. J. R. Broome, on Thursday, 28 February 2013.
The tune was Pilgrim.*

When peace, like a river, attendeth my way,
When sorrows, like sea billows, roll,
Whatever my lot, Thou hast taught me to say,
It is well, it is well with my soul.

Though Satan should buffet, though trials should come,
Let this blest assurance control,
That Christ has regarded my helpless estate,
And hath shed His own blood for my soul.

My sin - O the bliss of this glorious thought!
My sin, not in part, but the whole,
Is nailed to His cross, and I bear it no more:
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul!

For me, be it Christ, be it Christ hence to live:
If Jordan above me shall roll,
No pang should be mine, for in death as in life
Thou wilt whisper Thy peace to my soul.

But, Lord, 'tis for Thee, for Thy coming we wait,
The sky, not the grave, is our goal;
O trump of the angel! O voice of the Lord!
Blessed hope! Blessed rest of my soul!

*It is well with my soul;
It is well, it is well with my soul.*

PERCEPTION

A Quarterly Magazine for Young People



And they of Bethshemesh were reaping their wheat harvest in the valley: and they lifted up their eyes, and saw the ark, and rejoiced to see it. 1 Samuel 6.13.

AUTUMN 2013

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Cover picture: A Hertfordshire wheat field

PERCEPTION

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EDITORIAL

*“The harvest is past, the summer is ended,
and we are not saved” Jeremiah 8. 20.*

Every season of the year, in its own special way, has its delights. The four seasons, spring, summer, autumn and winter, are very clearly marked by the changes in length of daylight hours and temperature. Perhaps we may be tempted to think that the wintertime is long and dreary. Or a cold spring makes us long for warmer days. Then, when summer arrives at last, it is over only too quickly.

Harvest time has traditionally been associated with the months of September and October. However, with the modern machinery and drying facilities available to farmers today, the gathering of the harvest comes earlier now than in former years. Generally, though, harvest thanksgiving services in churches and chapels continue to be held in September and October, possibly because July and August is the time of year when many are away from home.

Nothing speaks more clearly of the faithfulness of God than the harvest. After the flood, as Noah left the shelter of the ark, God “said in his heart” that while the earth remained, seed time and harvest should not cease. True, history tells of good harvests and bad harvests, sometimes failed harvests (we think, for example, of the 1845 potato blight in Ireland) but still, through God’s mercy and faithfulness our food is provided for us year after year. Sadly, mismanagement of the production and distribution of food can lead to surpluses or shortages. We have had ‘butter mountains,’ ‘beef mountains’ and ‘milk lakes,’ food hoarded rather than sold. We remember our Bethesda Homes being offered what was called “intervention butter,” a government initiative to attempt to reduce the massive surplus of butter in storage. In Guernsey a few years ago we observed farmers bulldozing tons of tomatoes over the cliffs. (This kind of waste must be grieving to God.)

Although the harvest is a cause for much thankfulness and joy, it is also a reminder of something more solemn. In the parable of the tares, the Lord Jesus explained to His disciples that “the harvest is the end of the world” Matthew 13.39. The enemy-sown tares were to grow together with the wheat until the harvest. When the time of the harvest came, the reapers were to gather first the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them. The wheat (only) was to be gathered into the barn.

Now let us look back at the text at the top of this article: “The harvest is past, the summer is ended.” When the end of the world comes, then for all living at that time it will be said, “The harvest is past.” Or if our appointed time should be before the end of the world comes, when we die, it will be said concerning each of us, “The harvest is past.” But what if the second part of our text then proves to be our solemn state: “And we are not saved.” We will not be found among the wheat to be gathered into the barn.

When we are younger we feel that the end of our lives is a long way off. But of this we cannot be sure. It may *seem* to us to be in the distant future, too far off to think seriously about it. But what of those words in John chapter 4 verse 35: “There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest.” Perhaps we could use those words to ask ourselves a question: How would we feel if those words were spoken to us? What if someone came to us and said the end of our life (the harvest) will be in four months. Would we have a hope that it would be well with us? Or would we have to say, if the harvest should come now, I have no grounds to hope that I am saved.

May the Lord make the salvation of our souls the greatest of all our concerns, young friends and older ones too. Perhaps we can turn our concern into a prayer: “Lord, before the time of harvest comes, before the harvest is past, save me for Thy mercies’ sake. While Thou art others blessing, do not pass me by.” Remember, the Lord Jesus is the “Lord of the harvest” - it is *His* harvest.

“ His angels are coming like reapers some day,
To sever the tares from the wheat,
And carry God’s children in safety away,
Their loving Redeemer to meet.”

HAS THE LORD TOUCHED YOUR HEART?

*Part of a sermon preached by Mr. J. R. Broome
at Lamberhurst Strict Baptist Chapel on 7 September 2012*

Text: “Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever” (Hebrews 13. 8).

(Concluded from Summer 2013, page 8)

When brought to know Him in the early days of our pathway (and you younger ones who are here this evening, I do not leave you out and I would never preach over your heads,) I do say to some of you younger ones that are here tonight, have you had an answer to prayer? *When* did you pray? *What* did you pray? I remember the day when all I could say was, “I have had a few answers to prayer.” You have pleaded His name, “Lord help me,” and it comes from the heart. I say this to some of you younger ones: there have been others praying for you. How God-fearing parents have had cause to pray for their young ones and plead for them. And what about you older ones? Your parents have been long in the grave, but O the prayers they have put up for you.

Then there are those mothers in Israel who plead and wrestle with the Lord. They may not have family of their own but they *do* have a family - those for whom they have prayed and yearned. When I first went to Trowbridge in 1959 there were some godly mothers in Israel. They watched over the young. They were exercised and concerned about them. When I went out to preach ten years afterwards in 1969, one of those godly women said to me: “I knew you would go.” I said, “How could you tell?” She said, “By your prayers.” She was watching!

“The same yesterday.” What about your knowledge of His mercy? We sang in that lovely hymn:

“Determined to save, He watched o’er my path,
When, Satan’s blind slave, I sported with death.”

What effect does the sight of His mercy in your soul and your life have on you? If I know anything of it, it is this: “Why me?” That is the effect the hand of mercy has upon a poor sinner. Mercy is connected with guilt and condemnation and darkness and death - undeserving of the Lord’s mercies. The Lord showed this in the case of the prodigal

son. He had abandoned everything and gone into a far country. He came to himself, the Spirit shone in his heart and he returned to his father. "I am not worthy to be called thy son." When the Lord shows mercy in the hearts of His dear people they are brought to that blessed place, "Why me?" Have you come there? "Why was I made to hear His voice?" "Why me?"

What do we know of the blood of Christ in our soul's experience? What a searching question this is. To be able to look back over the way and remember those places where the Lord has visited your soul, where He has been with you and you have felt those everlasting arms underneath. Why should He deal with you like that? Why should He help you? He *does* help those for whom He has shed His precious blood on Calvary's cross. Do you know what it means to be made nigh by the blood of Christ, to be brought near to Him by that sweet, peace-speaking blood? He said as He left His dear disciples, "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you." What a blessed peace that was. Search your heart, ask yourself on your knees at the throne of grace: have you had a few moments in which you have had access in your life to that holy God, pleading His dear Son's blood at the mercy seat? "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son," said John, "cleanseth us from all sin."

"Jesus Christ the same yesterday." If you have a yesterday, you will want a today. You will be dependent today as you were yesterday. It is never going to be any different. You will need that atoning love and blood. You will need to plead that precious name at the mercy seat as you seek His help and His strength.

I turn to you young people again; my heart goes out to you. I took a church meeting some years ago. A young man came forward, he was a student and when asked, "When did the Lord begin with you?" he went back to when he was six. He said he heard Mr. Philip Warren senior speaking of his experiences in the Second World War in the Navy and how the Lord preserved him. As a young child he listened to this and he said, "I knew there was something real in that." He had such a sweet belief that there was something real in what Mr. Warren said.

I remember in my youth hearing dear old Mr. Harvey Carr, late pastor at Chippenham, (I remember hearing him many times) and people used to say, "Well, he is old and keeps on repeating himself." To me he

could have repeated himself all night, it was so sweet. He used to lean over the pulpit - and some of you may have seen him do it - and point to the ground and say, "I used to take my dear wife to Sheffield and I said to her, there the Lord met with me." That fastened on me. I thought, Yes, there is something in that. I could take you to a place now in Manningford Chapel, Wiltshire where dear old Mr. Eben Clark [Pastor, Barton-le-Clay, Bedfordshire for 42 years] preached from, "That we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." I listened that night as I had never listened before. I wished he would go on to midnight and not sit down. "Jesus Christ the same." O, how we need Him. I have needed Him today. Where are you? It is a blessed mercy if you have a hunger and thirst and you are yearning to walk with Him and commune with Him and to know Him.

"And for ever." We sang tonight, "Can he have taught me to trust in his name?" Can you say, "Here or there the Lord met with me?" Blessed mercy if you can. "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever." What He has been to you yesterday, what He means to you tonight, He will be to you in the future. He changes not. He abideth faithful. Amen.

THE MOON - ITS SIZE

Andrew Rayner

In this, the first of three short articles, Mr. Rayner draws attention to some little-known facts concerning one of God's masterpieces.

"The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork" Psalm 19.1.

Since we benefit from artificial light when we travel and carry out outdoor activities at night, we think very little about the moonlight. In all probability, you are unaware of the current phase of the Moon because it is of so little significance to your everyday life. Many of our ancestors would have thought very differently; they would have been acutely aware of new moons and full moons as nights with good

moonlight gave them opportunities which were otherwise unavailable to them.



Moon on Midsummer Day 2013

Genesis 1 says that God “made two great lights: the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night.” Have you ever thought about the size of the Moon? It is, or at least appears to be, of the same size as the Sun. The ‘greater’ and ‘lesser’ in Genesis would have originally been taken to refer to intensity, rather than to size. The similarity in size seems so natural and obvious to us that perhaps we do not give it a thought. But, not

only are their sizes when viewed from the earth apparently similar, they are, in fact, identical. This is best seen when a full eclipse of the Sun occurs. The Moon totally obliterates the Sun’s main body, but the hot gases and hot gas flares which intermittently extend beyond the main body remain visible. (There are some slight variations caused by the orbits being slightly offset.) Most scientists say, “What an amazing coincidence.” Perhaps they would rather we did not consider this point.

We know that the Moon is approximately 2,158 miles in diameter and 238,900 miles from the Earth, whilst the Sun is approximately 864,938 miles in diameter and 93,000,000 miles away. But why should the Moon’s size when viewed from the Earth’s surface match that of the Sun? Why should it be possible for a full eclipse of the Sun to occur in the way that it does? The answer is clear: *because it was designed in that way*. Could this, along with millions of other physical properties of the Universe and of the Earth in particular, possibly have resulted from chaos - from a Big Bang? The evidence is before us, but “The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God.”

PASTOR HSI - A REMARKABLE DELIVERANCE

Pastor Hsi (1836-1896) laboured unsparingly amongst the opium addicts in China. Having been an opium addict himself, he knew the sad and desperate lives of those who were a slave to the habit. His own deliverance from opium he attributed to the power of the Holy Spirit alone. *“At this time I still smoked opium. I tried to break it off by means of native medicine, but could not; by use of foreign medicine, but failed. At last I saw, in reading the New Testament, that there was a Holy Spirit who could help men. I prayed to God to give me His Holy Spirit. He did what man and medicine could not do; He enabled me to break off opium smoking.”*

Early in his Christian experience, he learnt the necessity, and privilege, of sharing the sufferings of Christ, if we would follow in His footsteps. To deny self and endure hardness for Jesus’ sake, and in the service of others, seemed to him only the right and natural thing. And he was very practical about it.



Pastor HSI

On one occasion he went into the city as usual to attend the Sunday morning service. This was a walk of *over thirteen miles*, and he was still far from strong. But as he tramped the dusty road he thought about the Lord Jesus carrying that heavy cross over a much more weary way; and so pressed forward, not daring to fear difficulty.

The service over, he was resting a little while before the homeward journey, when a poor man sought him out and begged him to go at once to the village of the White Mountain, to pray for a woman, dangerously ill, who wanted to hear of Jesus. The village was *seventeen miles* farther on. No cart or animal had been provided. The road was lonely and somewhat dangerous. And no one was going home that way with whom he could travel. But it never even occurred to him not to go.

Hour after hour, faint and solitary, he pressed on. At length evening fell, and he had only reached the rushing torrent three miles from the village. Very soon it was dark, and neither moon nor stars could be seen. Belated on that mountain road, he knew that travellers were exposed to the attack of hungry wolves grown fearless since the famine. And sure enough, as he stumbled on, he heard sounds that too plainly indicated their approach. Yes, they were on his track. Nearer and nearer came the howling, until he knew that they were all around him in the darkness. But there was a Presence nearer still.

Falling on his knees in that moment of peril, Hsi cried aloud to the Unseen Friend. He never knew what happened, or how he was delivered; but the next thing he was conscious of was silence, and that he was alone.

“Everything,” he records, “grew strangely still. I know not when the wolves disappeared, or where they went. But they returned no more. Truly the Lord was my shield and my protector.”

A little later he reached the village, and had the joy of telling the glad tidings to the sick woman and her friends, who probably had never seen a Christian before. What the result was in their lives we are not told. But the preacher himself never forgot that remarkable deliverance, nor the blessing that came to him in a service that involved some suffering.

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REVISIONS TO THE AUTHORISED VERSION BIBLE

The Authorised Version of the Bible we use today is essentially as first printed in 1611. A major revision of spelling, capitalisation and punctuation took place in 1769 some 150 years after publication. A few other changes relating to word order were also made e.g. in Romans 6.12 REIGN THEREFORE was changed to THEREFORE REIGN. The opportunity was also taken to correct a number of printing errors. (The Bible contains 791,328 words.) See how many changes you can find in the extract on the following page from Luke chapter 1, verses 38 to 48 as first published in 1611. The answers are on page 21.

38 And Marie said, Behold the handmaide of the Lord, be it vnto me according to thy word : and the Angel departed from her.

39 And Marie arose in those dayes, and went into the hill countrey with haste, into a citie of Iuda,

40 And entred into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elizabeth.

41 And it came to passe that when Elizabeth heard the salutation of Marie, the babe leaped in her wombe, and Elizabeth was filled with the holy Ghost.

42 And she spake out with a loud voyce, and saide, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruite of thy wombe.

43 And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to mee?

44 For loe, assoone as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine eares, the babe leaped in my wombe for ioy.

45 And blessed is she ||that beleueed, for there shalbe a performance of those things, which were told her from the Lord.

46 And Marie said, My soule doth magnifie the Lord.

47 And my spirit hath reioyced in God my sauour.

48 For hee hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden : for behold, from

THE SEA OF GALILEE - A STORM

From The Land and the Book by Rev. W. M. Thomson, D.D.

Dr. Thomson was born on the last day of the year 1806 in Ohio, USA. At the age of 27 he arrived in Beirut, Syria as a missionary, moving a year later to Jerusalem. For some years he ran a boys' boarding school. He carried out extensive tours of Palestine which he meticulously recorded, the results of which were incorporated into his famous *The Land and the Book*. He died in 1894 at the home of his daughter in Colorado, USA. To most people the Sea of Galilee suggests a tranquil, serene scene. The account, therefore, of the disciples in peril on the Sea of Galilee has led some to wonder how such conditions could arise. Here is Dr. Thomson's account.



My experience in this region enables me to sympathize with the disciples in their long night's contest with the wind. I spent a night in Wady Shukaiyif, [a Wady is an Arabic term for a valley or a dry river bed] some three miles up it. The sun had scarcely set when the wind began to rush down toward the lake, and it continued all night long with constantly increasing violence, so that when we reached the shore next morning the face of the lake was like a huge boiling caldron. The wind howled down every wady from the north-east and east with such fury that no efforts of rowers could have brought a boat to shore at any point along that coast.

In a wind like that, the disciples must have been driven quite across to Gennesaret, as we know they were. To understand the causes of these sudden and violent tempests, we must remember the lake lies low - six hundred feet lower than the ocean. The vast and naked plateaus of the Jaulan rise to a great height, spreading backward to the wilds of the Hauran, and upward to snowy Hermon. The water-courses have cut out profound ravines and wild gorges, converging to the head of the Sea of Galilee. These act like gigantic funnels to draw down the cold winds from the mountains.

On the occasion referred to, we pitched our tents at the shore, and remained for three days and nights exposed to this tremendous wind.

We had to double pin all the tent-ropes, and frequently were obliged to bang with our whole weight upon them to keep the quivering tabernacle from being carried up bodily into the air. No wonder the disciples toiled and rowed hard all that night; and how natural their amazement and terror at the sight of Jesus walking on the waves!



The Sea of Galilee looking towards Magdala

The faith of Peter, in desiring and daring to set foot on such a sea, is most striking and impressive. The whole lake was lashed into fury; the waves repeatedly rolled up to our tent door, tumbling over the ropes with such violence as to carry away the tent-pins. And, moreover, those winds are not only violent, but they come down suddenly, and often when the sky is perfectly clear. I once went in to swim near the hot baths, and, before I was aware, a wind came rushing over the cliffs with such force that it was with great difficulty I could regain the shore.

Some such sudden wind it was, I suppose, that filled the ship with waves, “so that it was now full,” while Jesus was asleep on a pillow in the hinder part of the ship. Nor is it strange that the disciples aroused him with the cry of “Master! Master! carest thou not that we perish? And he arose and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still; and the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. And the disciples feared exceedingly, and said one to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?”

RELATIONSHIPS

B. A. Ramsbottom

The most important of all relationships is, through grace, to have a right relationship with God in Christ. This is vital, and how many books have been written on the subject! But we are sure this was not the thought of the Editor when he asked us to write on this subject.

Life is made up of relationships, so it is not surprising that the Word of God has so much to say. See especially the closing part of Paul's epistles (Ephesians 5.22 - 6.9; Colossians 3.18 - 4.1) where he speaks at some length of the relationship between husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and servants (also 1 Peter 2.13 - 3.7). This is no wonder because, in our sinful state, whatever relationships there are, problems are sure to arise.

SERVANTS AND MASTERS

Today we rather use the terms: employers and employees. Not many, if any, of our young people have the responsibilities of master, but many are working in different situations with others over them. How are they to behave?

1. Always respectfully, even more so if the employer is a fellow church member or a friend.

2. Obediently. But if asked to do something contrary to your conscience, lift up your eyes to the Lord for help, quietly explain why you cannot do it, and be courteous.

If the employer is exceedingly difficult, it is on this very point that the Word of God exhorts: "Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; *not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward*" (1 Peter 2.18). It must be remembered that the "servants" to whom the New Testament writes were really "slaves," and often had cruel masters.

3. Above all be conscientious – not time servers, not clock watchers, but going the second mile. John Newton said that if a person's work is to sweep the streets, he should seek to do it better than anyone else in the town. In this way God's name has often been abundantly honoured.

In former days a little servant girl was asked if grace had made any difference in her life. "Yes," she said. "I used to clean very carefully

where everyone can see. Now I am just as careful where nobody looks!"

CHILDREN AND PARENTS

Those of you who are parents:

1. Pray for your children.
2. Seek grace to set them a good example.
3. Especially as they grow up, know how to say "No" to them when needful.

Above all beware of spoiling them.

Children are commanded to respect and obey their parents (and this should include grandparents, old people and elders in the church). One mark of the lowering standards today is the lack of respect at all levels.

Avoid family bickering. One magazine article recently stated that many homes, where everything else seems fine, are spoiled by what was described as "sniffishness."

What of where there are ungodly parents? Again, always treat them with respect; and if unable to do what they ask, humbly and courteously explain why. In the Word of God, Jonathan is an eminent example in the way he related with his father Saul, when Saul's behaviour to David was so dreadful.

HUSBANDS AND WIVES*

The great point here is love, and the example: Christ's love to His church. The old people used to say that "there are two bears in marriage: bear and forebear."

But with most of our boys and girls, the concern is friendship *before* or leading up to marriage, and what has the Word of God to say about this. To many, this will be the most interesting and most important part of this article.

BOY AND GIRL FRIENDSHIPS**

We wonder if this was meant to be the special aim of this article,

* CviE have published an interesting new booklet:
"The Puritan Family"

** CviE have published a useful and profitable
booklet on this: *Relationships*, obtainable free of charge from
Christian Values in Education, P.O. Box 273, Oakington,
Cambridgeshire, CB4 5FW

and we are sure that with most of our young people, this will be of special interest to them.

Close friendships with a boy or girl of the opposite sex are a very important matter. They must be serious. Short-term flirtatious friendships are forbidden.

Though marriage, obviously, is not immediately in view, it must be in our thoughts. And the Word of God is exceedingly clear: "Only in the Lord." "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers."

Often we have heard the argument: "God can change him/her. I am sure He will in answer to my prayers," etc. It is wrong to walk in disobedience to God's clear commandment. True, there are occasions when the Lord in the riches of His mercy does intervene. But what if the opposite? So many divided homes? What of the way children are brought up? What of sorrow in many cases? It is completely wrong to say, "God has given me a word," or, "I find much nearness to the Lord in contemplating it." God never leads contrary to His Word.

The great thing is to begin a close relationship in prayer, much prayer, and to pray your way along.

Solemnly it must be emphasised: no sexual relations before marriage. Also, avoid temptation and compromising situations.

There must be love. There must be mutual attraction, physically. We have had girls come to us to say they feel such admiration and their friend seems so godly but, "If he puts his arm round me, I cannot bear it." In that case there can be no going forward in marriage.

We have also had girls come to us who are very worried because a boy has said God has given them a clear word to marry them. We do not think this is fair or right. Remember the occasion when our hymnwriter John Berridge had a lady visit him with the news that God had told her to marry him. His candid reply was: "As it concerns me as much as you, I think He would have told me also!"

Beware of so-called platonic friendships – where a boy and girl become closer and closer, but say, "There is nothing in it!" This often ends in sorrow, one side being deeply hurt.

One last word: many a boy or girl has a bitter disappointment. Often the Lord sanctifies it. And often, in later years, that one looks back and blesses the Lord for the disappointment. God has provided

something better. “He taketh away the first that He might establish the second.”

OTHER FRIENDSHIPS

Apart from boy and girl friendships, there are other friendships. Many of our boys and girls, while at school, find happiness in having good friends, or are terribly distressed by their lack of friends. The Book of Proverbs has much to say about the subject of “FRIENDS.”

Be very careful about forming close friendships with undesirable people. We know the old argument: “I will not be influenced by them. I will stick to what I believe. I think I can have a good influence on them.” The old story has often been told of how a kind father dealt with this. He took a bad apple and put a good one next to it. He told his son to see what would happen. A few days later both of them were rotten!

Don’t be exclusive with your friendships. Bring other people in, especially the lonely. Also an overwhelming friendship can end in difficulties. We knew two lovely girls in our native town, Ruth and Brenda. They were absolutely inseparable. People smiled on them; they were so nice and never apart. But a break up came! As late teenagers, one of them suddenly realised she had no life, no existence, completely of her own – and felt she must end the relationship. The other had a complete breakdown.

Some boys and girls are sad because they are lonely and have no friends. But sometimes, often, it is because they are self-centred. Years ago we came across a book: “How to have many friends” and the thrust of the book was simple: don’t talk about yourself; show interest in the other person’s things!

What about when friendships break up? Perhaps you have a friend at school, but as you grow older, your friend does things and goes to places your parents do not approve of. You have to say, “No.” Your friendship comes to an end. You are very sad. May you know that “there is a Friend (the Lord Jesus) who loveth at all times, and a Brother born for adversity.” We knew a girl who lost her best friend, and the Lord blessed the simple word to her:

“There’s a Friend for little children,
Above the bright blue sky.”

RELATIONSHIP WITH THE WORLD

We live in the world. We cannot avoid it. What is to be our relationship with it? The Lord Jesus said, "I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldest keep them from the evil." We are called to be separated *from* the world (2 Corinthians 6.17), but we are still *in* the world, and of necessity must have relationships *with* the world. The old saying was: "*In* the world, but not *of* it."

Though we are not to be allied to the world, there is a witness for God's people to bear. They are the salt of the earth. They are light in a dark place. They are "lilies among thorns."

So we must be courteous in our dealings with the world. The world does not understand the doctrine of predestination, but it does understand kindness, in word or deed. "Do good unto all men, especially unto the household of faith," is the injunction of God here.

We must be kept from a proud appearance. We are not better than the world. If through grace we are different, then "who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou which thou hast not received?"

We have always admired the spirit of William Gadsby. One day, walking through the streets of Manchester with John Kershaw, they met some eminent prelate. On hearing who Gadsby was, he said, "Mr. Gadsby, you must detest me!" "Not at all," was the reply. "I have nothing but feelings of kindness toward you, and would do anything to help you. *But*," he added, "where I think you are wrong, I will unflinchingly oppose you!"

RELATIONSHIP WITH NEIGHBOURS

We are enjoined, "As much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men." Some people have great difficulty with neighbours. What need for prayer! But how often it is proved, "When a man's ways please the Lord, He maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him."

RELATIONSHIP WITH OLD PEOPLE

Today there seems to be a greater gap than ever between the old and the young. It should not be so with those that fear God. Many old people are lonely, sad, unwell; they have lost husband or wife, and perhaps their home. Do not pass them by at chapel. Speak kindly to

them. You do not know how much this is appreciated.

But whether speaking to old, middle-aged or your own age, “Look not every man on his own things.” There are some young people who love to be asked questions about what *they* are doing, and to talk of *their* interests – but who never make a loving enquiry about the concerns of the other.

BAD RELATIONSHIPS

Sometimes you will get into a bad relationship (“falling out”) with someone your own age, or perhaps older, and not through your own fault. Sometimes it may be you *are* at fault. What can you do?

Above all, pray. The Lord has a blessed ability to heal breaches, sometimes in a most unexpected way. The little-known passage in Ezekiel chapter 37 is very helpful here. Two sticks – how can they be welded together? The case seems impossible. It is. (In the context, the thought is of Ephraim and Judah, the ten tribes and the two.) The prophet is told to take the two sticks, and they become one. The Lord says, “They shall be one in My hand.” He can do it. But,

1. Ask, Where have I gone wrong? We are not infallible! In Puritan times someone wrote to another, “I beseech thee, in the bowels of Christ, consider thou mayest be wrong!”

2. Be willing to say sorry

3. Wait your opportunity. When the other is in trouble, bereavement, distress, speak a kind word. Send a sympathetic letter. Help in any way you can. “A soft answer turneth away wrath.”

Much, much more could be written about “relationships”; but in them all, “Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in Him; and He shall bring it to pass.” “In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths.”

PROGRESSIVE CHRISTIANITY

Progressive Christianity is a growing worldwide movement believing that the teachings of Jesus provide but one of many ways to “the gateway of God’s realm.” They acknowledge that other faiths are

as true for “them,” as our ways are true for “us.” All are invited to participate in their worship without insisting that they become like themselves in order to be acceptable.

They claim to find more ‘grace’ (whatever their understanding of that might be) in the search for understanding rather than in dogmatic certainty, and that there is more value in questioning than in absolutes.

Whilst accepting the greatest commandment, (“Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself”) the rest of Scripture they submit to the position of ‘sacred commentary.’

We feel we cannot warn our young people too strongly against this pernicious teaching. Sadly, some mainstream churches, whilst distancing themselves from the movement as a whole, through a desire to appear inclusive, politically correct and sympathetic, are beginning to think along similar lines. Sadly our own heir to the throne, Prince Charles, sees himself more as a ‘Defender of Faiths’ rather than ‘Defender of the Faith.’

The following article by a Progressive Christianity minister appeared recently in a local newspaper:

“As a Progressive Christian I am often asked: ‘What do you people believe?’ Well, church creeds, statements of faith and dogmatic certainty are of little importance for us. Far more important is the non-judgemental, open-ended spiritual quest for understanding that accompanies us on our journeys to make real differences in this world. We are not concerned what may or may not happen beyond death. We do not claim to have the ‘only way’ spiritual truth but invite all people into the fellowship community without insisting that ‘they’ become clones of ‘us’ in order to be fully accepted. Believers and agnostics, traditional Christians and open, questioning sceptics, all gender identities and sexual orientations; all abilities, colours and cultures; all are welcome.”

May we desire to be kept from such a poor Gospel, and seek rather to heed Jude’s exhortation, that we might “earnestly contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints.” How solemn for a so-called Christian minister to say we are not concerned what happens after death.

THE LIFE OF MR. J. G. PAVLIK
His escape from Czechoslovakia and arrival in England
(Continued from Summer 2013, page 27)

Under the Communists

The clouds over Czechoslovakia had never lifted entirely and with the upheaval in the country during 1948 a new situation developed which finally forced me to leave my country. I am often asked whether I left Czechoslovakia because of religious persecution, but it would be wrong if I said that it was so.

The reason why I had to leave was that my father was engaged in politics and had opposed the communists. Also my brother, who had been in England during the war, had several friends in western embassies in Prague who visited our home.

After the communists usurped power to govern the country they tried to eliminate all opposition. By inhuman methods they forced people to make confessions of acts they had not committed. Relatives were also forced to 'reveal information' as 'evidence' against people accused of spying for foreign countries etc. Though I had thought that eventually I would have to leave, it came about unexpectedly.

Forced to flee

One day in February 1949, I was suddenly requested to go back to the research institute of the University by a man whom we all rather feared because of his associations. He did not conceal that he was a member of the Communist Party.

On the telephone he told me that the Old Man (meaning the Professor) wanted to see me, and I must come. He would not give an explanation and laid the receiver down. It sounded rather peculiar as I knew that our Head was in fact in Prague, but I left everything, and as it was a beautiful warm sunny day, the snow melting, and water dripping from the roofs, I went without a hat and coat to the Institute where I was met by this colleague. He told me that I must leave immediately because the police wanted me to inform against my father and my brother. He would not let me go back for any money or provisions, and I was taken by an ambulance out of the city to board a coach which went to the frontier.

I was given a hat and coat in which I looked more like a scarecrow, and by ten o'clock we arrived near the border town at a place where I was told to alight and make my way on foot. It was necessary to cross an elevated railway line which was heavily guarded. When I approached the bunker near the railway line I saw the guards with their dogs. Suddenly one of the dogs started to bark as it picked up my scent. The guard called it back and walked away with it. I was terrified of the Alsatian which did not want to obey his master and I feared it would get loose and attack me. However, they went away and I was able to jump over the elevated line and disappear on the other side.

Crossing the Austrian border

There were two miles to go. How I got between the mines to the deep water-filled trench which marked the border and jumped over it, I still do not know. It appeared to be about four yards wide, but I believe the Lord helped me, and so I found myself in Austria. I was warned not to go into the nearby town because the Russian Occupation Army had a Unit there, but to go a little way along the main road and wait for the early morning coach.

It was midnight when I crossed the border, and I had to wait several hours. The snow was laying on the ground and I made a little hollow in it to rest in, feeling very sorry for myself. It was difficult to contemplate what lay before me. I felt that one period of my life had closed but now everything was uncertain, everything was in doubt, and what seemed worse, I could not find that sweet rest which I enjoyed when the Lord first smiled on my poor soul. As I looked into the sky, suddenly a few lines of a Czechoslovakian hymn came to my mind, and there is one equivalent to it in our hymnbook (Gadsby's 403, verse 2):

“He left His starry crown,
And laid His robes aside,
On wings of love came down,
And wept, and bled, and died;
What he endured no tongue can tell,
To save our souls from death and hell.”

The sweet sense that the Lord left heaven for my poor soul melted me down and I wept myself to sleep in the snow. I was awakened by the cold, but it was not yet time for the coach. When it arrived it had some

people already in it, and to prevent any misunderstanding with the driver, as I had no Austrian currency I gave him my watch, saying that when we reached our destination we would sell it and he would get his share. The next worry was how to get through into the international sector of Vienna, but happily that day there was no inspection.

Prison

When safely at the end of the journey I began to rejoice, but my joy was short-lived as one of the passengers approached a policeman standing nearby and told him that he had good reason to believe that I came across the border without a passport. The policeman had to investigate and as I had no passport I was taken into custody, brought before a magistrate, and sentenced, as the custom is in Austria, to three days' imprisonment for illegally crossing the frontier.

While in the Austrian prison I was notified that the Czechoslovakian authorities wished me to go back, and I was given a piece of paper to sign that I was going willingly, of my own accord. This I refused to do but it was of no avail, and instead of three days it was a fortnight before I was brought out by an American officer who went through the prison looking for any refugees that might be there from the communist countries.

Whilst in the prison I experienced some things which I shall never forget, as I was put into a cell with two very bad characters. One was there for larceny and assault and the other for robbery with violence. They not only told their experiences but also planned and schemed further exploits. This was a terrible situation for me as I had never known what bad company was. I was scorned and told that I would get used to prison, it was not so bad, and that this was only the beginning, I would be a prisoner for the rest of my life. I cannot tell how upset I was. Mixing with such characters was dreadful.

As I lay one night on the canvas bed which was alive with vermin, I could not but groan and sigh unto the Lord and beg for deliverance. The Lord granted it in a most wonderful way, giving me faith's view of the Lord Jesus crucified between two thieves; the holy, just and spotless Lamb of God; He who did no sin; in whose mouth was found no guile; in such company, not only imprisoned, but crucified on the cross. What came over my soul I cannot tell, but the sense of blood-bought pardon,

the sense that He did this for me, melted away all rebellion, and made me to acknowledge with the thief: "We indeed justly . . . but this man hath done nothing amiss." That prison cell, with all the darkness and wretchedness in it, was suddenly a place visited from on high, and I felt like Paul and Silas: I could sing the praises of Him who is "yesterday, and today, and for ever," a faithful, covenant-keeping, merciful God.

Refugee camp

When brought out from prison I was helped to get into upper Austria and directed to a refugee camp. The wooden huts had many lodgers in them and were filthy and unkempt, and there seemed to be nothing to encourage the inhabitants to make their present abode more cheerful and comfortable. For me there was an urgent necessity to look for means of livelihood, for whilst I was given a bed to sleep on and morning coffee with a piece of bread, I needed money to buy food, utensils and clothing.

I ventured to find a job, and the only one available was on the railway line - six weeks of hard labour, at the end of which I was so tired that I could neither eat nor do anything else, but wanted only rest and sleep. I could not carry on like that, but I had a few shillings and with that I could start looking for some other work. I found employment as a laboratory assistant in a hospital for refugees, with no pay, but a room and food provided. This was much better but rather uncertain for the future. However, after about six months an opening was offered to me in a hospital for the dependents of American army personnel. I stayed there for three years, at the end of which period I was given an invitation to come to England, which I accepted, and so the way was made for me to come to this island.

From Austria to London

Whilst in Austria I did not settle as I could not find any acceptable company of the Lord's people. I used to go to a place where the minister one Sabbath preached the Gospel as we know it, but the next preached freewill and man's good works. Having several discussions with him I was told that if he preached what I wanted to hear he would soon not have any congregation. This, of course, was plain from the beginning - he courted the smiles of men and we could not walk together. However,

when leaving Austria he gave me an address for Gower Street Chapel, and this was where I would have gone but for the Lord's direction.

Having arrived in London I was brought to the flat which the friends of my brother had prepared for me, and was left with the caretaker of the house to help me in my difficulties and to show me around the surrounding area. Duly the next day, which was Saturday, I was taken to the butcher, the baker, the grocer, and we finished in Portobello Road market for greengrocery and other goods.

Having bought our provisions we left the crowd and turned into a side street. Suddenly my companion, the caretaker of the house where my flat was, stopped, and I began to look around. We had stopped just in front of an open door, and I could read the inscription: 'Beulah, Strict Baptist Chapel.' Having beforehand asked him the way to Gower Street, now in my broken English I asked: "And what is this?" He shrugged his shoulders and told me that only a few old people went there; he did not know anything about them. But then, he did not know anything about Gower Street either. I thought, 'Well, as the other was in the city, and I should have to go by bus and underground, I had better find out first where the Chapel was, and not get lost in a great place like London.'

Attends Beulah chapel

After much exercise of mind I decided to go to 'Beulah.' My first day there proved to be the last day that Mr Bradbury preached, in the evening only. The morning service was a reading one, but I did not understand, neither could I understand what our deacon said: and we no doubt talked at cross purposes. I cannot recollect much of the services and have only a faint recollection of Mr Bradbury's face; but, nevertheless, there was something for me.

After the service Mr Thomas Attewell, the elder deacon, came to me, shook my hand, and said: "We believe in Sovereign Grace. Goodnight." I knew what 'believe' meant, I knew 'Sovereign' was something to do with the king, but the equivalent of 'Grace' in Czechoslovakian I did not know, but it was only one word, so I hastened to my flat and searched in the dictionary, 'Grace' - yes, and that was what I wanted. When I recalled this two years later on joining the Church at 'Beulah,' our dear old friend, with tears streaming down his

cheeks, said to me: “I remember that well, for I have seen people come in and then have seen them no more. I thought I would tell you straight, you might just as well know.”

Leaves London for Manchester

After about eighteen months in London I went to Manchester to get some English qualifications. Manchester was the only place open to me. I did not want to go there, but I had to, for it was there that I received, I trust, some further teaching and instruction in the way.

Whilst in London I began to be exercised concerning joining the little Church at ‘Beulah’ but with the uncertainty of my present circumstances I wondered whether it would be right and wanted the Lord to confirm it. This, however, did not come until in Manchester, at the baptismal service of one who later became my wife. The text was: “If thou know not, O thou fairest among women, go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock, and feed thy kids beside the shepherds tents” (S. of S. 1. 8). The minister was led into my exercises and I felt it was right for me to join the Lord’s people, not only in public worship, but to be one with them.



Mr. And Mrs. J. G. Pavlik

But now the question was raised - was it to be ‘Beulah’ or Manchester? After several months even this, by the Lord’s appointment, was solved for me, as a minister, quoting from Isaiah, was led to say: “Thy land shall be Beulah.” After a pause he added: “And when the Lord says it shall be Beulah it shall be Beulah.” Thus I felt the way clear for joining the Lord’s people there in Church fellowship.

To be continued

(We thank one of our readers for confirming that Mr. Pavlik’s DOB was June 27th, 1919. This she found from an entry in her diary noting that it was Mr. Pavlik’s 70th birthday.)

Answers to changes in the AV, Luke 1. 38-48 (see page 8)

<i>vv 1611</i>	<i>Today</i>	<i>vv 1611</i>	<i>Today</i>
38 Marie	Mary	43 mee	me
38 handmaide	handmaid	<i>(But 'me' in same verse)</i>	
38 vnto	unto	44 For loe	For, lo
38 Angel	angel	44 assoone	as soon
39 dayes	days	44 eares	ears
39 countrey	country	44 ioy	joy
39 citie	city	45 beleueed	believed
39 Iuda	Judah	45 shalbe	shall be
40 Elizabeth	Elisabeth	45 things,	things
41 passe that	pass, that,	46 soule	soul
41 wombe,	womb;	46 magnifie	magnify
41 holy Ghost	Holy Ghost	47 reioyced	rejoiced
42 voyce	voice	47 sauour	Saviour
<i>(but voice in v44)</i>		48 hee	he
42 saide	said	48 for behold	for, behold
42 fruite	fruit		

“BAPTIZE”

Those of us who have ever learnt a foreign language will know the difficulties sometimes in understanding the true meaning of a word. Sometimes there are subtle shades of meaning which, although quite apparent to the native speaker, can be lost in translation.

The word “baptize” is not an English word at all – it is taken straight from the Greek. Some years ago in Israel we spoke to an old Greek priest. Above his head hung a painting of John the Baptist baptizing the Lord Jesus Christ. The picture depicted that this was being done by sprinkling. However, we ventured to ask the old priest, “Can you tell us, what is the *real* meaning of the word baptize?” Without hesitation he said, “To dip under water.” Since that time we have felt how unwise it is for people with no knowledge of the original languages of Hebrew and Greek to tell us that certain words in the Bible really mean this or that. We need to go back to a native speaker or scholar.

BISHOP THOMAS KEN
Bishop of Bath & Wells 1685-1691

*“Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
 Praise Him all creatures here below;
 Praise Him above, ye heavenly host;
 Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.”*

How often we sing these lines, but do we ever think of the man who wrote them?



Bishop Thomas Ken

Thomas Ken was appointed Bishop of Bath & Wells in 1685. Before this he lived in Holland as Chaplain to Princess Mary, the eldest daughter of King Charles I and his queen, Henrietta Maria. (Princess Mary had married William, the son of the Prince of Orange.) Upon his return, Ken's appointment as Bishop was made by King Charles II.

The appointment came about in a strange way. The King had a mistress, Nell Gwyn, and for convenience wished to lodge her in the chaplain's residence. Thomas Ken sent the king a sharp refusal. "It is not suitable," said Thomas, "that the Royal *Chaplain* should double as the Royal *Pimp*." Charles admired his honesty and bluntness, and when the bishopric of Bath and Wells became available soon after, the King declared, "None shall have it but *that little man* who refused lodging to my poor Nellie!" In 1685, the first year of his appointment as Bishop, a great battle took place in Somerset. This was the Battle of Sedgemoor. James (Duke of Monmouth), an illegitimate son of Charles II, led an army of mainly poor farmers and peasants against the royal army of James II.



Wells Cathedral

The Pitchfork Rebellion as it became known, was soon defeated. The infamous Judge Jefferies presided over the trials of the rebels. So ferocious were his punishments the court became known as the *Bloody Assize*. Bishop Ken's concern and care for the rebels made him a loved and popular Bishop.

Although a popular Bishop it did not save him from trouble. The next king, James II, converted to Roman Catholicism. It was feared the king would appoint large numbers of Roman Catholics to positions of power. James issued a decree known as the Declaration of Indulgence,



Bishop Ken's walk, where he composed many of his hymns

which decreed that various public offices, formerly open only to Anglicans, should thereafter be open to all persons. Thomas Ken refused to accept the decree. By the King's command, with six others, he was imprisoned in the Tower of London.

Soon after, Parliament offered the crown to William and Mary. Thomas Ken refused to swear an oath of allegiance to the new king and queen. He was therefore put out of his office of Bishop. The rest of his life he lived in retirement. He died on 19 March 1711.

The well-known doxology forms the last verse of "Awake, my soul, and with the sun," and, "Glory to Thee, my God, this night," hymns written for evening and morning worship at Winchester College when he was teaching there.

Here is verse 3 of his evening hymn (often sung to Tallis' Canon):

Teach me to live, that I may dread
The grave as little as my bed;
Teach me to die, that so I may
Rise glorious at the awful day.

SINGING THE PRAISES OF GOD

“He justly claims a song from me.”

Remarks made by Mr. J. Sperling-Tyler in the course of a sermon preached from Psalm 46 at Bethersden Anniversary Services on 7 June 1967.

One of the great parts of divine worship is that wherein you may join with glorified saints and angels. And what is it? *It is singing the praises of God.* And so we have a beautiful word in one of our hymns:

To make his saints his glory view
And sing their cares away,
The Lord will make his goodness pass
Before them in the way.

I would point to the case of Paul and Silas in the prison in a very suffering condition - at midnight they prayed and *sang praises to God*. They were so in the enjoyment of the love of Christ that this eclipsed all suffering and distress and it seemed as though they sang their cares away.

Well, that is just a little observation I felt tonight. But I tell you why. Do not take me wrongly because I know that temperament goes a long way. But there are some of our people, and this is not common just to our people, it doesn't matter when you meet them, they are always so morbid and miserable. And there is something that very much troubles me from the pulpit, and I will tell you what it is. There are some people never open their mouth in a note of praise. NEVER OPEN THEIR MOUTH. They stand up, and their lips are buttoned together. Almost as if they are sewn up. And they can make all sorts of excuses.

But my friends, it doesn't carry with me, and I am sure it does not carry with God. To me, it's a very sad thing for one who professes the Lord's name to never make the slightest attempt to sing a note of praise. They could say, “Well, I'm doing it in my heart.” Well, I hope they are, and I am not the judge and I am not cynical, but this is something I don't know how to see. They constantly, consecutively, always, never, make the slightest attempt to sing.

Well, I can tell you one other thing before I come to the general

canvas of this Psalm and that is, singing the praises of God is not something that is exclusive to deliverance. We are to sing his high praises in trouble, in sorrow, in joy, through all the changing scenes of life. There is always something for a child of God to praise God for, even for the very being of God. The adoration of His Being. If you know the adoration of His Being, you will praise Him.



Mr. J. Sperling-Tyler (left) with his father

the one in London. And I can look back, and remember in my childhood and teens, and later, her being in such distress, and she *ceased to sing*. The pain and trouble that she was in made her feel that she could not sing. But the Lord altered it, and brought her out of that snare. I believe it *was* a snare. And He did it by applying these words to her: “He *justly* claims a song from me; His loving-kindness, O how free!” And she started to sing again. She knew that it was right that she should start.

Now I am going to pass this on to you. You may be in trouble, but don’t you stop trying to sing the praises of God. God is good to you - you have got many mercies, you have got far more favours and blessings than you have troubles. ***So don’t you stop singing.*** The Lord help you to praise Him. So as Luther sang in trouble this psalm, the Lord favour us to sing too.

Well, I had not thought to say that, but I must say it. It is incumbent on me to say it. I might give you just this *g r a p h i c a l* illustration, relating to my dear old grandmother, who has long since been safely gathered to glory - that is on my mother’s side, not

MATTERS OF CONSCIENCE

G. D. Buss

One of the challenges facing young people as they go into the world in which we live is that they will be continually confronted with matters of conscience. Modern society has no fixed rules of behaviour, long ago having discarded the Bible as the true guide in all matters. For young believers this can be very challenging but consider the following questions put by a gracious man on this very point.

“Is it right or wrong for the Christian to do this or that - to go here or there? If in doubt see what God says. Answer the following questions: Is it of the world? (1 John 2. 15). Is it to the glory of God? (1 Corinthians 10. 31). Can you ask God’s blessing on it? (Philippians 4. 8). Is it a stumbling block to others? (Romans 14. 13). Does it have an appearance of evil? (1 Thessalonians 5. 22). Is it a weight? (Hebrews 12. 1). Is it honouring to Christ’s name? (Colossians 3. 17).” *E. MacLelland*

In a past generation, there was a young minister who thought that to be able to attract others into his congregation he should be seen to be more outgoing and mingle with unbelievers in the hope they might be attracted to his church. Accordingly he made it a practice to visit the cinema on a Saturday evening. His godly mother lived with him and often remonstrated with him about this dangerous path. Eventually, after much persuasion, on Saturday evening he got her to accompany him. With a heavy heart and a guilty conscience the aged mother made her way into the cinema, a place she had never frequented in all her long life. Sitting down by her son, she bowed her head, to seek the Lord’s blessing on the evening. “Oh, Mother!” exclaimed the son, “We do not do that in here.” With that the godly mother got up with the words, “Then I can in no wise stay in any place where I am not allowed to ask God’s blessing.” We would hope her son felt some lasting rebuke in his own conscience as he saw her make her way out of the den of iniquity.

Such cases are clear cut and the words of Paul in 2 Corinthians 6. 17-18 leave us in no doubt: “Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean *thing*; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.” The power for us to leave

these paths lies not in ourselves but in the Lord Almighty.

Other paths at first sight may not seem to be so clear cut. Take for example, the case, of a close friend or relative, or a work colleague who may have passed away and the funeral service is to be a cremation. How should we handle such sensitive issues? On the one hand the practice of cremation is undoubtedly pagan in its origin and its popularity owes much to the secular and humanist nature of present day society. Christians rightly believe that the example set by our Lord in being buried is that which should be followed in this matter, and that cremation has no Scriptural authority and should be abhorred and avoided. On the other hand the word of God exhorts us to be courteous and thus to coldly disassociate ourselves from the mourners altogether could bring reproach on the name of Christ in another way, just as our very presence at a crematorium, could also do in the light of the Scriptures above.

If there is a church service and then a journey to a crematorium, then it may seem right to some to attend the first service but certainly not the second. Often these days, committals and cremations take place before a church service leaving the option to meet the mourners at the church rather than the crematorium. If the entire service is at the crematorium then it is most consistent to absent oneself completely, explaining the matter of conscience to those involved, but perhaps to take the opportunity to meet the relatives as they may gather afterwards as is the usual custom.

The case of Lord Macleod, the Lord Chancellor, was very prominent when he attended the funeral service of a colleague in a Roman Catholic Church, where part of the service was the blasphemous celebration of the so-called mass. His loyalties were understandably divided but the decision he took to attend caused great offence to his own denomination, the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland. He may have taken the account of Naaman in the house of Rimmon as an example but certainly his attendance was a great stumbling block to many of the godly.

Asaph was kept from a wrong path by this very principle, that his actions would offend the generation of God's children, which he said was 'too painful for him.' We must be careful lest we are seeking to

avoid the offence of the cross, yet on the other hand we should seek not to cause needless offence. The wise man, Solomon, tells us that “he that handleth a matter wisely shall find good” (Proverbs 16. 20).

Other instances of conscience which may well be faced could be if a woman vicar, or a person in a single-sex relationship officiated at a religious wedding service, or if you are asked to go to a works’ dinner/dance. In each case, as in the previous examples, there are clear principles of separation from the world to be followed, at whatever the cost. Some may feel it right to go to a works’ dinner, but no sober believer should countenance taking part in a dance or being present at one. In our view the safest course is to avoid the function altogether.

With regard to wedding services, it would be wrong to countenance an unscriptural ministry whatever reproach this may bring upon us. It is incumbent courteously to explain to those who have invited you, why, in the light of Scripture, you are unable to be present at that part of the celebrations which is clearly contrary to the revealed mind of God. Who knows, you might be an instrument in the Lord’s hands to cause others to reflect on their ways. We must, however, seek to be preserved from a Pharisaical spirit, which gives the impression that we are holier than others. It is the honour and glory of God that we are defending.

We are thrown back to the questions asked at the beginning of our article. Let conscience speak in each matter, and if it is void of offence before God, then you will know the path to take. “Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God. Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth” (Romans 14. 22).

THE LIVERPOOL CARE PATHWAY

Euthanasia by the back door, or palliative care excellence?

Dr. Timothy J. Ramsbottom

The Liverpool Care Pathway (LCP) has caused fierce controversy in the national media in recent months. It has been promoted enthusiastically by the Department of Health and backed by many influential bodies such as NICE (National Institute for Health and Care Excellence), as the gold standard for end-of-life care. Audits show that

29% of patients dying in NHS hospitals die on the LCP. While initial reception was positive, the pathway has been heavily criticized in the media in 2009 and 2012 and presented as a way prematurely to kill senior citizens who are blocking NHS beds and whose care is costing too much money.

Believing the Holy Scriptures to teach the sanctity of life, such reports cause God's people alarm.

A. What is the Liverpool Care Pathway?

It was developed by the Royal Liverpool University Hospital and Liverpool's Marie Curie Hospice in the late 1990s for the care of terminally ill cancer patients. It was motivated by the poor care dying cancer patients often received in busy NHS hospitals - sometimes neglected in a side room with poor symptom control, or at other times inappropriately treated and investigated - causing needless distress when there were only a few hours left to live.

Since then it has been rolled out to patients dying from any condition, not just cancer.

The LCP encourages professionals to consider the needs both current and anticipated, of patients and their families, and guides them through the key areas of assessment and provision of care. As well as twelve goals covering an initial assessment and after-death care, it entails frequent assessments in which patients are checked every four hours to ensure comfort. The pathway suggests provision of treatments to manage pain, agitation, respiratory tract secretions, nausea and vomiting, or shortness of breath that the patient may experience. It also explicitly encourages provision for spiritual needs, though only according to the patient's beliefs and wishes.

B. Why is it controversial?

There have arisen several criticisms of the LCP:

1. Patients inappropriately entered on to the LCP, when uncertainty exists that they are truly dying.

There have been many examples reported in the media of patients entered onto the LCP, whose relatives have successfully fought to take them off it, and the patient has rallied and lived a few more weeks or, in one case, going home for a further 14 months.

The LCP protocol states that patients should be entered into the LCP when judged to be in “*the last hours or days of life.*” Herein is a key problem with using the LCP in a widespread way on general wards - the fact that predicting death is unreliable and uncertain, especially in the non-cancer diagnoses that the LCP is now routinely used for. Furthermore, evidence exists that doctors overestimate their ability to predict when death will occur. Hence patients whose death has been erroneously predicted may be inappropriately entered into a programme, which precludes active treatment aimed at prolonging life.

This is a serious concern. The LCP correctly applied to someone who is genuinely in the last few hours of dying, does not hasten death. But if applied to someone who perhaps would otherwise naturally die in a few weeks time, it does hasten the end, which, as will be shown later, is wrong in the sight of God.

2. Patients started on the LCP without their consent or discussion with the next of kin.

While the LCP protocol is explicit that the decision to enter a patient on the pathway should only be taken by a senior doctor and after discussion with the patient (assuming the patient is in a condition to understand the situation), in practice this is often not happening. Also, a Royal College of Physicians’ study showed in up to 50% of cases the relatives were not informed.

3. Inappropriate sedation

Clearly it is only right to sedate a patient if they are very distressed, but to deprive them of consciousness routinely would be abhorrent, especially as it takes away the opportunity to hear Scripture read, to pray for forgiveness and to prepare for death, or, indeed, to say farewell to relatives. 37% of patients on the LCP are sedated, though how many of these are sedated inappropriately is uncertain.

4. Lack of hydration

It is true that, when dying, patients naturally do not eat or drink nearly as much as usual. Furthermore, to inappropriately give intravenous fluids can cause harm. In fairness, the LCP does not enforce withdrawal of intravenous fluids or artificial nutrition, and emphasises that the decision needs to be made on a case by case basis. However, a

national audit found that intravenous fluids were continued in only 16% of patients started on the LCP, and anecdotally relatives regularly complain that their loved ones suffered dehydration. So in everyday practice it would seem the balance may be wrong and harm being done.

5. The financial inducement of NHS Trusts to use the LCP

In 2012, it was revealed that just over half of the total of NHS Trusts have received or are due to receive financial rewards to hit targets associated with the use of the care pathway. This causes great suspicion that the LCP could be abused by cash-strapped Trusts anxious for financial gain. While there is no evidence this has been the case, clearly the risk is real.

C. “What saith the scripture?”

The Word of God obviously does not mention the LCP, but it does teach some fundamental truths and principals which can be applied.

1. Sanctity of life

The Bible teaches the sanctity of life. Because we are created in the image of God, and given the gift of life, Christians believe that we do not have a right to interfere with when life ends. This is what sanctity of life means. *“So God created man in His own image” Genesis 1:27.*

2. Ten Commandments

The ten commandments are the law of God. The sixth clearly states: *“Thou shalt not kill” Exodus 20:13.* So any decision to enter a patient onto the LCP with a view to hastening their end, or for financial gain, would be in breach of this commandment.

3. The sovereignty of God

The Bible teaches we should submit to the sovereignty of God. God is King of kings and has a perfect right to govern our every circumstance - especially the time of our birth and death. We have no right to interfere with this. Any attempt to hasten the time of death by inappropriate use of the LCP would be wrong. *“A time to be born and a time to die” Ecclesiastes 3:2.*

4. Care and compassion

The whole life, example and teaching of the Lord Jesus was one of

caring and compassion. This should motivate and inform all attempts to care for people at the end of their lives. *“Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself” Matthew 22:39.*

D. Euthanasia by the back door or palliative care excellence?

If it could be certain that the LCP was applied to distressed patients who were beyond doubt in the last few hours of their lives and with no hope of any form of recovery, and that it would be used properly by skilled doctors and nurses, it would both provide palliative care excellence, and uphold the Scriptural principals listed above. This is because in such cases it provides a tool to relieve suffering without hastening death.

However, as the prediction of death is often uncertain, real concern exists as to the misapplication of the LCP to those who might otherwise have at least a few more weeks of life. This is compounded by evidence that the strict letter of the LCP is often deviated from on busy NHS wards, possibly with overuse of sedation and inappropriate withdrawal of hydration, thus hastening death. While there is no evidence that this is wilfully being done to provide euthanasia by the backdoor, the risk exists. Its use in practice in the modern NHS appears sometimes to fall short of Scriptural standards of sanctity and care. Thus the widespread promotion of the LCP in the general (that is, non-cancer) setting is a real cause for concern.

Editor: Following a report *More Care - Less Pathway* from a review panel set up under Baroness Neuberger, the Government has announced its intention to phase out the LCP over the next twelve months. Numerous examples of poor implementation and worrying standards in care were found. The LCP will be replaced with more individualised care packages. Target payments for the LCP have been withdrawn. It is significant that the Marie Curie Hospice was involved in drawing up the LCP, thus providing assurance that there was no intention of promoting ‘euthanasia by the back door,’ although as Dr. Ramsbottom points out, the risk exists.

Would any of our nurses care to respond from a Christian nurse’s perspective?

Some verses from Harvest Hymns

To love my sins, a saint to appear,
To grow with wheat, and be a tare,
May serve me while on earth below,
Where tares and wheat together grow;
But soon the reaping time will come,
And angels shout the Harvest Home.

Mr. F. C. P. Pearce (composer of several tunes in The Companion Tune Book) sung this verse in Sunday School as a young man. He wrote: "It went straight to my conscience and showed me that no matter what I professed I had never had a real change of heart."

For the Lord our God shall come,
And shall take His harvest home;
From His field shall in that day
All offences purge away;
Give His angels charge at last
In the fire the tares to cast;
But the fruitful ears to store
In His garner evermore.

This third verse from "Come, ye thankful people, come," possibly the best known of all Victorian harvest hymns, was written by Henry Alford, Dean of Canterbury. It is said he wrote Latin odes and a history of the Jews before he was ten! The hymn is normally sung to the tune "St. George."

Early settlers took the harvest thanksgiving to North America. After their first harvest in 1621, the Pilgrim Fathers held at the Plymouth Plantation a three-day period of thanksgiving, attended by 53 Pilgrims and 90 Native Americans. This became known as "The First Thanksgiving." It is believed it took place in mid-October.

PERCEPTION

A Quarterly Magazine for Young People



Thou hast set all the borders of the earth:
thou hast made summer and winter.
Psalm 74.17

WINTER 2013

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Cover picture: Rothamsted Park, Hertfordshire in Winter.

PERCEPTION

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EDITORIAL

*“Tekel; Thou art weighed in the balances,
and art found wanting” Daniel 5.27.*

It is not unusual at this time of year to find a notice at the entrance of a shop or business premises: “CLOSED FOR STOCKTAKING.” This necessary procedure takes place at the end of each year in order that proper accounts can be prepared. Accounts are necessary to show how well, or how badly, the business has done. Every business has to “balance the books” if it is to survive.

When we were working in a bank in the 1960s, before the days of computers, the last day of the year was known as *Balance Day*. In those days most banks kept a large, often leather-bound, General Ledger. It was the responsibility of the bank’s Chief Clerk throughout the year to enter into the ledger a summary of each day’s deposits and each day’s withdrawals. At the close of business on 31 December everything had to balance. How glad we were to hear the triumphal cry throughout the building, “We’ve balanced!” If the General Ledger did *not* balance, then might follow days or even weeks of investigation. Balance Day usually meant a late night - for which we were paid the princely sum of £1 extra!

Of course, accountants work on the principle of ‘double entry.’ For every credit there must be a corresponding debit. Done correctly, it is impossible that the books will not balance. Sadly, mistakes happen.

For most businesses there is another very important matter to be attended to. At the end of the year, the business’s debtors must be calculated, that is, all the money owed to the business which has not been received. Similarly, the business’s creditors must also be calculated, that is, all the money the business owes but which it has not yet paid.

It is a good principle always to pay our debts as quickly as we can. The Apostle Paul says, "Owe no man any thing." But there is one debt owed which no man can ever pay. That is the debt of sin. But for the Lord's people, the debt they owe has been paid for ever. We read that the Lord Jesus, "took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross."

Perhaps it will help us to understand if we think of a pair of old fashioned scales (or balances), similar to the one shown in the picture.



On one side of the scales are found our sins (remember - "Sins immense as is the sea" - hymn 802). The other side of the scales is empty - completely empty - for try as we may, we have nothing of our own we can put into it. ("Nothing in my hand I bring.") So if the scales are to balance, everything needed must come from another Source outside of

ourselves. Nothing less than the blood and righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ can ever balance the scales.

Perhaps we may think that the text at the top is rather a gloomy one for the end of the year. Well, when we come to die it will be true of all of us unless each side of the balances is equal. The hymn-tune writer, Mr. F. C. P. Pearce, in his diary put it like this: "I am a sinner that deserves nothing but hell. 'O to grace how great a debtor' - and I still keep on increasing the debt; never shall pay it. How I hope that the Lord Jesus Christ has."

So as we come to the end of the year, and ponder the coming of the Saviour, may His blessed Name, JESUS, be more precious to us than ever before. "For He shall save His people from their sins."

We sincerely wish all our readers the Lord's blessing as one year draws to a close and we embark on a new year. What better text could we have for 2014 than Psalm 37.5: "Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in Him; and He shall bring it to pass."

WILLIAM TIPTAFT'S CHRISTMAS DAY SERMON IN ABINGDON GREAT CHURCH, DECEMBER 25th, 1829

It had been for many years the custom for a sermon to be preached in St. Helen's, commonly called from its size, "The Great Church at Abingdon," on the evening of Christmas day, before the mayor and corporation; and as a large congregation was usually assembled, some preacher was generally chosen who it was thought could suitably address them. William Tiptaft, the newly-appointed vicar of Sutton Courtney, was appointed to preach it. Boldness and faithfulness were his marked characteristics as a preacher; but at that time these features in his character were not much known beyond the circle of his hearers at Sutton.

Nothing daunted by the presence of the vicar of the parish, most of the clergy of the town, and the mayor and corporation in all the dignity of mace and robes, he got into the pulpit after the vicar (a man much opposed to the truth) had read the prayers. To a crowded congregation in one of the largest parish churches in England he delivered in his clear, loud, and ringing voice, the now well-known sermon from Matthew 1. 21. Never, perhaps, did a sermon commence with a more striking opening. "*I stand before you this evening either as a servant of Christ, or as a servant of the devil.*" Its effect was electric, and many remembered the sensation it produced on the congregation, especially the clerical and worldly part of it. (From William Tiptaft by J. C. Philpot, published by Gospel Standard Trust Publications.)

TEXT: "*She shall bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call His name JESUS: for He shall save His people from their sins*" Matthew 1. 21.

I stand before you this evening either as a servant of Christ or as a servant of the devil. I must be one or the other, for he that is not with Christ is against Him (Mat. 12. 30); and, "Woe is unto me, if I preach not the Gospel!" (1 Cor. 9. 16). Paul says: "Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed" (Gal. 1. 8). Now if I preach not the Gospel which Paul preached, a curse hangs over my head. I am sure everyone present, whose heart is not as hard as stone, will tremble to

think in what an awful situation we ministers are placed. Isaiah says: “To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them”, and we are commanded not to add to, nor to diminish anything from, the Word of God (Deut. 4. 2).

We, then, as the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God, must be faithful. I call upon you all this evening to compare with the Word of God whatever I may say. I beseech you to do it; and I will be careful to advance nothing but what I fully believe, and can clearly prove to be according to the Word of God, which all who have been taught of God will acknowledge and confess.

Before I proceed further I earnestly entreat all present who have faith in Christ to lift up their hearts to God, to ask His blessing upon the



St. Helen's Church, Abingdon

truths about to be declared, that many who are dead in trespasses and sins may be aroused, awakened, and converted; that the feeble-minded may be comforted; that the wavering may be established; that those that are “strong in the Lord” may have their faith strengthened; and that the Spirit of truth

may powerfully bear testimony to my discourse.

Our minds are lost in wonder and admiration when we consider that Jesus Christ should come to sojourn in this world, that He should be born of a virgin, should take upon Himself the form of a servant, be so despised and rejected of men as not to have a place to lay His head, and at last suffer a most ignominious death upon the cross. “Great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh.” That He should come in the manner that He did was clearly foretold by the prophets a great many years before, and has been evidently fulfilled; as Isaiah says, “Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel” (Isa. 7. 14); and, at the time appointed, a virgin, having conceived by the Holy Ghost brought forth a Son, and they called “His name JESUS: for He shall save His people from their sins.”

Let us, in the first place, inquire who are meant by His people that He will save; and, secondly, how they are saved from their sins. But before I say more on this important subject, I beg to remind you that except you receive the kingdom of God as a little child, you shall not enter therein (Mark 10. 15). If you understand this text of Scripture, you will know that as long as you bring your carnal reason and human learning to judge of spiritual things, they will profit you nothing. Except the Lord give you a teachable and childlike spirit, the preaching of the cross must be foolishness to you; for “the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him.”

No man can learn and know the spiritual meaning of the Bible to the saving of his soul, except he be taught of God. This “offensive” truth Christ told the Jews; but whenever He said anything which He knew would hurt the pride of their hearts, He used to say: “It is written in the law, or in the prophets;” then they were not able to answer Him a word, for they professed to believe them; as He said in this instance: “It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God.” We ministers adopt the same most excellent plan, for when we advance truths which excite the enmity of carnal minds, we appeal to the Bible for the truth of what we say; and as you profess to believe it, you must justify us.

We are first to inquire who are “His people” that He will save. By nature we all imagine that Christ died for everyone in the world, but He died only for those whom God chose in Him before the foundation of the world. But we must know that what God teaches by His Holy Spirit is true doctrine, and not what man thinks. The Word of God is our standard and our guide, and whoever speaks not according to that Word, believe him not, for there is no light in him. Now Isaiah, where he is speaking so plainly of Christ, said: “He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied: by His knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; . . . and He bare the sin of many.” (Isa. 53. 11, 12). The prophet, therefore, very clearly shows that Christ came to save a peculiar people; for Christ says, “I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep” (John 10. 11).

The above is the beginning only of Mr. Tiptaft’s long sermon.

THE MOON

PART 2 - ITS ROTATION IN RELATION TO THE EARTH

Andrew Rayner

Having considered in the last article the notable point about the size of the Moon when compared to the Sun, there is something still more remarkable. Whenever you look at the Moon, at whatever time of year, its surface always appears the same. The craters and features are always in the same position. Most people realise this but how many people think how it can possibly be so?

We know that the Moon rotates on its own axis as does the Earth; the Moon orbits the Earth every 29½ days and the Earth, along with the Moon, orbits the Sun every 365 days. Notwithstanding this, the



same face of the Moon is always pointing towards the Earth, not just at full moons when we see it most clearly, but at all times. This means that the Moon must be rotating on its own axis precisely once every time it orbits the Earth. It also means that man has never seen the back face of the Moon except from spacecraft. It does not, however, mean that the concealed face is always dark,

indeed it is not, because, as the Moon orbits the Sun, its various aspects receive the light, including the side facing away from the Earth, hence we see new and full moons.

How can it be that the Moon's orbit on its own axis is so intimately linked to its entirely separate orbit around the Earth? Surely this link cannot but fill us with wonder?

Everything in our world and in the Universe has been created by God to operate according to an order, and this order can, and has, in part, been set down in laws of physics and nature. And so there must be a natural explanation to this question, although it makes the point no less remarkable. Two explanations are given: one is that the Moon is tidally locked to the Earth as a result of the tidal deformations of the

Earth; the other is that the mass of Moon is not perfectly balanced, the near side having a slightly greater mass which adds to its gravitational attraction to the Earth. The strong gravitational force which the Earth exerts on the Moon pulls slightly more on the side with the greater mass and so always keeping the same face pointing towards itself.

Interestingly, the Moon's orbit on its axis is not totally smooth, even though it always rotates once for each orbit around the Earth. Its rotation is somewhat 'wobbly', so much so that we see as much as 70% of its surface from the Earth rather than 50% during a cycle as would be expected.

What a wonder of balance is involved! Such huge objects are so finely balanced in space and so intimately linked. If we think beyond the Moon, how is it that the Earth's orbit and the other planets' orbits remain so perfectly constant that we do not gradually drift nearer or further from the Sun? Add to this the movements of the other planets - a marvel of order and creation.

Can all this fine balance of great objects possibly be the result of a 'Big Bang' and countless coincidences and chances? And that is before you begin to consider the finer aspects of creation and life on Earth.

SOME PRINCIPLES OF CHRISTIAN GIVING

G. D. Buss

Throughout Scripture, from the book of Genesis onwards, it has been a principle that those who fear God, ought to be 'ready to distribute.' We have only to think of the generous way that Abraham treated Lot in giving him the first choice of land to settle in, as an early example of those who found it no hardship to put the needs of others first. As Paul says in Philippians 2, "Let every man look on the things of others and not on his own things." "For even Christ pleased not Himself" (Romans 15. 3).

Jacob at Bethel was so overwhelmed with the unexpected and undeserved goodness and mercy of God toward him that he vowed to give one tenth of all that he possessed to the Lord. In this he followed Abraham who gave tithes (which means one tenth) of all he possessed

to Melchisedec, and would take nothing of the heathen kings. Yet Abraham generously said that the young men should be rewarded.

In the New Testament, however, there is no specific commandment to tithe, as there was in the Levitical Law, although many Christian people do tithe, not out of duty, but out of love to God. The widow woman of Zarephath showed one of the greatest acts of charity in the Old Testament, when she was constrained to give her last meal to the Lord's servant Elijah. Another principle of Old Testament giving was the way in which David insisted on paying for the threshing floor of Araunah, saying that he "would not give to God that which cost him nothing." In this he emphasised that giving should be 'sacrificial.' One man even went so far as to say that we should give until it hurts! William Tiptaft was a man of this calibre, who repeatedly gave until he had nothing for himself, and yet he never lacked!

In the New Testament there are principles of Christian giving which the gospel rule sets clearly before believers.

Firstly, we are to give *cheerfully* and not grudgingly. If our *heart* is not in our giving, then it is not an acceptable sacrifice in God's sight. "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver" (2 Corinthians 9. 7). "And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, ..., and have not charity it profiteth me nothing" (1 Corinthians 13. 3). In the days immediately following the outpouring of the gift of the Holy Ghost on the Day of Pentecost, such was the love of Christ in their hearts that the believers sold their possessions and had everything in common.

Secondly, we are to give *unreservedly*. The woman who cast her last two mites into the collection gave in this way. The Lord looked on how much was left after she had given. She had given her all whereas the rich had only given part of their substance. How different was the spirit of Ananias and Sapphira who kept back part of the price, in contrast to the widow! Their dishonesty before the Lord cost them their lives in judgment. It was not, however, so much that they only gave half to God's cause, but they pretended that they had given all. How God hates dissembling!

Thirdly we are to give *humbly*. "But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth" (Matthew 6. 3).

David's words in 1 Chronicles 29. 14, when the people had given willingly for the building of the Temple, are very apposite in this respect. "But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? for all these things come of Thee, and of Thine own have we given Thee." All the honour of giving belongs to the Lord who both constrains the heart and gives the ability to give aright.

Many years ago in the cause at Chippenham there was a need for a new heating system. The deacons after prayerfully considering the matter proposed that a special collection to meet this need would be held after the weeknight service. They did not tell the congregation what was needed but exhorted all to give prayerfully "every man according as he purposeth in his heart" (2 Corinthians 9. 7). They put the estimate on the front desk where none could see it. When they added the collection up they found it came to within a few pence of what was required.

The pre-eminent example in all this is that of the Lord Jesus Christ. As Paul says in Galatians 1. 4: "who gave Himself for our sins." "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down His life for His friends" (John 15. 13). The Lord Jesus willingly laid down the life which could not be taken from Him. He unreservedly in all humility gave His all, as Paul says: "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be made rich" (2 Corinthians 8. 9).

How those who have tasted that God is gracious should lay the words of the poet (Isaac Watts) to heart:

"Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small.
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all."

WILLIAM HUNTINGTON S.S.

This year marks the 200th Anniversary of the death of William Huntington. “This eminent minister of Christ, having faithfully served his generation for the space of 40 years, and lived to see his labours, both in preaching and writing, crowned with abundant success, at length entered into the joy of his Lord on 1st July 1813 in the 69th year of his age.” So reads the monument to his memory erected in Providence Chapel, London. He was buried in the graveyard of Jireh Chapel, Lewes. Mr. Huntington always appended to his name the initials S.S. - meaning Sinner Saved. He lived much of his early life in desperate poverty as can be seen from the following extract from his autobiography, *The Bank of Faith*.

Early married life

My dame and I now kept house at a very cheap rate - two shillings and sixpence per week carried us through tolerably well. As for the world’s dainties, we were satisfied without them; for we knew that the grace of



God had enabled us to choose that good part which shall never be taken from us; therefore patience had, in a manner, her perfect work.

We soon saved upwards of twenty shillings; with which, on the Saturday night, I set off to Kingston to get some of my clothes out of pawn, leaving money in the hands of my dame to get half a bushel of barley. It so happened that the apparel which I went to redeem came to so much, with the interest, that I had not any money left to bring

home. This was a great trial to us; because our poor little girl, who had been but lately weaned, had nothing to carry her through the week but bare barley cakes; and, though she would eat barley, yet I could not endure to see her live on that only.

Provision for the first day

On the Monday following I went heavily to work, and very much distressed to know how my poor little one was to live. I reflected with indignation on myself for parting with my money; thinking I had better have gone without any clothes, than have exposed my poor little one to want the necessaries of life. But, as I went over a bridge that led to my work, I cast my eye on the right hand side, and there lay a very large eel on the mud by the river side, apparently dead. I caught hold of it, and soon found it was only asleep. With difficulty I got it safe out of the mud upon the grass, and then carried it home. My little one was very fond of it, and it richly supplied all her wants that day. But at night I was informed the eel was all gone, so the next day afforded me the same distress and trouble as the preceding day had done.

Provision for the second day

When going to my work, cruelly reflecting on myself for parting with all my money, just as I entered the garden gates I saw a partridge lie dead on the walk. I took it up, and found it warm; so I carried it home, and it richly supplied the table of our little one that day. A few days after this my master told me he had found a partridge on the garden walk also, but that it stunk. I told him I had found one a little before that time. He said that two males had been fighting, and had killed each other, which was very common. But I was enabled to look higher.

Carnal reason always traces every thing from God to second causes, and there leaves them floating upon uncertainties; but faith traces them up to their first cause, and fixes them there; by which means God's hand is known, and Himself glorified. I believe this battle between the plumed warriors was proclaimed by the Lord: for, if a sparrow falls not to the ground without God's leave, (as the Scriptures declare), I can hardly think a partridge does.

Provision for the third day

The third day arrived, and I was still in the same case as before. As I went to my work I saw a bird's nest in one of the shrubs, which, upon examination, I found to be the nest of a large bird, with four young ones in it, just ready to fly. It was with much reluctance I stormed and plundered the little simple citadel - but necessity hath no law. Therefore

I was forced to rob the poor dam of her young, and leave her mourning and lamenting, while my young one lived upon hers. However, I found it was no sin in God's sight: "If a bird's nest chance to be before thee in the way in any tree, or on the ground, whether they be young ones or eggs, and the dam sitting upon the young or upon the eggs, thou shalt not take the dam with the young; but thou shalt in any wise let the dam go, and take the young to thee, that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest prolong thy days" Deut. 22. 6, 7.

Provision for the fourth day

These birds served for that day very well, but the next day found me still unprovided, as before, and brought forth fresh work for faith and prayer. However, the morrow still took thought for the things of itself: for, when I came to take the scythe in my hand to mow the short grass, I looked into the pond, and there I saw three very large carp lying on the water, apparently sick. When my master came to me I told him of it. He went and looked, and said they were dead; and told me I might have them, if I would, for they were not in season. However, they came in due season to me. And I found, morning after morning, there lay two or three of these fish at a time, dead, just as I wanted them; till I believe there was not one live fish remaining, six inches long in that pond, which was near three hundred feet in length.

My master told me he thought it was the heat of the sun that killed them; and I believe it was: but I knew that the sun and his heat were both from God: and that the sun shined in due season for me. And it much amazed me to see God so kind, even in temporal matters.

The Goodness of God!

I could not help weeping, and admiring the unmerited goodness of my God in suffering the eel to sleep till the hand of the necessitous had entangled him. And directing my eyes to the little lodgement of birds, when all other supplies seemed to be cut off. O the goodness of God to the children of men!

THE MARTYRDOM OF RAWLINS WHITE

From John Foxe's 'Book of Martyrs', a moving account of one thought of as simple, a fisherman, but strong in faith

Rawlins White was by his calling and occupation a fisherman, living and continuing in this trade for the space of twenty years at least in the town of Cardiff, being one of a very good name, and well accepted amongst his neighbours.

Though the good man was altogether unlearned, and withal very simple, yet it pleased God to remove him from error and idolatry to a knowledge of the truth, through the blessed Reformation in Edward's reign. He began to be a diligent hearer, and a great searcher out of the truth. He had a little boy which was his own son, which child he set to school to learn to read English. Now after the little boy could read pretty well, his father every night after supper, summer and winter, would have the boy read a piece of the Holy Scripture, and now and then of some other good book.

When he had continued in his profession the space of five years, King Edward died, upon whose decease Queen Mary succeeded, and



Cardiff Castle

with her all kind of superstition and Papistry crept in. Rawlins White was taken by the officers of the town, as a man suspected of heresy, brought before the Bishop of Llandaff that then was, the said bishop lying then at his house besides Chepstow. After divers combats and conflicts with the bishop and his chaplains,

Rawlins was committed to prison in Chepstow, and at last removed to the castle of Cardiff.

During this time, this reporter [*we presume Foxe means himself*] resorted to him very often, with money and other relief from this

reporter's mother, who was a great favourer of those that were in affliction in those days: which he received not without great thanks and praises given to the name of God.

Now when he had continued in Cardiff Castle by the space of one whole year, the aforementioned Bishop of Llandaff caused him to be brought to his own house besides Chepstow, and whilst he continued there, the Bishop assayed many ways how to reduce him to some conformity.

Now when the bishop had made an end of his long tale, this good father Rawlins spake very boldly to him, and said: "My lord, I thank God I am a christian man, and I hold no opinions contrary to the word of God, and if I do, I desire to be reformed out of the word of God, as a christian man ought to be."

But in the end, when Rawlins would in no wise recant his opinions, the bishop told him plainly that he must proceed against him by law, and condemn him as a heretic.

Before they proceeded to this extremity, the bishop proposed that prayer should be said for his conversion. "This," said White, "is like a godly bishop, and if your request be godly and right, and you pray as you ought, no doubt God will hear you; pray you, therefore, to your God, and I will pray to my God." After the bishop and his party had done praying, he asked Rawlins if he would now revoke. "You find," said Rawlins, "your prayer is not granted, for I remain the same; and God will strengthen me in support of this truth."

After this, the bishop tried what saying Mass would do; but Rawlins called all the people to witness that he did not bow down to the host. Mass being ended, Rawlins was called for again; to whom the bishop used many persuasions; but the blessed man continued so steadfast in his former profession that the bishop's discourse was to no purpose. The bishop now caused the definitive sentence to be read, which being ended, Rawlins was carried again to Cardiff, to a loathsome prison in the town, called Cockmarel, where he passed his time in prayer, and chiefly in singing of Psalms.

Now after he had thus continued as prisoner in Cockmarel Prison a good space, about three weeks before the day he suffered, the head officers of the town which had the charge of his execution, were determined to burn him, because they would be sooner rid of him. But

they had no deed of a writ of execution awarded, as by the law they should have. Whereupon one Henry Lewes, the recorder of the town, seeing that they went about to burn him without any warrant by writ, came to them, and told them, that if they did burn him before they had the writ, the wife of the said Rawlins would upon just cause by law, call their doings into question. Immediately upon this advertisement, they sent to London for the writ above named; upon the receipt whereof they made some speed to the execution of the said Rawlins.

Now when he perceived his time near, he sent forthwith to his wife, and willed that she send unto him his wedding garment, meaning a shirt, which afterward he was burned in. Which request of his, his wife with great sorrow and grief of heart did perform, and early in the morning did send it him, which he received most gladly and joyfully.

Now when the hour of his execution was come, this good and constant father Rawlins was brought out of prison, having on his body the long shirt, which (as you heard before) he called his wedding garment and an old russet coat which he was wont to wear. Thus being brought out of prison he was accompanied with a great company of guards; which sight, when he beheld, said “Alas, what meaneth all this? This is not needed. By God’s grace, I will not start away; but I with all my heart and mind give unto God most hearty thanks that he hath made me worthy to abide all this for his Holy Name’s sake.”

When he came to the place, where his poor wife and children stood weeping and making great lamentation, the sudden sight of them so pierced his heart, that the very tears trickled down his face. Being come to the altar of his sacrifice, (I mean the place appointed for his death,) he found there a stake ready set up, with some wood toward the making of the fire. In going toward the stake, he fell down upon his knees, and kissed the ground; and in rising again, a little earth sticking on his face, he said these words. “Earth unto earth, and dust unto dust; thou art my mother, and unto thee I shall return.”

Standing with his back close unto the stake, a smith came with a great chain of iron, whom when he saw, he cast up his hand with a loud voice and gave God great thanks. Then the smith cast the chain



Rawlins White embraces the stake

about him and as he was making it fast on the other side, Rawlins said unto him, "I pray you, good friend, knock in the chain fast for it may be that the flesh would strive mightily; but God, of thy great mercy, give me strength and patience to abide the extremity.

When all things were ready, directly over against the stake, there was a stand erected, whereon stepped up a priest, addressing himself to the people, but, as he spoke of the Romish doctrines of the Sacraments, Rawlins cried out, "Ah! thou wicked hypocrite, dost thou presume to prove thy false doctrine by Scripture? Did not Christ say, 'Do this in remembrance of me?'"

After which words he held his peace.

Then some that stood by cried out, "Put fire! set on fire!" This being done, the straw and reeds cast up a great and sudden flame. In which flame this good man bathed his hands so long saving that once he did, as it were, wipe his face with one of them. All this while, which was somewhat long, he cried with a loud voice, "O Lord, receive my spirit!" until he could not open his mouth. At last the extremity of the fire was so vehement against his legs that they were consumed almost before the rest of his body was hurt, which made the whole body fall over the chains into the fire sooner than it would have done.

Thus died this good old man for his testimony of God's truth, and is now rewarded, no doubt, with the crown of eternal life.

THE LIFE OF MR. J. G. PAVLIK
Spiritual Exercises and the Ministry
(Concluded from Autumn 2013, page 19)

Early exercises

Going back over my spiritual experience, my exercises concerning the ministry began early when I was still in Southern Bohemia. After returning from Prague, from the clinic, the Lord had granted me a rather remarkable and quick recovery. In the first love and enjoyment of the Lord's mercy and His presence in my soul I felt constrained to join the little Church at Pisek, and there I often felt the Lord speaking to me through the preaching of His Gospel. The times of espousals were very sweet and I had many a sip from Bethlehem's well to refresh my soul.

One particular occasion when my soul was favoured was when imbibing the preaching on Isaiah 6, verses 5-8. How I enjoyed the minister tracing out the path and experience which I had recently been brought through! But alas, whilst I rejoiced at the first, I trembled at the closing remarks, in which it was so solemnly stressed: "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" I then realized that I was not fit for anything of this nature and was much troubled because I found in my soul a solemn perplexity arising from not only my felt weakness of soul, but also of mind as my heart was still attached to the things of time and sense, and my own family.

Church elders enquire

This was not just a passing impression. The words stayed with me and I was much disturbed, especially when the elders of the Church enquired whether I had felt any exercise concerning the ministry. I tried to deny this. I must confess that I had put this exercise off as much as I could and hoped that it would pass away. I thought this was the time for me to decide what further steps to take in my life, and, desiring to please my parents, I chose to go for training in medicine, hoping that in such a way I might do more for the poor and needy of the Church than if I became a preacher of the Word. However, the Lord blasted my gourd, my studies being interrupted by the war.

Several years passed and whilst I cannot say that I was completely free from exercise, I was content to be a hearer of the Word

only. With the end of the war, my exercise concerning the ministry was renewed. Still my heart was hardened and I felt I could not go. Having been brought out from my country and arriving in these islands I said in my heart: "Here I am a stranger and no-one will say to me, 'You must go and preach the Gospel'." Little did I know the Lord had His own purposes and that Word in Isaiah: "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" was brought again with great force to my heart. I responded: "Lord, thou knowest that I love thee, and I would submit to Thy will, but I cannot speak, I am not able, I am base and vile, full of sin and unbelief; I would not be received; I cannot go."

Then the Lord mercifully instructed me through the instrumentality of His word, and one season very particularly when the text was: "Call unto Me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not." Over a period of two years the Lord led His servants to pull down pride and self-will. Correction and instruction were followed one by the other. The application of the word in Jeremiah 32 verse 14 became not only a commandment that Jeremiah had to speak to Baruch, but it began to burn in my heart.

Another minister sent out

I was then a member at Beulah, and later, when hearing that Mr. Elsom was being sent out by our friends into the ministry, I began to rejoice and tried to shake the exercise from my mind. I said in my heart, "Surely I must have been mistaken; it is impossible to send two from one little cause like Beulah." But these were my thoughts, and the Lord's mind was different. There was no peace within, but instead disobedience brought darkness and condemnation into my mind, for the Word of God was under a bushel, but I dared open my mouth to no-one.

As it was, the Lord had laid the matter upon the heart of our deacon, Mr. Risbridger, and to my surprise he began to enquire concerning my exercises. I tried to evade his enquiries, but finally had to tell him the truth. It was the first Sunday in August, and the following day Mr. May's weighty ministry deepened the exercise. When parting from the friends at Beulah I could say to Mr. Risbridger only what Jonah said to the mariners: "Take me up and cast me forth into the sea; I cannot and dare not go myself."

I had to speak before the Church of my exercises, and they

expressed their desire to hear me preach. Two ministers (Mr. J. H. Gosden and Mr. J. Delves) were asked to attend this meeting and to give guidance to the Church. The text from Jeremiah, already mentioned (ch. 32 v. 14) was still on my mind and I had to venture with it, for I felt this was my commission from the Lord. My preaching was well received and I was unanimously sent out to work in the Lord's vineyard. As help and strength have been given I have continued, though in much felt weakness and insufficiency, and I have tried to labour in Word and doctrine over the years.

An account of his marriage

At that time I was already married. It may be of interest how this came about. When attending Rochdale Road Chapel, Manchester, the congregation was still about one hundred souls. The pews in the



Rochdale Road Chapel, Manchester

main chapel were fairly well occupied, and if not full there were always one or two people in each. Also there were several who, though not attending had paid their seat rents, and so I had my seat allocated to me

by one of the deacons. It so happened that a family from Liverpool had come to Manchester and started to attend Rochdale Road Chapel. Why they had selected the pew in which I was sitting I did not know at first, but having found it occupied I was forced to look for another place. I tried the pew in front but the family that sat there arrived so I moved to the pew behind, but here a similar thing happened again. Consequently I turned to one of the deacons, Mr Billington, and asked him if he could give me another seat. He thought it would be best if I joined him in his pew because he was sitting alone. This was at the back of the chapel.

Unknown to me, Miss Shaw, and her sister, Mrs Case with her children, were not altogether settled in the pew on the opposite side of the Chapel; the children causing a little disturbance at times, so they decided it would be better if they moved to the back of the chapel. Thus it transpired that as I came to join Mr Billington in the back pew my future wife also came into the same seat and we sat together. This was the means by which we were able to converse together, not only on ordinary things, but soon on the things which were dear to our souls, and this fellowship in the things of God has knit us together as one.

Now we wanted the Lord to make our way plain and to guide us aright. After hearing of the death of my parents, during a holiday in London, I returned north with a heavy heart. Soon after we went together for a weekend to Garstang where Mr. E. G. Rowell preached from Mark 11 verse 22. He really walked in my path, but I must say not in mine only, and after the service my dear one said: "And what of it now?" We both felt that our mountains had been brought low before the heavenly Zerubbabab and that we could be joined in Holy Matrimony.

Rebellion and self-pity taken away

One Lord's Day evening, returning from preaching in London, the train was particularly delayed because of the electrification of the Euston line. Having arrived in Manchester late at night, the last train had gone. There was only one other means of transport and this was the night bus which ran every hour. However, one had just gone, and it meant I had a long wait. Many other buses were arriving with people pouring in from places of entertainment; they came and were soon gone, and the devil started his work, saying to me: "Now you see these people have it much easier; they please themselves, and enjoy themselves;

everything goes their way; they do not need to stand about like you in the wind and rain; they get their bus and soon they will be in bed whilst you still have nearly an hour to wait. You have been engaged in your Master's business, and now you have to endure this trouble."

My rebellious heart was soon taken with self-pity and ready to dwell on Satan's suggestions. As I stood there, full of self-pity, thinking how badly I was treated, I fell into the trap of the adversary, but the Lord did not leave me there. I had been hankering after a car, to be independent, but had not the means to procure one, and so I thought: 'Yes, it is a hard way.' Suddenly the Lord mercifully broke the snare. My mind was diverted from self by that still small voice that whispered to my soul: "Look unto Me, and be ye saved." I had some sweet meditation there on the Lord Jesus, how He walked on this sin-polluted earth, had not ridden in either cars, wagons, or what then used to be the means of transport - camels. Only once we read He rode upon an ass's colt. Oh how that broke the snare! The Lord had walked for miles, walking for His beloved people. I need hardly say that it filled me with shame and melted me at His feet, so much so that when the bus came, at first I did not realize that it was mine, and only just in time was able to check the number and jump on it while it was moving away.

An accident and illness

I can look back to one particular occasion when in Manchester, when, after a small accident, I had to go to hospital in great pain. For over a month I felt the Lord's presence in my soul and the sweet enjoyment of His smiles and comfort. Lifted out of pain by these spiritual consolations I could sing and praise Him because He was all and in all to my soul. Though unable to move, yet I felt the movement of the Holy Spirit in my soul, and my heart was drawn towards Him and His ways. I can say then I was willing to part with all, to leave this earth to be with Christ which is far better. When after several weeks I was visited by some colleagues from work, this heavenly atmosphere was broken down, and both my wife and I felt the deadening influence of the world. When they had gone we each said that we wished they had never come!

The following year I was laid aside with bronchitis, which developed into pneumonia. O the hardness of my heart! There was

nothing of the sweetness experienced the year before. How I mourned and longed for the Lord to break this stubborn heart of mine! I seemed to come out of it as I had gone into it, apart, perhaps, from the sorrow that I felt, and a solemn realization that only the Lord can command the blessing, only His presence can make downcast sinners to rejoice in Him. However, the Word of God declares that: "Tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed;" and so it is sometimes, when we are in tribulation, it seems such a long, long way to that "hope" which "maketh not ashamed."

Changes in employment

Shortly after the visit, before mentioned, of the two colleagues, after the first illness, I had my first preaching engagement in Luton, and I well remember the word which throughout my illness was sweet. It is in II Peter 1 verse 2: "Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord." At that time I little realised that in a few years time we should come to live close by and often attend at 'Bethel' chapel. It came about in a somewhat peculiar way. The particular line of my work in Cancer Research came to an end, and we were notified of the decision that our grant would not be renewed. This caused my boss to look for some suitable employment for me. Well in advance before the expiry date, he sent a letter to my present place of employment. The reply stated that there was nothing suitable available at that time, but that a formal application should be made, and when there was an opening I would be considered. Having known the writer, and his contacts with my previous boss, I felt that this was just a nice polite way of saying, "No", and therefore I did not make any application.

To my surprise, after three or four months, a hasty letter arrived with an enquiry whether I was still interested in getting a position at the National Institute, Mill Hill, London. If so, I was to make an application immediately, as an opening would be available shortly. My boss was on holiday at the time, but as we had discussed the matter before, I had no hesitation in sending an application. Arrangements were made for an interview the next time I came to London, and I was promised the job.

Accommodation provided

However, I was confronted with the problem of finding suitable accommodation in the London area, as I could not afford to purchase a dwelling place. In answer to many prayers the Lord provided for us in a remarkable way. Having occasion to visit the south with engagements at Beulah and Haverhill, I was taken by friends to special services at Swavesey where Mr. B. A. Ramsbottom was preaching. During the interval I was introduced to a gentleman from Luton who was a builder and had recently developed a large housing estate in the Harpenden locality. When he heard of my situation he willingly promised his help and suggested that I went to see some of the property available. This I did shortly afterwards, and as I did not possess the means to buy a house, our kind friend undertook to let one to us on very generous terms. This has been a wonderful provision for us, and we have dwelt there to this present time - a period of some 22 years.

A FEW PARTICULARS FROM MRS. PAVLIK'S NOTES

My dear husband and I were brought together at Rochdale Road Chapel, Manchester, a door having been opened in providence for him to work on Cancer Research at Manchester University. He became a regular worshipper at the Chapel but remained rather shy, language being a great barrier to any real conversation with him, although he managed to convey to the deacons something of his background - how he had been obliged to flee from his own country without any possessions and the way the Lord had led him to Beulah Chapel, Notting Hill, London.

I was baptised by Mr. John Turton at Rochdale Road Chapel in 1954. The text on this occasion was Song of Solomon chapter 1 verses 7 and 8. My dear one had a very sweet and blessed time at this service. Shortly afterwards we were introduced to each other and from that time we felt to be drawn together in the double bond.

Seeking a word of direction from the Lord before we became engaged, we went to relatives at Garstang for a week-end. On the Lord's Day we heard Mr. E. G. Rowell. He read Hebrews 11 and preached from Mark 11 verse 22: "Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God." Unknown to each other we both felt he came right into our path and the mountains were removed. Dear George and I

became engaged the next day. We were married on December 17th 1955, living in Manchester where we remained for ten years. My husband obtained a Master of Science degree in July 1965.

Not long after this, his work there came to an end and in the Lord's kind providence we were brought to Harpenden. George then did similar work at The Medical Research Centre, Mill Hill, London, until he retired in 1984. However, he continued in the ministry until a few weeks before his death.

Through all these years my dear husband laboured among the churches preaching every Lord's Day and in the week. Though often much afflicted, he seldom failed to fulfil his engagements, and many of the Lord's people loved him greatly for the Truth's sake.

The nature of Mr Pavlik's work over many years gave him a comprehensive knowledge of our mortal frame and the bodily functions. Consequently he was able to advise in the treatment of several extremely difficult medical cases. Those directly involved can testify of the loving and prayerful concern which endeared him to their hearts.



Harpenden Cemetery

He finished his course on July 11th, 1989 aged 70 years, as a weary traveller safely gathered home.

SALTSTONE ROCK, KINGSBRIDGE ESTUARY, DEVON

This desolate spot in the middle of the estuary is now home to just a few seabirds. However, in the 1600's it was a meeting place for non-conformists in the days of persecution. Here they could worship safely, rowing out to hold their services. The estuary is sea, and not a river, and as such was outside the jurisdiction of any parish authorities. At low tide, the area of exposed rock would be far greater, so no doubt the times of their meetings were arranged according to the tide.

BISHOP THOMAS KEN - CORRECTION

Well spotted those who found the mistake in the royal line in our Article in the last edition. Princess Mary was the *granddaughter*, not the *daughter* of King Charles I. She was the eldest daughter of his son James II and her mother was Anne Hyde who died before her husband became King. King Charles II was her uncle.

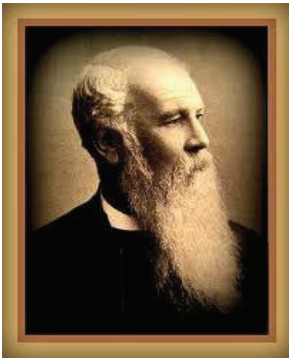
THE LORD'S SUPPER

Bishop J. C. Ryle

“And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it.” (Matthew 26. 26-27.)

These verses describe the appointment of the ordinance of the Lord's Supper. Our Lord knew well the things that were before Him, and graciously chose the last quiet evening that He could have before His crucifixion, as an occasion for bestowing a parting gift on His Church. How precious must this ordinance have afterwards appeared to His disciples, when they remembered the events of that night.

The **first** thing that demands our notice in these verses, is the right meaning of our Lord's words, “*This is my body, this is my blood.*”



It is needless to say that this question has divided the visible church of Christ. It has caused volumes of controversial theology to be written: but we must not shrink from having decided opinions upon it, because theologians have disputed and differed.

The plain meaning of our Lord's words appears to be this: “This bread *represents* my body. This wine *represents* my blood.” He did not mean that the bread He gave to His disciples was really and literally His body. He did not mean that the wine He gave to His disciples was really and literally His blood.

The conduct of the disciples at the Lord's Supper forbids us to believe that the bread they received was Christ's body, and the wine they received was Christ's blood. They were all Jews, taught from their infancy to believe that it was sinful to eat flesh with the blood (Deut 12. 23-25). Yet there is nothing in the narrative to show that they were startled by our Lord's words. They evidently perceived no change in the bread and wine.

Our own senses at the present day forbid us to believe that there is any change in the bread and wine in the Lord's Supper. Things above our reason the Bible requires us to believe; but we are never bid to believe that which contradicts our senses.

The true doctrine about our Lord's human nature forbids us to believe that the bread in the supper can be His body, or the wine His blood. The natural body of Christ cannot be at one time in more places than one. If our Lord's body could sit at table and at the same time be eaten by the disciples, it is perfectly clear that it was not a human body like our own. But this we must never allow for one moment. It is the glory of Christianity that the Redeemer is perfect man as well as perfect God.

The language in which our Lord spoke at the Lord's Supper, makes it entirely unnecessary to interpret His words literally. The Bible is full of expressions of a similar kind, to which no one thinks of giving any but a figurative meaning. Our Lord speaks of Himself as the "door" and the "vine," and we know that He is using emblems and figures when He so speaks: there is therefore no inconsistency in supposing that He used figurative language when He appointed the Lord's Supper; and we have the more right to say so when we remember the grave objections which stand in the way of a literal view of His words.

Let us lay up these things in our minds, and not forget them. In a day of abounding heresy, it is good to be well armed. Ignorant and confused views of the meaning of Scripture language are one great cause of religious error.

The **second** thing which demands our notice in these verses is the purpose and object for which the Lord's Supper was appointed.

This is a subject again on which great darkness prevails. The ordinance of the Lord's Supper has been regarded as something mysterious and past understanding. Immense harm has been done to Christianity by the vague and highflown language in which many writers have indulged in treating of the ordinance. There is certainly nothing to warrant such language in the account of the original institution. The more simple our views of its purpose, the more Scriptural they are likely to be.

The Lord's Supper is not a sacrifice. There is no offering up of anything but our prayers, praises, and thanksgivings. From the day that

Jesus died there needed no more offering for sin. “By one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified” (Heb. 10.14). Priests, altars, and sacrifices, all ceased to be necessary, when the Lamb of God offered up Himself. Their office came to an end: their work was done.

The Lord’s Supper has no power to confer benefit on those who come to it, if they do not come to it with faith. The mere formal act of eating the bread and drinking the wine is utterly unprofitable, unless it is done with a right heart. It is an ordinance for the living soul, not for the dead; for the converted, not for the unconverted.

The Lord’s Supper was ordained for a continual remembrance of the sacrifice of Christ’s death, until He comes again. The benefits it confers are spiritual, not physical. It was intended to remind us, by the visible, tangible emblems of bread and wine, that the offering of Christ’s body and blood for us on the cross is the only atonement for sin. It was meant to help our poor weak faith to closer fellowship with our crucified Saviour, and to assist us in spiritually feeding on Christ’s body and blood. It is an ordinance for redeemed sinners, and not for unfallen angels. By receiving it we publicly declare our sense of guilt, and our need of a Saviour, our trust in Jesus, and our love to Him, our desire to live upon Him, and our hope to live with Him. Using it in this spirit, we shall find our repentance deepened, our faith increased, our hope brightened, and our love enlarged, our besetting sins weakened, and our graces strengthened. It will draw us nearer to Christ.

The **last** thing which deserves a brief notice in this passage, is the character of the first communicants. It is a point full of comfort and instruction.

The little company to which the bread and wine were first administered by our Lord was composed of the Apostles whom He had chosen to accompany Him during his earthly ministry. They were poor and unlearned men, who loved Christ, but were weak alike in faith and knowledge. They knew but little of the full meaning of their Master’s sayings and doings. They knew but little of the frailty of their own hearts. They thought they were ready to die with Jesus, and yet that very night they all forsook Him and fled. All this our Lord knew perfectly well. The state of their hearts was not hid from Him; and yet He did not keep back from them the Lord’s Supper.

There is something very teaching in this circumstance. It shows

us plainly that we must not make great knowledge, and great strength of grace, an indispensable qualification for communicants. A man may know but little, and be no better than a child in spiritual strength, but he is not on that account to be excluded from the Lord's table. Does he really feel his sins? Does he really love Christ? Does he really desire to serve Him? If this be so, we ought to encourage and receive him. Doubtless we must do all we can to exclude unworthy communicants. No graceless person ought to come to the Lord's Supper; but we must take heed that we do not reject those whom Christ has not rejected. There is no wisdom in being more strict than our Lord and His disciples.

Let us leave the passage with serious self-inquiry as to our own conduct with respect to the Lord's Supper. Do we turn away from it, when it is administered? If so, how can we justify our conduct? It will not do to say it is not a necessary ordinance: to say so is to pour contempt on Christ himself and declare that we do not obey Him. It will not do to say that we feel unworthy to come to the Lord's table: to say so is to declare that we are unfit to die, and unprepared to meet God. These are solemn considerations: may we ponder them well.

THE ABKHAZ BIBLE PROJECT

At the Annual General Meeting of the Trinitarian Bible Society held in September 2013, Mr. Alexander Thomson, M.A. gave a most interesting report on plans to begin a Bible translation into the Abkhaz language under the auspices of the Society. He has kindly agreed to our publishing a shortened version of his report which we hope you will enjoy.

Khazia: geography, history, people, and current status

The Republic of Abkhazia is a strip of subtropical, wooded Black Sea coast backed by the Caucasus, the greatest mountain range in our own continent. Europe's highest mountain, Elbrus, is just to the east of Abkhazia. The population is about a quarter of a million. The capital,

Sukhum, is a town of fewer than 40,000 people. The Caucasus is an area the size of Britain where nearly a hundred languages are spoken, often with a change of language every ten miles.



The Abkhaz political and cultural scene is at a turning-point. This month marks the twentieth anniversary of the terribly brutal capture of Sukhum in 1993 by Abkhaz independence forces aided by Chechens.

Economically, Abkhazia ought to have a lot going for it. It has a well-educated, European-leaning population; humid lowlands that grow excellent maize, tea, tobacco, citrus fruits and nuts; good pasture and skilled cattle farmers; fine mineral waters; many mountain rivers perfect for hydroelectricity; and plenty of coal. The beach, mountain and cave scenery is spectacular and brings in hordes of Russian tourists. Consequently, the prices of many new properties in the west of Abkhazia have inflated to a hundred times more than the cost of a family house in the ruined east.

The Russian language dominates national life in the capital city, Sukhum, but the Abkhaz language is also used in national media and is the spoken language in villages and regions further away from Sukhum. About 100,000 people speak it natively - in Abkhazia itself, that is. There is perhaps an equal number of Abkhaz speakers outside the state, mostly in Turkey and Arab lands and in Turkish communities in Europe.

The Abkhaz became literate for the first time in the early Soviet years and have a phenomenally rich and ancient culture of poetry and song. Their culture is very socially conservative, especially in Turkey, Syria and Jordan, where the women will hardly speak to strangers and wear long, elegant clothes.

The Christian history of Abkhazia

There are solid traditions that the apostle Andrew evangelised this stretch of the Black Sea shore. The Eastern Orthodox proudly call him “Andrew the First-Called Disciple.” The coastal towns were Greek-speaking trading ports in antiquity and thus well-favoured to receive the New Testament.

An Abkhaz bishop attended the Council of Nicæa in 325. Many elaborate churches and monasteries were built, with some still standing and in use today. There followed many centuries of Islamic encroachment on this territory, especially once the Turks became the major Black Sea



naval power. The Jesuits were also hard at work in all the Russo-Turkish borderlands in the Early Modern period, promising the Muslims deliverance from Moscow and the Slavs deliverance from the Sultan.

Under communism, one highlight of which I am aware is that a large Protestant youth rally drawn from several Soviet republics managed to meet in Sukhum on May Day for several years in the 1960s and there was even once a mass baptism of several thousand in the Black Sea. May Day was chosen because it was a public holiday and more especially because believers could count on being less molested at their meetings while all committed communists were out parading and drinking!

The Abkhaz view of themselves is that they are a *historically* Christian nation. They have always had a rather Western view of the place of religion in society and prefer to talk of ‘Christian values.’ This vagueness is not surprising considering that the national language has never had a Bible, or Protestant preachers.

Current church situation in Abkhazia

Most Abkhaz speakers are either nominally Eastern Orthodox Christian or nominally Sunni Muslim. Orthodox church services in Abkhazia use Abkhaz as well as Russian liturgically. Orthodox church

attendance is quite low, especially in the towns. Open and flagrant sin against Orthodox Christian doctrines, however, such as unmarried couples living together, is not much tolerated in Abkhaz society. There are still young people becoming priests, monks and nuns in the Abkhaz Orthodox Church, but little evidence of a lively Christian devotion today in Abkhazia, and especially not much public proclamation of the Gospel of Christ.

As elsewhere in the Black Sea region, the Evangelical Baptists began to feature on the scene at the close of the 19th century and have clung on through communism. There was some American Presbyterian missionary effort; and there are some Pentecostals dating from the Soviet era.

Abkhazia also has substantial communities of speakers of other languages: there are Jewish, Armenian and Slavic neighbourhoods in the towns. These non-Abkhaz ethnicities are well represented among a few evangelical Baptist congregations in the towns. Any such congregations that exist will certainly be Russian-speaking. As you will imagine, they are not the sort of churches to have websites and it is very difficult to ascertain what kinds of numbers are involved or whether they would look kindly on an Abkhaz Bible translation effort.

Bible translation history in Abkhaz and the need for a Bible

This brings us on, then, finally, to Bible translation considerations: the history of and the need for Abkhaz Bible translation efforts. Above all, the need is there quite simply because Abkhaz is the national language of a European country that has never had a Bible translation. A large minority of the national population cannot read Russian fluently enough to benefit fully from Russian Bibles or Christian resources, and preaching in Russian is merely intelligible to the rural Abkhaz, rather than being strikingly direct to them.

The Orthodox Church of Abkhazia published an Abkhaz translation of the four Gospels a few years ago, which caused great ructions among its clergy because it came to be seen as the production of one particular political wing of the denomination. Other tendencies within the Abkhaz Orthodox Church remain keen to stay closely tied to either Russian or Georgian Orthodoxy and so do not wish to see an Abkhaz Bible. Other than that, the only published Bible portion in

Abkhaz that I am aware of is the Gospel of John that the United Bible Societies brought out in 1980. Official resistance to Abkhaz Bible translation efforts is equally strong in Georgia proper and in Turkey, in both of which countries the suspicious security services have often disrupted Bible translation projects for other regional languages and have persecuted the translators on the charge of stirring ethnic separatism.

9 Шәныхәа абас: Жәәан икоу Хәб, ицкәхааит ухиз.
 10 Иааиант Уцсхара; икалааит угуацхара, хахь ажәәан акны
 еицш цака адунеи аеҕы.
 11 Ача ада ҳхуартам ихат ҳара ехьа.
 12 Егьҳазныйь ҳара ҳауалқуа, ҳара ҳтәи зықуқуоу ишырзн-
 ҳажьуа еицш;
 13 Хәгьалаумгалан ҳара ацәыгьцышәара, ҳагьацәнырха
 ҳара ацәгьара. Уара Ацсхареи амчи адуреи цымкрыда иумоуп
 азы. Амин.

The Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6) in Abkhaz

Native Abkhaz speakers are growing and look set to continue to do so if the Lord allows. There is a growing curiosity among the population about their own history and heritage, and a deepening cynicism about modern secular life. Above all, there is now a freedom of publishing, worship, evangelism and travel that is unprecedented in Abkhaz history, which coupled with the new and powerful reach of digital media means that an Abkhaz Bible translation now, God willing, would penetrate the national awareness more than it ever would have done in the past. Digital media in particular - an electronic Bible text formatted for mobile devices, or an audio Bible - would be a wonderful means for the Scriptures in Abkhaz to reach Muslim communities in the Middle East and Europe.

It seems, then, a prudent and providentially-favoured time to endeavour to begin Bible translation into the language.

Other Bible societies, some of which have been hotly keen to produce poor paraphrases of the Scriptures for other languages of the Caucasus, seem to my knowledge not to have any current or planned projects for Abkhaz. Mercifully, this might mean that no work of undoing previous confusion and offence among local Christians may be

necessary in the case of Abkhaz. It is a providential favour that the denominations in Abkhazia have always used Received Text-based New Testaments, whether in Greek, Russian or Georgian.

My own involvement with Abkhazia goes back to the time I spent working in Christian student mission in Georgia. I subsequently went back to live in Georgia and became a Georgian translator for the Civil Service on my return. I now live in the Netherlands with my Dutch wife and work as a freelance translator, and continue to feel a burden for Abkhazia, a European nation without a native Bible. I find the Abkhaz a sober and dignified people who speak well of the Scriptures that they so little know, who are inclined to read carefully what is presented to them and to consider the claims of Christ sincerely when urged to do so.

Travel to Abkhazia is difficult. One has to fly via Moscow, or take a cross-border train from Sochi, or sail across the Black Sea illegally from Trabzon in Turkey, avoiding the Georgian coastguard. Due to my security clearance at the time, I was forbidden to travel there while in the Civil Service, and since that time Georgia has legislated that foreigners who are discovered merely to have travelled to Abkhazia in the past can be heavily fined and imprisoned. In God's providence, I have well-placed native Abkhaz speaker contacts in Britain who are well-disposed towards Bible translation and who would see this project as contributing positively towards Abkhazia's national identity and heritage. In fact, it is the mother of that family who translated the Gospel of John in 1980.

It is my hope and prayer that through them, and perhaps through befriending Abkhaz speakers among the Turkish community in the Netherlands, I might be led into contact with suitably-qualified literate Abkhaz people who could help to revise my initial translation while preserving Biblical accuracy. I would add in closing that the Abkhaz language is an exceptionally difficult one, with a huge repertoire of sounds and massive grammatical complexity.

RESPONSES FROM TWO NURSES TO THE ARTICLE ON THE LIVERPOOL CARE PATHWAY

Response 1:

As a Christian nurse, newly qualified, I think that it is a shame that the LCP is now being phased out as my experience of the LCP has been positive. Where I have seen it in use, I felt that it improved patient care. For example, to ensure that goals on the LCP (such as pain control, mouth care and hygiene) were met or achieved, staff had to sign every few hours to give evidence of the care they were providing. This document also guided staff through the care needs of dying patients, prompting assessments and actions.

In my experience, families were always involved and knew what the care plan included, often being present when it was completed. The LCP helped families understand changes in their relatives and enabled them to become involved in everything that happened to them. It also gave assurance that loved ones were being given regular care to meet their needs. Patients were looked at individually and I saw a few instances where there was an improvement in the condition of patients and so were taken off the LCP. Some patients were put on and taken off the LCP a number of times.

I am currently working on an elderly medicine ward where end-of-life care is often delivered. Because nothing has replaced the LCP, there is potential for some aspects of care to be passed by as the prompts to achieve goals are not there. While excellent care (i.e. regular checks, responding to changes, good pain control and comfort) should be given to all patients anyway, there is the possibility that aspects will be neglected or not documented - for example with inexperienced nurses or because of time constraints.

In conclusion, when used properly I feel that the LCP provides a good tool to guide nurses to provide palliative care excellence to dying patients. As a Christian nurse, I feel that the LCP aided me to provide Christian care, care that reflects the compassion of the Lord Jesus Christ. It may be argued that the examples of poor care shown in the media involve staff who do not uphold Christian principles, therefore the tool is only as effective as the people using it.

Anna Parsons

Response 2: As a Christian nurse I feel able to give my support to the LCP. I am a staff nurse on a busy General Medical ward with over 12 years of experience in caring for the dying. The reality of death does hit me, and I often spend the rest of a shift thinking, “Where is her soul now? And what about me, am I ready for when my time comes?”

I was pretty devastated a few weeks ago to be told that we will no longer be using the LCP in our hospital. When the LCP was first introduced in the hospital I was very happy. It finally allowed me to care for the dying properly as any compassionate nurse would wish to, with no more unnecessary monitoring of blood pressure etc. It freed time to ensure that the patient was pain free, not agitated or nauseous, and to give essential nursing care as appropriate to a dying patient.

I once had the privilege of sharing the Gospel with a man who was on the LCP. His family said that he had been praying, and were quite surprised as he had “never been a religious man.” I asked the Lord to give me ‘a word in season’ and the words, “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins” came to my mind. He was very responsive, and I have a hope that he was given the faith to do so.

Several times a patient has been started on the LCP but has actually made some improvement, and has been taken off the care plan, and even been able to go home. So the plan is not infallible and neither are medical staff. The LCP is only as good as the person utilising it.

Before the introduction of the LCP on my ward, we would loosely use the term TLC (tender loving care) to describe the care that we would be giving to patients that were clearly at the end of their treatment options. But legally we were still obliged to continue with monitoring blood pressure, temperature, pulse etc. I do have a memory of caring for a terminally ill man. Instead of being able to spend time supporting the family and ensuring the comfort of the man, I spent the last 15 minutes of his life frantically recording oxygen saturation levels, drawing up IV antibiotics and as I switched on the pump he drew his last breath. I was so thankful that earlier that day the team of doctors had made the decision that he was “not for resuscitation.”

Sadly now that the LCP has been discontinued, we are left once more in a nursing “limbo” as to our legal responsibilities, and there has been no good palliative nursing care plan to replace it. *Naomi Sayers*

ONE DAY AT A TIME

One day at a time with its failures and fears,
With its hurts and mistakes, with its weakness and tears,
With its portions of pain and its burden of care;
One day at a time we must meet and must bear.

One day at a time - but the day is so long,
And the heart is not brave, and the soul is not strong,
O Thou pitiful Christ, be Thou near all the way;
Give courage and patience and strength for the day.

Not yesterday's load we are called on to bear,
Not the morrow's uncertain and shadowy care;
Why should we look forward or back with dismay?
Our needs, as our mercies, are but for the day.

One day at a time, and the day is His day;
He hath numbered its hours, though they haste or delay.
His grace is sufficient; we walk not alone;
As the day, so the strength that He giveth His own.

Swift cometh His answer, so clear and so sweet;
"Yea, I will be with thee, thy troubles to meet;
I will not forget thee, nor fail thee, nor grieve;
I will not forsake thee; I never will leave."

Annie Johnson Flint

Annie Flint was born on Christmas Eve 1866 in the little town of Vineland, New Jersey, USA. Her mother died when she was three years old. From early adulthood she suffered from progressively-worsening arthritis, until she was unable to walk. She died in 1932. Her last words were, "I have nothing to say. All is right." You may feel these verses suitable to sing at this time of the year at your family gatherings (they can be sung to the tune St. Denio).

".... and as thy days, so shall thy strength be" Deuteronomy 33.25.