

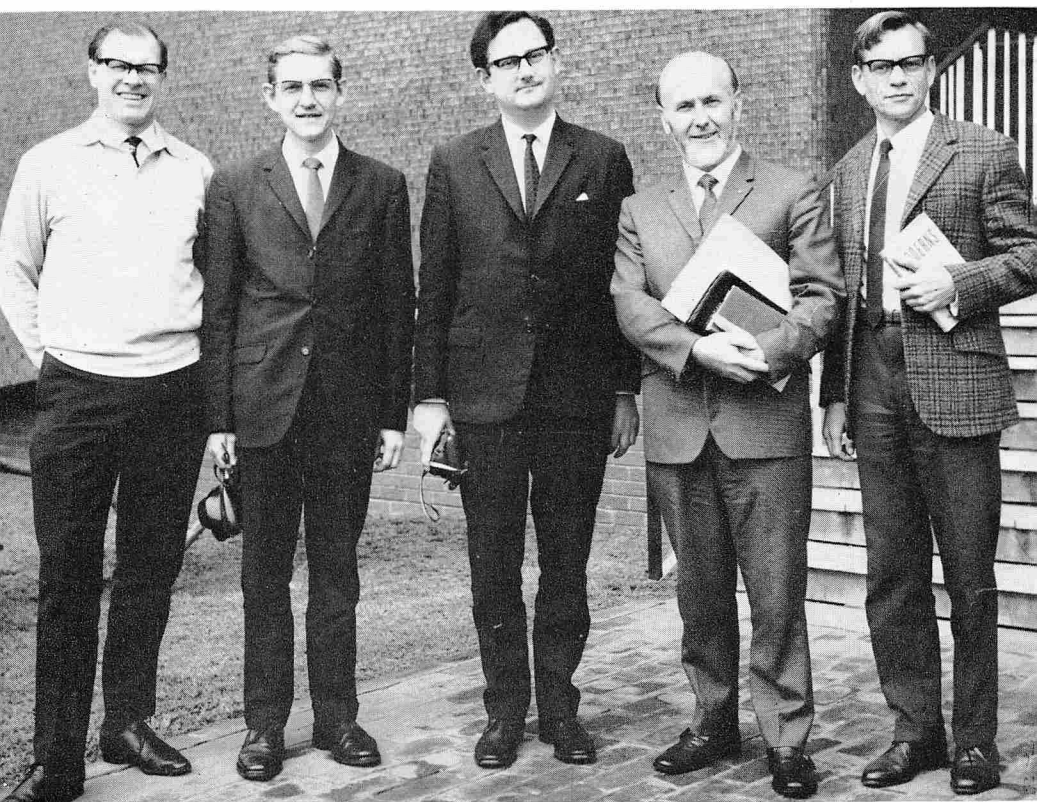
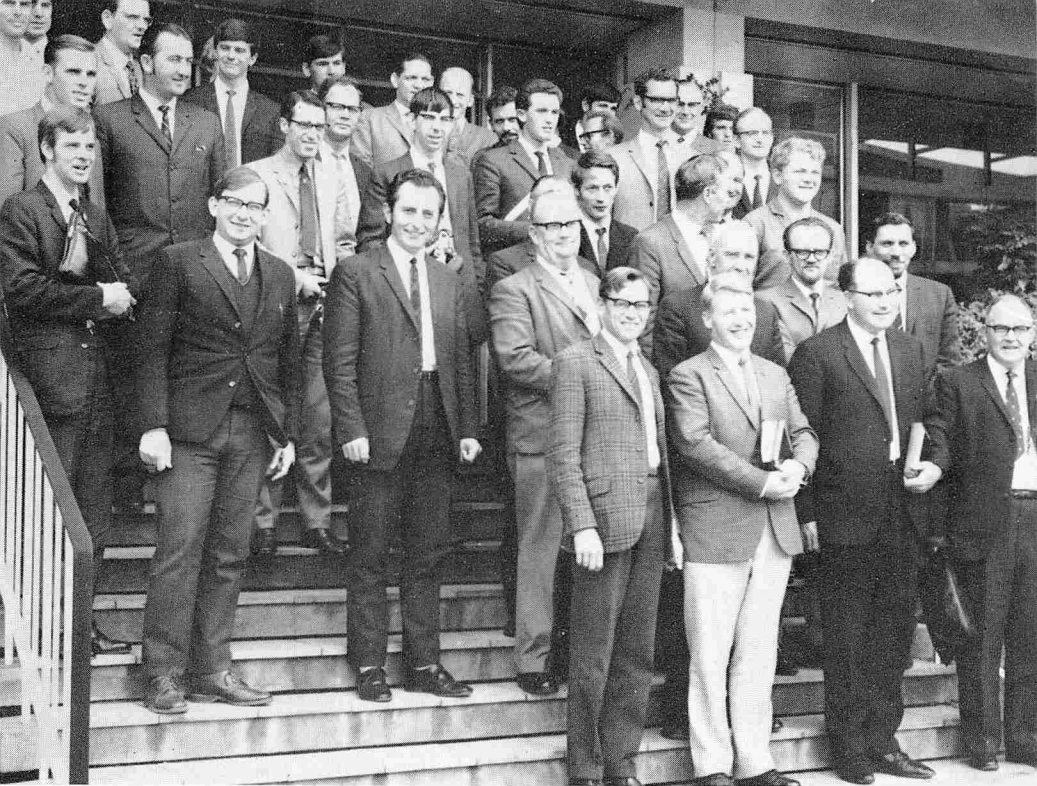
REFORMATION TODAY



-
- 1 EDITORIAL.
-
- 7 THE UNITY OF THE CHURCH. *David Kingdon.*
-
- 17 THE PROSPECT OF BRITAIN.
-
- 21 ARE THERE APOSTLES TODAY?
-
- 22 THE PURITAN CONFERENCE. TWENTY YEARS
IN REVIEW. *David Fountain.*
-
- 27 REFORMATION FOR HUSBANDS. *Erroll Hulse.*
-
- 33 WILLIAM KIFFIN—MERCHANT, PASTOR—"GRAND
RINGLEADER OF THAT SEDUCED SECT!"
Jack Milner.
-
- 43 SEARCHING JERUSALEM WITH CANDLES.
-
- 44 WHAT CAN WE DO FOR OUR YOUNG PEOPLE?
-

NUMBER 6

SUMMER 1971



Editorial

The Conference at Port Elizabeth

A FAMILY FROM THE CHURCH WHICH PUBLISHES THIS MAGAZINE HAS emigrated to South Africa. Meeting me at Jan Smuts Airport, Johannesburg, overall satisfaction was expressed with the new land. There is much to make them happy and questions of major importance are faced with equanimity. But there was one question of small moment: "Where is the sunshine you spoke of?" Rain is a precious commodity, but this year The Republic has been favoured with a lot of it. Soon I was on my way to Port Elizabeth. When drawing near to the coast the pilot informed us that it was stormy. "Never mind," he said, in typical South African extrovert fashion, "we have enough fuel and will just circle round until things improve!" Happily this proved unnecessary. But we certainly experienced some torrential downpours that week. Some roads were washed away, preventing the arrival of ministers coming from Cape Town to attend the first Evangelical and Reformed Conference at Port Elizabeth.

The Conference was highly successful and in the future may well be looked upon as a milestone in the spiritual history of the country. Over sixty came, drawn from a variety of denominational backgrounds.

The majority of those attending came from the Johannesburg and Pretoria area, although Natal and the Cape were also well represented. Jan van Woerden, minister of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, came all the way from Rhodesia. Also, from a long distance, was Martin Holdt from Phalaborwa. Each session was followed by discussion, this proving an exercise of considerable value. The Baptist minister of Hill Crest, Natal, who has had some experience of Conferences in England, was well pleased with the standard of ministry, particularly that of Dr. Jannie du Preez who expounded on the principles of expository preaching. Others expressed their appreciation of the papers given by David Kingdon, especially those on secularism and evangelism today. His paper on Barthianism was timely, although I admit that I had to suck peppermints to keep awake! Neo-orthodoxy is like chloroform. Even when its dangers are exposed the fumes have an anaesthetising effect!

The Conference was characterised by a warm spirit and a high degree of maturity. Those present held firm theological views but maintained

Photos opposite:

A group of ministers who attended the Conference at Port Elizabeth, shown above and below, from left to right, the Conference speakers: Hulse, van Zyl, Kingdon, Gilfillan and du Preez.

a gracious attitude to those of different outlook. One brother attended from the Church of the Province (High Anglican), which church has been very much in the news of late with one of its ministers being arrested for spreading communist literature. Several attended from the C.E.S.A. (Church of England of South Africa), a body separate from the main Anglican community which maintains an evangelical emphasis.

Well known Baptists such as Rex Mathie, John Wilton and Andre Erasmus of East London were present. Baptists were in the ascendancy, and this would have been much more the case had not the Conference been at Easter time when many were committed by prior engagements. The Rev. A. S. Gilfillan, of Port Elizabeth, presented a paper which he humorously described as the "small shot amidst the great guns". This paper, together with a biographical study of George Whitefield and the discussion sessions, gave a balance to the whole Conference in which an over-stress on intellectualism was avoided. Dutch Reformed representation was small, but those who did attend expressed their surprise that such a high standard of exposition should come out of an English-speaking Conference. Indeed, as far as the Reformed faith is concerned I feel that there is more cause for optimism among the English-speaking groups than in the Afrikaans churches, where there is a grave danger of drifting away from the Reformed faith of our fathers. Very few Dutch Reformed ministers recommend Banner of Truth books. Banner books are not the only criterion for soundness, but what I mean is that not a few Dutch Reformed men are lukewarm about the need for an old-fashioned revival. However, this view is not held dogmatically, and if someone wishes to prove otherwise the information will be gladly received!

Conferences of this kind are valuable in providing ministers with an opportunity of spiritual reflection and reappraisal of their ministries. In addition to this there is time for reflection, fellowship, discussion and the opportunity to benefit from the gifts of others. Problems can be shared either in public discussion or in private conversation. It is no small thing for the average minister to produce three expositions a week. Indeed, to maintain a high standard in this way is in itself a Herculean task, and could well take up the whole of a minister's time. If right principles of homiletics, hermeneutics, apologetics, dogmatics and exegesis are possessed by a minister this greatly facilitates his task. But if he has not experienced Reformed teaching then the advantages of attending a Conference where these subjects are clearly expounded are all the greater.

Such was the enthusiasm for this Conference at Port Elizabeth, that the suggestion that we should wait two years for another was firmly rejected. The foundations are already being laid for a further Conference in Johannesburg in July next year. It is hoped that a non-European Con-

ference can be organised in the Cape with its own distinct leadership during the same month. If all races do not benefit then we will fall short as the servants of God. July is the coldest month in Johannesburg, but since the Conference is regarded as a time of spiritual edification the fact of climate is secondary. The organisers, however, hope to make good what was absent at the Port Elizabeth Conference, namely an opportunity during afternoons for organised "keep-fit" sessions for those who might feel the need of a little bodily exercise. The ministry is very exacting and it is not unusual for some men to allow themselves to deteriorate physically. The first opportunity for a little exercise after the hectic days of Conference in Port Elizabeth came with a game of cricket at Gilfillans'. Here it was discovered that Jim van Zyl, besides being an able Conference organiser, spreader of books among the African people¹ and general all-rounder, is also a competent batsman!

During the last few years there has been a tremendous upsurge of interest in Reformed Theology. The most heartening feature is the improvement to be detected in the standard of preaching. This has been noticed by not a few members of congregations. It is hoped that this newly founded Conference, the first as far as we know in South African history, will provide a strong stimulus toward higher standards all round in the ministry—a better and more Scriptural evangelism, more zeal for missionary endeavour, and a stronger emphasis on expository, systematic preaching.

Twenty Years of Puritan Conference

In this issue we are grateful to David Fountain for answering questions about the Puritan Conference which began in 1950 under the leadership of Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones and J. I. Packer. The influence of this Conference, not only in the British Isles but abroad, has been considerable. In more recent years—as is shown in the interview—the printed papers have been widely distributed.

Why did it stop?

The answer to this question can be better understood by observing the appearance of a controversial book, *Growing Into Union*. Possibly the best extended and thorough examination of this treatise is by Mr. S. M. Houghton whose review appeared in *The Bible League Quarterly* (December, 1970). The following quotation from that review will provide an explanation of what it is about.

The sub-title of this book, "Proposals for forming a united church in England", indicates its purpose. It is a product of ecumenism, not however of the World Council of Churches, but of four clergymen, two of them hitherto Anglican Evangelicals and two of them Catholics (not Roman Catholics, but in the Catholic

¹ The *Africa Trust Fund* started by Jim van Zyl distributes the best expository books among African peoples at subsidised prices. It is a work which deserves generous support.

wing of the Church of England). One of the two Evangelicals—Dr. J. I. Packer—is well known as the author of *Fundamentalism and the Word of God* (1958), *Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God* (1961), and *God has Spoken* (1965), works which have met with the hearty approbation of Evangelicals at large. He also edited *All in each Place* (1965). The Catholics are the Rt. Rev. G. D. Leonard, Bishop of Willesden, and Dr. E. L. Mascall, Professor of Historical Theology in King's College, London.

The four men issued a Joint Statement shortly after the Anglican-Methodist unity breakdown, in which they intimated the broad lines which they intended to follow in their discussions and proposals for a united Church. This stated that:

“(1) the oneness sought should be organic, visible, and sacramental.

“(2) the beliefs and practice of the united Church should be controlled by theological norms, with explicit reference to the Bible. The Church must confess its faith in the Christ of the Scriptures and seek constantly to live under the Word of God and to reform its way of life accordingly.

“(3) Unity should be visible locally and should be mission-orientated . . . The Church is God's mission on earth. Because unity is intimately related to local mission, high priority should be given to seeking actual local organic unity.”

It should be added that the coming together of the four men did not begin in the summer of 1970. They tell their readers that a strong friendship existed between them long before the “bond was established across the party divide” and that from 1965 and onwards a growing intimacy has developed. We agree with their claim that there is nothing dishonourable in men “who have apparently been opposed to each other seeking to discover how far this is really so”, particularly when they belong to the same Church and are therefore confessedly “members one of another”. In this case their further claim is that a “joy and mutual benefit” have resulted, which presumably means that they have drawn closer together. They tell us, however, that they remain what they were—Catholics and Evangelicals—“strong and uncompromising”. At the same time they assure us, “Equally we are not what we were”. We judge from this last statement that they are not merely more knowledgeable but that, despite their plea of “no compromise”, the views they formerly held have been more or less modified and adjusted. How Catholics and Evangelicals can come together and agree together on the founding of a Church on biblical principles, while remaining uncompromising in their respective persuasions is a matter of wonder.

For an Evangelical to find himself on fraternal common ground and in happy fellowship with a bishop who has been recently advertised as holding a Solemn Requiem Mass, singing a Solemn Pontifical Mass, and presiding at Solemn High Mass, is an equal wonder. “Equally we are not what we were” carries an ominous note. Does it ring the death knell of true Evangelicalism as far as the two leaders are concerned?

A century ago C. H. Spurgeon could write: “Our Episcopalian neighbours at first disliked the Popish revival (*i.e.* in the C. of E.), then they tolerated it, next they excused it, and now to a great extent they admire it”. As a matter of plain fact *Growing into Union* says very little about the type of worship which would result from the kind of unity which is proposed. Indeed the omissions of the book are to be regarded as closely as its assertions. The reviewer has no doubt at all that, were a “Catholic” clergyman to operate the scheme of union in his own particular locality, worship would be “High”, and Protestant Evangelical principles of worship would be correspondingly and conspicuously absent.

In *Reformation Today*, Number 5, Peter James described something of the downgrade taking place in Anglicanism. The Romeward drift is in

the opposite direction to Puritanism. It has brought about a situation in which co-operation with Anglicans who avow their unity with Anglo-Catholics is impossible.

In 1662 2,000 Puritan ministers were ejected from the Established Church and exposed themselves to privation and suffering rather than compromise their principles. With them there was no question of uniting themselves with those who were determined to maintain Romanist principles. The Puritans have provided us with the greatest source of expository literature anywhere to be found in history. The importance, therefore, of a Conference which explores the virtues and expositions of the Puritans is obvious. But those who are responsible for promoting such a Conference need themselves to contend for truth as did the Puritans. Otherwise they will be rightly accused of being mere academics. It is not a question of intellectual study only, but of practical example. In other words, we must be "doers" of the word and not "hearers" only. Whitewashing the tombs of our Puritan forebears with academic whitewash while at the same time making one with those who zealously promote unscriptural teachings will result in grave damage to the cause of the Gospel.¹

A new start

Some have expressed the opinion that the termination of the Puritan Conference has left a large gap in the area of theological and spiritual edification—a gap which ought to be filled. Request has been made to Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones to recommence the Conference which he has agreed to do providing that it is not left to individual responsibility. He has insisted that it be under the wing of the British Evangelical Council,² not for them to control or organise, but as a paternal body which can disassociate itself from the Conference if it heads in an unhealthy or wrong direction. The title of the Conference will now be: *The Westminster Conference for Theological and Historical Studies with*

¹ Allowance must be made for those whose position has always been similar to that of William Gurnall, who in 1662 did not suffer ejection for conscience sake. Gurnall was orthodox in his doctrinal beliefs, but, it seems, could not see the relationship of these to Church principles. To remain in the Anglican Church involves union with every kind of ecclesiastical creature. What has happened is that we nonconformists have wakened up to the facts, and *Growing into Union* has awakened us to the facts in no uncertain manner. We have come to see that according to our Church principles it is quite impossible to remain within a system which, to us, has become more and more apostate, evangelical one day, Romanist one day, Modernist the next, and so on. Pressures of Ecumenism have become increasingly acute. The lines have become dagger sharp. To conduct or organise a Puritan Conference on any other basis than that which is in line with the convictions of *the ejected* Puritans is difficult to envisage.

² In former years the Conference sailed under the heading of the *Tyndale Fellowship*. This is commented upon by David Fountain in the interview article.

particular reference to the Puritans, and the next one is to take place on the 14th and 15th of December, 1971, at Westminster Chapel, London.¹

The testimony of a changed life

In 1959 a student of the London Bible College attended the Puritan Conference. It was not as though he had any appetite for Reformed theology. In spite of his strong evangelical background he had turned to modern theology and psychology. This had brought disillusionment and depression even to the point of considering that life was not worth living and that he might even do away with himself. In his depression he was willing to try anything, even the Puritan Conference! Through hearing a paper given by Tom Watson ("Andrew Fuller and his conflict with Hyper-calvinism") in which the sovereignty of God was clearly expounded, our young friend experienced such a vision of the glory and majesty of God that not only was his modern theology shattered but he himself was raised to a level of understanding from which he has never departed. This same man returning from missionary service several years later, again attended the Puritan Conference as the place where the scales had fallen from his eyes, and where he had been brought into new life and enlightenment. He testified, however, to his disappointment. He found that the Conference had become academic and spiritually arid. He did not return the second day lest his disillusionment be confirmed. Now this is merely one experience and many others might disagree, although it is generally thought that the Conference became too heavy.

Unity in the Church

Believers need to unite today. This magazine and the church behind it recognise the paramount need for a broad evangelical unity as is represented by the *British Evangelical Council*. We acknowledge spiritual unity with all born again believers. From experience we have come to see that there are different levels of unity and that it is quite wrong to allow one level of unity to hinder another. For instance an evangelical minister in any town would err if he refused to identify with other evangelicals out of fear that this would frighten his believing friends who are still bound up in apostate denominations. Likewise, those who are evangelical and Reformed, would err if they refused to forge ahead in formulating and clarifying their views in respect of Reformed theology, out of fear that this might offend non-Reformed brethren. The more truth there is the better the foundation of unity. Past generations sought maximum truth. Our generation seems to strive for a minimum of truth.

David Kingdon speaks plainly on these issues and we are glad to include his address given at a recent B.E.C. conference in our issue.

¹ For details write to the Conference Secretary, Pastor David Bugden, 75 High Street, Warboys, Hunts., PE17 2TA.

The Unity of the Church

David Kingdon

I

IN DEALING WITH THE SUBJECT OF THE UNITY OF THE CHURCH IT WOULD be possible to make an all out attack on the ecumenical movement. This I do not propose to do since there is now plenty of literature exposing the false assumptions and aims of that movement. Moreover, there is the very real danger that in continually attacking a false conception of church unity, evangelicals should ignore the unpleasant fact that in their own house there is much that needs searching scrutiny in the light of the teaching of holy scripture. As I observe the British scene across the water that divides us my impression is that in some quarters awareness of the errors of the ecumenists is blinding evangelicals to the fact that for all their talk of being one in Christ, they are very far from manifesting to the world that unity for which our Lord prayed.

I shall attempt, therefore, to survey the scriptural teaching on the subject of church unity with my eyes upon the broken, fragmented and multi-form movement which we call evangelicalism. Perhaps in the great mercy of God this will result in the creation of the conviction that the greatest need of our churches is a thorough-going reformation according to the Word of God.

So far as evangelicals are concerned the development of the ecumenical movement has forced them to face up to the fact that the Bible speaks not only of the necessity of repentance and faith, but also of the Church, which is the body of Christ and the temple of the Holy Spirit. According to the New Testament the purposes of God centre in the Church—its calling by grace, its worship, mission, edification, sanctification and justification. For the *Church* Christ gave Himself, “that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing. But that it should be holy and without blemish” (Eph. 5:26-27). Thus we who make much of the evangel which proclaims the glorious redemption wrought in Christ fail to be faithful to the whole counsel of God if we do not realise that Gospel and Church belong inseparably together. Christ died—for the Church. He rose again and ascended to become “the head over all (things) to the Church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all” (Eph. 1:23). He returned to His Father’s right hand that He might pour out the Holy Spirit upon the Church, and He shall come again to claim His bride. We cannot, therefore, neglect the doctrine of the

Church in favour of evangelism or the pursuit of holiness. These are not options, because the saints are perfected *together* in holiness, and evangelism is for the increase of the church.

II

What then does scripture teach on the subject of the unity of the Church? (1) According to scripture unity is, and can only be, in Christ. In the Pauline Epistles this phrase, "in Christ" occurs some 153 times. Not one of the benefits of salvation is ours apart from union with Christ. Every spiritual blessing is ours only in Christ (Eph. 1:3). We were chosen in Him before the foundation of the world (Eph. 1:4), we are accepted in Him the beloved Son (1:6). In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins (1:7), in Him we have obtained an inheritance (1: 11), incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us (I Pet. 1:4).

Implicit in the idea of our faith-union with Christ is the thought that in Him we are a new humanity. There are but two basic solidarities in human existence, the solidarity of mankind in Adam, and the solidarity of regenerate believers in Christ, the last Adam, who is the quickener of the dead. "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive" (I Cor. 15:22). If Adam was the federal head of the old humanity, so Christ is the head of the new humanity. As in virtue of their union with Adam his sin was imputed to all men (Rom. 5:12-14) so in virtue of our union with Christ by faith His righteousness is imputed to us (Rom. 5:18-19). Now while it is true that only as we are *individually* granted faith to believe in Christ, and thus are justified, it is also true that our union with Christ does not permit us to take an *individualistic* view of salvation. We are not saved to be isolated units, we are saved in Christ, and thus are incorporated into a new humanity, *one new man* (Eph. 2:15).

Undoubtedly one of the great weaknesses of contemporary evangelicalism lies in the failure of so many evangelicals to appreciate that conversion is not an end in itself, but the means whereby the believer is incorporated into the new humanity which is in Christ. So much of present-day evangelism seems to proceed on the assumption that a complete silence about the Church—its purpose, nature, and destiny—is the mark of faithfulness to the Gospel proclaimed by the Apostles.

In laying the stress I have upon the unity which believers enjoy in Christ as being the result of their incorporation into the new humanity I do not wish to be misunderstood. I am not advocating the *identification* of Christ the head with the body, which is the Church, an identification which V. Subilia has shown is the root error of Roman Catholicism. What I am stressing is that faith-union with Christ of necessity issues in communion with Him as members of the new

humanity. In emphasising, as we rightly do, the necessity of conversion, we must never forget that conversion is to be seen as initiation *in* Christ into the people of God.

(2) The second feature of scriptural teaching to which I wish to draw attention is that the Church is the body of Christ. By the Church I mean those, and only those, who are in faith-union with Christ. According to the N.T. only persons *in* Christ are in the Church, which is His body. "In one Spirit have we all been baptised into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink one Spirit" (I Cor. 12:13).

Now at this point evangelicals divide. Those who stress the present mixed nature of the visible churches tend to think of the body of Christ in invisible terms—the Church of God's elect, known only to God. For example, James Bannerman writes—"The Church invisible stands, with respect to its members, in an inward and spiritual relationship to Christ, whereas the Church visible stands to Him in an *outward* relationship only" (The Church of Christ, II, p. 29). Other evangelicals, however, point out that in the New Testament the *visible* church is spoken of as being in an *inward* relationship to Christ. This comes to the clearest expression in Paul's description of the *visible* church at Corinth as "sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints" (I Cor. 1:2). The fact that this church contained within its membership certain immoral persons does not lead the apostle to deny the essential nature of the Corinthian Church as a community in Christ by adoptive grace. Indeed, he says, "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular" (I Cor. 12:27) and he links the Corinthian Church with all its problems with the whole church visible, "saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours".

It is worth pointing out that the division as to the nature of the visible church usually works out with the paedobaptists on one side and the Baptists on the other. The paedobaptists stress the invisibility of the Church of the elect and the mixed nature of the visible church, and the Baptists emphasise that on their understanding of the New Testament teaching the visible church ought, in so far as it is humanly possible, to be coterminous into the membership of the Church of the elect at present on earth. However, it should be noted that paedobaptists like Professor John Murray agree with Baptists that the visible church is according to the N.T. viewed as being in inward relationship to its Head, Jesus Christ (see "Christian Baptism", pp. 41-43, and "The Nature, Unity and Government of the Church").

Now it is important to draw attention to this difference between evangelicals as to the nature of the visible church since it has at the back of it other differences. For example, how we think of the nature of the visible church will, if we are consistent, determine whom we baptise.

If my previous point has been taken, namely that to be in union with Christ is to be within the Church, the people of God, then what we think about the nature of the Church will give concrete expression to the union that is enjoyed by believers in Christ. For example, it is possible so to emphasise the invisible nature of the Church of God's elect as to be indifferent about the visible unity of the churches which preach the Gospel. Indeed one meets many to whom the invisibility of the Church of God's elect is a reason not to be a member of any particular local church. Perhaps one reason why evangelicals are so divided today is because in their reaction against the mixed nature of particular churches they have drawn the false conclusion that the invisibility of the ideal Church warrants the neglect of the undoubted teaching of the New Testament that spiritual unity in Christ be visibly manifested in the church on earth.

That it is the local, visible church which is viewed as the body of Christ, or more particularly, the manifestation of the body of Christ, is, I think, abundantly clear in the teaching of the New Testament. Several considerations support this statement.

(1) Writing to a local, visible church, at a particular point in time, the apostle Paul can describe it as the "body of Christ" (I Cor. 12:27).

(2) The fact that his teaching about the body of Christ is given to correct the abuse of spiritual gifts at Corinth (12:12-14) and to encourage the exercise of such gifts at Rome (12:3-13) supports my statement. If the visible church is not regarded by the apostle as being the body of Christ what would be the point of his teaching? One can hardly avoid the conclusion that it is of the local, visible church that Paul is thinking.

(3) When the Lord's Supper is profaned by drunkenness which arises from selfishness it is the body that is not discerned (I Cor. 11:29). That is, there is a failure to recognise that the local church is one body in Christ.

(4) When different factions in a local church attach themselves to different leaders there is again a failure to appreciate that the body of Christ is not divided (I Cor. 1:13 ff.). Here again we can only make sense of Paul's teaching if we understand him to be speaking of the local, visible church.

For these reasons (and more could be advanced) I want to insist that the New Testament views the local church as the visible manifestation of the body of Christ. If I am correct the unity of the Church is an inescapable implicate of the fact that the Church is the body of Christ. We cannot, if we are attempting to be faithful to the teaching of the N.T. play off the spiritual unity of believers against the demand that this unity be visibly expressed in local churches. As the body of Christ

the local church, by analogy with the human body, ought to exhibit certain characteristics.

(i) Unity in diversity. The body is one (I Cor. 12:12) but the unity of the body does not work against the fact that it has many members. So it is with Christ—*i.e.* this is what it means to be in union with Christ. Nor does the fact of the differing functions of the members destroy the unity of the body. The body is one, but it has many members.

This unity in diversity is ordained by God in the exercise of His sovereignty. He places each member in the body, that is He determines the function of each member in relation to the other members of the body, as it pleases Him (I Cor. 12:18). His sovereignty is manifested through the Holy Spirit's distribution of gifts "who apportions to each one individually as he wills" (I Cor. 12:11). The distribution of gifts is "for the common good" (I Cor. 12:7) R.S.V.=profit, advantage.

A practical point of some importance follows. Within the body of Christ there is room neither for the envying of the gifts of another (that would be to quarrel with the sovereignty of God), nor for a sense of pride stemming from an attitude of self-importance (that would be not to recognise that each member needs the others). How many divisions within churches are traceable to either envy or pride!

(ii) The relationship of members to each other. The members are not set in the body as single members, precisely because being in a body implies a relation to all other members of that body. The gifts bestowed upon the members are for the benefit of the whole body, not for the display of egotism. The gifts are all related and they are all necessary for the building up of the body. There is thus a profound synthesis between the work of the Spirit in each individual by which he is placed within the body, and the corporate nature of the body in which he is set. Here again the New Testament teaching has to be set against the unbiblical individualism which is so marked a feature of evangelicalism. It is important, of course, to understand the relationship of the members of the Church to each other in the right way. According to Roman Catholic theologians since the Church is a body, it must, like a body, have a structure. The structure is necessary to give the body form. In the nature of the case this structure must be hierarchical, since the Head controls the body. Therefore, so the argument runs, there must be a visible head, Christ's head of earth, the Pope. Below him, deriving their magisterium from him, are the bishops, and beneath them the priests, and last of all is the "ecclesia audiens", the listening church, the laity.

But it is just such an understanding of the Church as the body of Christ that Paul's teaching in I Cor. 12 rules out. Those members of the

Church at Corinth whom Paul rebukes for their pride (vv. 21-24) thought precisely in Roman Catholic terms! They thought in terms of their own importance to the body, and they dismissed other members as being of less importance. Paul points out that it is wrong to think in terms of relative importance at all, and that for two reasons. First, the so-called prominent members need the lesser ones (v. 21)—“the eye cannot say to the hand . . .”. Second, the more presentable members are to serve the less presentable ones (vv. 23, 24). Thus to think in terms of a hierarchy ascending from the member of the least importance to the member of the most importance to the body is altogether contrary to the apostle’s teaching.

(iii) The government of the members. Having criticised the hierarchical view of Roman Catholic theologians we must not suppose that each member is therefore to be regarded as free of discipline and not subject to authority. Government and discipline are necessary to ensure the harmonious working of the body. The Head of the Church exercises His authority through chosen instruments (elders) who are to be obeyed (Heb. 13:17). The exercise of this authority is meant to build up the Church, to ensure its purity and to preserve its unity. The exercise of authority within the Church ought always to serve these ends.

(iv) The universality of the body of Christ. Here we face a seeming paradox. The local, visible church is the body of Christ. Yet in other places there is the body of Christ—Corinth, Ephesus, Philippi, Rome. How are these churches related the one to the other? Quite clearly there are not bodies of Christ—Christ has only one body. Yet there are “churches of Christ”. Nor on the other hand, is the local church *part* of the body of Christ. To say this would be to deny that the church of Corinth is the body of Christ at Corinth, and to infer that it was less than a Church of Christ.

The issue that confronts us then is that of the relationship of the local church to the Church universal, the company of all believers on earth. The way this issue is settled determines both one’s view of church polity and one’s view of what is being attempted by the leadership of the ecumenical movement.

Taking my cue from a remark of P. T. Forsyth, I want to suggest that the issue is resolved when we regard the local visible church as the “out-crop of the Church universal”. This metaphor helps us to see how on the one hand the local church is the manifestation of the body of Christ in a particular place, and on the other hand it is in principle united with every other local church of believers. There is one body (Eph. 4:4) which is so really and truly manifested in local churches that they each are to be regarded as “the body of Christ”.

Thus the local church must exhibit the universality of Christ's body. It is not to be confined in its membership by race, sex, class, or culture. To ban a believer from fellowship because his face is black and his culture is different is a denial of the universality of Christ's body.

The local church, whilst enjoying a direct relationship with Christ the Head, since it is the body of Christ, does not function as God intended it to do if it lives in splendid isolation from other fellowships of believers. How in its self-imposed isolation can it manifest universality? Surely it is high time that independent evangelical churches began to examine what they mean by the autonomy of the local church. It simply will not do to congratulate ourselves on the spiritual unity we enjoy at Keswick and elsewhere and then have no relationship with the evangelical church down the road. The problem of the relationship of evangelical churches the one to the other ought not to be ignored any longer. If we continue to bypass it as we have done for so long we shall rightly merit the charge from others that we are only as biblical as it suits us to be.

(3) The third aspect of the biblical teaching to which I wish to draw your attention is the manifestation of the unity of the Church. According to John 17 and Eph. 4:1-6 the unity of the Church has a visible manifestation. The late Marcellus Kik aptly wrote of John 17: 21, "Without a visible oneness how could the burden of the petition be effected, 'that the world may believe that thou hast sent me'? The world cannot behold the invisible" (Ecumenism and the Evangelical, p. 42).

The unity of the Church is manifested in various ways. Each of these is as essential to the showing forth of unity in Christ as any other.

(i) The unity of the Church is manifested, firstly, in *life*. The Father is in the Son (John 17:21, 23) and the Son in the Father. The union between them is a vital union, not a mere union of will and love but of nature. Since the Son is in His Church the Church will exhibit the trinitarian life of the Godhead. This life which is eternal life is manifested in the Church which is the temple of the Holy Spirit. Without the presence of the life of God there could not be a showing forth to the world of the unity of the Spirit.

(ii) Secondly, the unity of the Church is manifested in *holiness*. Unity which is not exhibited in holiness would not be the unity taught in scripture. The unity of the Church in holiness is shown in the separation of the Church from the world. The members of the Church have been given to the Son by the Father *out* of the world (John 17: 6). They are no longer of the world (v. 16) yet because they are in the world our Lord prays the Father to keep them from the evil one (v. 15). Holiness, which is both separation from the world and conformity to Christ is an

essential mode of the manifestation of the unity of the Church. Implicit in this particular manifestation of unity is also, of course, the thought that the Church is under the discipline of God.

(iii) Unity is also manifested in truth. The Church is sanctified by the truth. The truth of which our Lord speaks in John 17 corresponds to the "one faith" of which Paul writes in Eph. 4:5. This is the truth revealed in Christ and witnessed to by the apostles under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. In short it is the apostolic gospel—the faith once delivered to the saints.

The unity of the Church is manifested in the preaching and doing of the truth. Since there is only one Gospel the true unity of the Church can be known by adherence to the Gospel. As there are not bodies of Christ, so there are not gospels of Christ. Thus there is "one body . . . one faith".

(iv) Unity is manifested in love. In both John 17 and Eph. 4 the manifestation of unity in love is prominent. The context of Eph. 4:4-6 is the need to forbear one another in love and to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (v. 3). In John 17:26 our Lord prays that "the love with which thou hast loved me may be in them". As the Father sends the Son, the Son in His works manifests the love of His Father for mankind, for the Son lives always in the unity of love with His Father. The Son sends the Church, and in the mutual love which exists within the unity of the Church, there is manifested to the world the life of the Father and of the Son.

(v) Unity is manifested in mission. The Son was sent into the world by the Father to accomplish the work He was given to do (17:4). And as He was sent into the world so He sends His apostles into the world (v. 18). Through their mission many will come to believe (v. 20), and for these our Lord prays that they all may be one, in a union which is analogous to that which subsists between the Father and the Son. Thus as it accomplishes its mission the Church manifests to an ever-widening circle the unity of Father and Son which finds its counterpart in the unity of believers in Christ.

(vi) Unity is manifested in the Gospel ordinances. Both of the Gospel ordinances, baptism and the Lord's Supper, proclaim and deepen the unity of the Church. According to the apostle Paul baptism declares not only cleansing from sin through the blood of Christ, but our union with Christ in His body. In language reminiscent of Rom. 6:3 Paul reminds the Galatians that "as many of you as have been baptised into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus". The one baptism is—as appropriate to the one body as the one faith (Eph. 4:5).

In my opinion the interpretation that sees baptism in Spirit in Gal. 3: 27 ff. (and Rom. 6:3 ff.) is unwarranted. I Cor. 1:12-13 surely points us in the right direction. Paul argues from the meaning of baptism in water against the view that the Church is divided. "Were ye baptised in the name of Paul?" The clear implication is that baptism in water sets forth the unity of the Church of Christ. If this is so in I Cor. 1:12-13 why should it be claimed that in Gal. 3:27 ff. not water-baptism but Spirit-baptism is meant, when the thrust of what Paul is saying is the same—"ye are all one in Christ Jesus". Baptism in water must therefore be understood as visibly proclaiming the unity of the Church with which the baptised is identified.

In the case of the Lord's supper there is less difficulty for everyone admits that the one loaf and the one cup set forth the unity of the Church of Christ. "The cup of blessing which we bless is not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread" (I Cor. 10:16-17).

Baptism and supper then proclaim the unity of the Church which is Christ's body. Since they were both ordained by Him both are of equal authority and both are to be observed.

Here again it seems to me that evangelicals must start to take scripture seriously. I can understand and appreciate the arguments of my paedobaptist brethren when they urge that the baptism of infants is warranted by inference from scripture (I cannot agree with their inference!). What I cannot understand is the position of those who argue that the supper is obligatory, but in the interests of evangelical church unity, baptism—whether of infants or believers—is not. By what right do they decide that one command is mandatory but the other is not? Do not they do despite to the authority of the Head of the Church who ordained both? Surely it is time that some of us abandoned "the lowest common denominator" approach to evangelical church unity, and faced up to the scriptural teaching on the Gospel ordinances.

Before I finish this paper I want to make some practical suggestions.

1. We evangelicals must apply ourselves to the study of the doctrine of the Church. With few exceptions the most stimulating books on the Church are coming from the pens of scholars who do not share our view of scripture. To our shame we are not prepared to wrestle with the teaching of scripture as some of them are. The way forward does not lie in pragmatic organisational opposition to the W.C.C. but in reformation according to the Word of God. That reformation will not take place unless and until we apply ourselves diligently to the study of the scriptural doctrine of the Church.

2. We must examine time-worn slogans, and ask ourselves whether they really do justice to the fulness of the scriptural doctrine of the Church. What do we mean by "scriptural unity"? Some of us allow our understanding of that slogan to make us indifferent to the *visible* unity of the Church. To go to Keswick once a year and say "We are all one in Christ Jesus" and then to ignore other evangelical churches in one's locality for the other 51 weeks, is as sensible as a man saying that he is in union with his wife, but he only lives with her for one week in 52! Other slogans which need examining carefully are "the invisible Church", "not organic union but spiritual unity" and the way in which "life" is put in antithesis to "organisation".

3. We must seek to manifest unity at the level of our local churches, not by adopting a lowest-common denominator approach, but by honestly and prayerfully studying scripture together. As we do so, in the great mercy of God, we shall find that "there is yet more light and truth to break forth from His Holy Word".

Continued from p. 21.

the Apostles, yet Paul indicates that these were not incidental to their ministry but authenticating signs. He whose ministry was not so accompanied was evidently not an apostle.

(v) The manner of the appointment of apostles. An apostle was called to his office directly by Christ, without the use of human agency. The ordinary officers of the church are also appointed by Christ (Acts 20:28), but through His providential guidance of the choice made by men. Apostles were appointed without any such human agency. Most of them were chosen by Christ during His earthly ministry, and Paul, who was not so chosen, is at pains to assure us that his apostleship was none the less genuine by telling us that he too was an apostle, "not from men neither through men, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised him from the dead" (Gal. 1:1). To the same purpose is the oft repeated expression: "an apostle of Jesus Christ". (Notice, by comparison, the "apostles of the churches", who were simply men chosen by the churches to act on their behalf in a particular matter (2 Cor. 8:23, Phil. 2:25). Even the sending out of Paul on his missionary journeys was not the result of the sanctified decision of godly men, but of the direct revelation of God.

These five considerations should establish beyond all doubt that the office of apostle was a special office designed to meet a special need at a special period of the church's history and is not a continuing office in the church. There can be no parallel to the Apostles in the present day. Such has been the common conviction of the churches of the Reformation in opposition to Rome and finds a continuation of the apostolic office in the Episcopate. I am sure that scripture is on our side.

The object of the following review article by the Editor is to draw attention to trends in Britain, to show how much hope is attached to the prospect of Britain joining the Common Market, and to point out that spiritual awakening is the real solution.

The Prospect of Britain¹

"THE TIMES", IN A SERIES OF FIVE EDITORIAL ARTICLES (APRIL 28 TO May 4), has set before us the future prospects of Britain. The articles are, of course, secular in approach, well-written and full of factual information. The writer illustrates the gradual disappearance of moral values, but fails to suggest a solution, except that salvation may lie in Britain's entry into the Common Market.

The titles in the series are as follows:

1. The Critique of the Young

Reasons causing disillusionment among the younger generation are cited in the first article as hideous architecture, materialism, racial prejudice, technological arrogance, organisational gigantism, dehumanisation, family isolation, boredom and universal dullness. Many young people see a solution in a Maoist revolution to force society into an egalitarian mould.²

He continues the young notice . . .

that their fathers are not enjoying themselves, even if they have been successful. Never has there been such a time for the oppressive sense of failure which lies at the heart of human success. In Britain and the United States the leaders in industry, or education, or politics—though not the scientists—talk and work like men who are conducting a long strategic retreat, two thousand miles backwards on foot. Indeed our leaders' virtues are the virtues of withdrawal under fire, resolutely conducted for years on end.

"They notice that their fathers have lost the sense of the romance and mystery of the world, the religion of nature that might have uplifted some, the religion of God that would have uplifted others."

The writer goes on further to make this conclusion:

Our dry, impersonal, metropolitan, mechanised, commercial society, with too little love and too limited a passion, is not a satisfactory envelope for a human being.

¹ Available as a booklet from The Times Publications Department, Printing House Square, London, E.C.4, from May 20th, price 15p, plus 5p postage.

² When staying at a college in the Midlands recently I was reminded of this by the fact that the student's room I was occupying was decked with Maoist slogans together with blatant espousals of immorality. These visual declarations were in keeping with the stench of home-brewed beer. The bottles had to be removed to make the room habitable. One of the lady cleaners told me that since male students had moved in, the place had turned into a moral and material dustbin, while the authorities in typical modern fashion stood by helpless, hoping for the best! This example represents a minority but it reminds us of a trend which is widespread.

The real merit of our civilisation is dribbling away through our fingers. As with the early 19th century Romantics, whom they so closely resemble, some of the leaders of the young will destroy themselves with drugs or disordered sexuality or other forms of despair. But the rejection by the stronger spirits who survive of what is most degrading in our society will influence their generation and our future.

This is fair enough except to say there is no reason to believe that "stronger spirits" will survive unless there is a genuine spiritual renewal to inspire such a survival. Immorality and drug-taking are rapidly increasing in British universities.

2. What is the British Disease?

This is perhaps the best of the five articles and the writer describes Britain's malaise in vivid terms. Here is an extract:

The central problem now is that Britain's vigour, the natural delight and tendency towards action, seems to be suspended. If Britain were an individual the physical signs of mild depression would be present, a sedentary habit, the sluggish postponement of action, a pallid complexion, irritability rather than exhilaration on exertion, long slug-a-bed hours in the morning, early bed at night but restless dreams and broken sleep.

So it is with the nation. Nothing but the lack of determination to make it so, separates us from more vital competitors, the Dutch, the Germans, the Japanese; Britain, a nation of imperial will-power, has now less than sufficient will to manage humdrum affairs with humdrum efficiency, and shivers indoors as though, on the passing of the empire, we had retired to a seaside resort to nurse a tropical fever.

There is a conservative anxiety that our standards are being eroded. Parents say that they do not know what advice to give their children and doubt whether their children would listen if they gave it. Never, they say, has it been so difficult to bring up a young family; more things are being questioned than at any time.

The state has even itself removed some of the most important decisions that parents feel they ought to make. Some parents see what they regard as a total dissolution of intellectual and moral standards, and naturally fear the consequences. They also fear the destructive power of inflation, which can destroy their savings, their pensions, and the happiness of their retirement.

These are the symptoms. While the writer speculates on causes he is unable to provide an answer, although, to be fair to him, he does strike the right note in the following statement:

What seems almost certain, however, is that the revival of national will which can restore Britain's economy cannot depend purely on economic motives. Some nations make civilisation a by-product of the creation of wealth; Britain is more likely to make wealth a by-product of the creation of a worthwhile civilisation.

3. Mr. Heath's Historic Gamble

The third article deals with Britain's application for entry into the Common Market. The prophets of Israel used to deride her for looking to Egypt for salvation when she was in dire straits. Today Britain hopes that entry into the Common Market will provide a magic formula for all her ills.

The possibilities are stated as follows:

Let us take first the favourable possibilities. By the end of the summer Britain may have been negotiated successfully into Europe. By the end of the summer trade union reform legislation will have been passed. By the end of the year rising unemployment, not sought but accepted, may have brought wage inflation under control. If so, Britain will enter Europe with at least a competitive level of price stability, and with a reserve of labour of between a million and a million and a half—not all listed as unemployed—available to man a period of long-term industrial expansion. At the same time, British industry, having laid off many of its surplus men, will be leaner and itself more competitive than at any time since the war.

Will entry really solve the problems? This remedy bypasses the spiritual and moral malaise which lies at the root of everything.

4. The Politics of Reconciliation

Here general observations are made. For instance it is pointed out that long-haired Maoist students form a limited proportion of the population and that the stopping of the South African cricket tour was nowhere more resented than by the ordinary Labour voters in northern industrial towns. This article wanders a bit and is of less value than the others.

5. Dead Failure or New Start

In the final article the Gospel of entry into the Common Market is preached as though our very lives and those of our children depended upon it. The following quote represents some of the arguments:

Put quite simply, Britain outside Europe is the wrong place. In the present world, one which is becoming more protective, there are already four industrial groups more powerful than ourselves, the United States, Europe, the Soviet Union, and Japan. China will certainly have overtaken us before the end of the century. Britain is therefore running fifth in a six horse race and falling back. As a partner in Europe Britain would be jointly running second and moving up.

In 1960 Britain's share of world exports of manufactured goods was 16 per cent.; by 1968 it had fallen to 11 per cent.

In 1961 those who supported British entry argued that outside Europe Britain would have a much lower growth rate than the European countries. That has happened. They argued that Britain would fall behind in advanced industries. That has happened. They argued that British industrial investment would be well below the European level. That has happened. They feared a decade of sterling crisis. That has happened. They forecast that Europe's standard of living, then still below ours, would have overtaken us by 1970. That has happened. All the main lines of the hotly disputed argument of 1961 proved correct in the 1960s. The chief difference between those arguments of 1961, which proved correct at every point, and the argument of 1971 is that the situation is now much worse. In 1961 we were entering the rapids; now we can hear the rumble of the falls.

These arguments are persuasive. Yet they can be rebutted by competent statesmen who are opposed to Britain's entry. Moreover, it is alarming to note that questions of equal importance to economics such as

religion, history, culture and language are neglected, not to mention our long association with the Commonwealth and with English-speaking nations to which we are related. Most of all we need to bear in mind that union with Europe does not solve the problem of steady moral decline in our schools and universities, or the moral decline taking place throughout the fabric of British life.

The Gospel of Jesus Christ is the only hope for Britain and the world. The Gospel will restore faith in the absolute unchanging character of God who has created the world, who controls history and who will judge every man in the coming great judgment day. The Gospel will restore the truth about man. He is a sinner by nature. They that are in the flesh cannot please God. The remedy for the disease of sin is not education about sin, but insistence upon repentance or a change of heart. A drunkard is not saved by knowledge about what damage "booze" can do. He is saved by the renewal of his heart, the expulsion of old affections by a new and living love for Christ the Lord. Our children will not be saved from sexual promiscuity by giving them volumes on sex. That is like trying to quench a fire with incendiary bombs. The more the subject is blown up the more desires are fanned. The heart of man is depraved and empty. Jesus Christ alone can fill the void and remove the guilt that separates us from the Father.

The greatest encouragement in Britain today is the fact that some evangelical churches are on the upgrade. This I regard as a slight turning in the tide. There are recent converts whose lives testify to the reality of the Gospel. This strengthens us for the battle ahead. God continues to prove that He is with us by transforming sinners. We know that God who saves by few can also save by many. If He saves by many this will constitute a revival, and it was a revival that saved Britain in the 18th century. Conditions are different today. A reformation is needed. Indeed we are in a similar position to that which prevailed in the 16th century. Truth has been washed away and you cannot have a revival without truth. There are rumours of revival taking place in different countries but when the facts are examined it is found that these revivals are not only exaggerated but they are very shallow. Only that which really changes the hearts of many people in a deep and lasting way, to the extent that the behaviour of a nation is transformed, can be called a revival.

What should be the attitude of Christians if Britain does enter? Whether in or out our attitude should always be positive. What may be a curse in some ways can also be a blessing in others. Opportunities to spread Gospel truth in Europe may result. If this is the case we should be ready to make the most of it. Whatever happens let us never underestimate the power of the Gospel.

A pastor in America in writing to a missionary shows that the office of an Apostle is extraordinary. We would contend that the office of an Evangelist is also extraordinary. Elders who are gifted may be set aside to special tasks of missionary or evangelistic endeavour, but they are elders still, no more and no less, equal in authority to other elders.

Are There Apostles Today?

NOW I MUST ATTEMPT TO ANSWER YOUR QUESTION CONCERNING THE relation of the missionary to the local church. As I understand it, your contention is that the ministry of the missionary is similar to that of the Apostles, and is therefore independent of the authority of the elders of any church, though not isolated from the church.

The immediate and fatal flaw I see in this reasoning is that a missionary is neither an apostle, nor the successor to the Apostles, nor is his ministry comparable to that of the Apostles. The office of the Apostles was a unique office without succession. While the word might be used in a loose sense, the office of apostle, as a distinct office in the Christian church, has no parallel in the present day.

This extraordinary character of the apostolic office is evident from:

(i) The total lack of any provision for the continuation of the office beyond the first apostles. Detailed instructions and precedent are given governing the appointment of elders and deacons, but not a word about the further appointment of apostles. As John Owen remarks: "Where no command, no rule, no authority, no directions, are given for the calling of any officer, there that office must cease."

(ii) The purpose of the apostolic office, which was to bear authoritative witness to the risen Christ. As such the Apostles laid the only authentic foundation for the church throughout the whole N.T. era (Eph. 2:20), and are the sole authenticators of the revelation of Christ (Eph. 3:5). With the completion of that revelation, and the consequent completion of the scriptures as the sole sufficient rule for the church, the need for such an office ceased. No missionary today fulfils such a role, and few missionaries would even dare to claim that on them the church is built as it was on the Apostles.

(iii) The qualifications for an apostle, which included the requirement that the Apostle should have seen the Lord in the flesh (Acts 1:21-25, 1 Cor. 9:1; 15:8). It is evident that none could claim this qualification today. Even Paul spoke of himself as, in this respect, an exception, since, while he did see the Lord in His risen flesh, yet it was "as one born out of due time" (1 Cor. 15:8).

(iv) The extraordinary gifts that attested the apostolic ministry. Paul cites these in writing to the Corinthians, saying, "the signs of an apostle were wrought among you . . . by signs and wonders and mighty deeds" (2 Cor. 12:12). None today can match, or even begin to match the flood of miraculous signs that accompanied the ministry of

Continued on p. 16.

David Fountain, pastor of the Spring Road Evangelical Church, Sholing, Southampton, acted as secretary to the Puritan Conference until 1960 and has an intimate knowledge of its progress and history. Here he answers questions put to him by the Editor.

The Puritan Conference

Twenty Years in Review

Could you tell us how the Puritan Conference began?

It was started in December 1950 by Dr. Lloyd-Jones and Dr. J. I. Packer, as a study group of the Tyndale Fellowship for Biblical Research. It was first held in the Church Parlour at Westminster Chapel, with about 30 attending. Those who came had already acquired an interest in the Puritans. The Evangelical Library had doubtless played a part in creating this unusual interest, besides the influence of the Chairman, Dr. Lloyd-Jones, and the Organiser, Dr. Packer.

I have all the Puritan Conference papers from 1956, but it would be interesting to know what kind of subjects the earlier Conferences dealt with.

I still have vivid recollections of some of the early papers. I can recall clearly a paper given by Dr. Lloyd-Jones on Thomas Goodwin's exposition of Isaiah 50:10 and 11, on the subject "A Child of Light Walking in Darkness, and a Child of Darkness Walking in the Light". It had a stunning effect upon me which lasted for some time. I had not appreciated the biblical doctrine of Assurance, and the Puritan view was shattering.

In 1951 Dr. Packer, speaking on "The Puritan Theology of the Christian Life", gave a general background to the whole Puritan movement, with a general history of it. He stressed that though there were differences they were held together by pastoral work and a common belief in the doctrines of grace. They were predominantly pastors, and as pastors it was needful that they be thorough and proficient as theologians. Great stress was laid on the pastor and the flock, and the oversight of each member. The Puritans brought the work of the Reformers to completion, applying the great doctrines of the faith to the Christian life. Richard Baxter's example as a Reformed pastor provided much practical help in the sound guidance he gave to his people.

Dr. Kevan spoke on "Repentance and Saving Grace". He showed how Baxter insisted that "Gospel preachers must enquire into the principles of conversion so that we may comply with the will of God". Baxter's

spiritual earnestness was striking. Note some of the headings. He dwelt on (i) "Man's Spiritual Destitution"; the fact that (ii) "Only by Grace Can an Unconverted Man Accept God's Salvation"; (iii) "Preparations to Conversion"; (iv) "Common Grace" was dealt with as "a special activity of the Holy Spirit as far as, but not including, Redemptive Grace". It was preparatory to regeneration. The experiences of temporary believers were real, so that they spoke of how the unconverted strive against the Holy Ghost; (v) "The Divine Purpose of Common Grace"; (vi) "Regeneration the Act of God Alone"; "God actually gives us faith and repentance. Faith is the applying of Christ to oneself. Man needs more than assistance, he needs salvation." The thoroughness and reality of this stands in contrast with shallow evangelism today.

Other papers in 1951 dealt with "Puritan Casuistry" and "The Response of Man to the Work of Christ". In the latter paper emphasis was laid on the fact that the Gospel points to Christ, and not simply to His work. We respond to Him and meet with Him. The Law is preached to convict of sin, to produce fear and a sense of need; *then* the Gospel is to be preached. Man turns from his sin to God. Repentance and faith are both vital. He must hate sin and follow Christ. The early Christians referred to the Christian life as "the Way". We must stress that there is no salvation apart from going along "the Way". Christ must be Lord as well as Saviour. Just as a woman leaves all and commits herself to her husband, so it must be that we follow Him. It is an irrevocable step, as in marriage. This step is only comprehensible to a Christian. It is the life of Christ within the believer—"You have finished your former life, your hope is that you will be with Him and like Him. This is your true life. Even now you can experience the joy of this new life. We must always be ready to leave this earth. True conversion always leads to this attitude." We must present the Gospel broadly and not isolate part of it. Holiness is not optional.

I think the first time that I went to the Conference was in 1955 and I have a very clear memory of the informality of the occasion. There seemed to be quite a few young men and I remember they had erected a blackboard which was going to be used for illustrations. Perhaps you could tell us something of the composition of the early Conferences.

Those who came to begin with were men who already had an interest, but soon the excellent material and helpful applications of the Chairman attracted a growing number. Quite a number of students came, mainly from Oxford, and each year the numbers increased. Those in attendance were generally, but not always, sympathetic to the Puritans, but one incident stands out as indicating how few fully grasped the doctrines of grace. It was during Dr. Packer's paper on Richard Baxter, referred to above. He dwelt at some length on the fact that Baxter did not hold to the Doctrine of Particular Redemption, but followed the view of a French Seminary at Saumur, believing that it "hindered evangelism" and

dishonoured God. He differed from the vast majority of Puritans in this, as in other things. This provoked some discussion in which the Chairman pointed out that if you really believe in Universal Atonement you are confronted with the question, "Will sin be punished for people whose sin has been atoned for? This cannot be". I remember that Dr. Lloyd-Jones was the only one at the Conference in 1952 prepared to defend the Doctrine of Particular Redemption (the proper outworking of Substitutionary Atonement). Later this point of doctrine was generally adopted by Reformed men in England. However, the incident reveals a haziness of thinking in the early days while there was a general appreciation of the Puritans and a desire to learn.

Generally speaking, from which section of the Evangelical community did those who attended the Conference come?

Just over half were ministers. A large number were students. Others came, including a sprinkling of ladies. The vast majority were Baptists and Independents; some were Anglicans and a few were Presbyterians. The Brethren were noticeably absent, with the exception of the late Percy Ruoff. His presence had always adorned the Conference and his comments were sure to provoke a useful discussion. He would often ask questions which others were too timid to ask, because they were a little provocative. It was inevitable that the intimacy of the earlier Conferences was lost as it grew in size.

I was never clear in my own mind as to who was ultimately responsible for the Conference. It started off under the auspices of the Tyndale Fellowship. This ceased at one point. Do you know when this was, and why?

The 1959 Conference was the last to be held under the auspices of the Tyndale Fellowship. The Conference had grown out of all proportion from its early beginnings as a study group. Furthermore, it had become a strong influence in the life of Evangelicals in the country. The Tyndale Fellowship felt that it would be better for the Conference to separate. It was obvious that a distinctively Calvinistic Conference that was having so much influence could not be allied to a body that by virtue of its very nature and work took no clear position on the Doctrines of Grace without causing some embarrassment. The I.V.F. represented all Evangelicals. The Puritan Conference, in the very nature of things, was Reformed. It was felt, therefore, by the Tyndale Fellowship, and by the Committee of the Conference, wiser to follow separate courses. It was better for the Conference to run independently than to be held under the auspices of a body that was broadly Evangelical. A clear voice could be raised without anyone suggesting that because of the broader Evangelical umbrella they did not have any brief to speak in the way that they did.

We have lived during a time of an awakening in reformed literature, and I feel sure that the Puritan papers have added a little to the stream which

has become a mighty river. Could you tell us when the Conference reports were first made available to the Christian public?

In 1954 and 1955 the papers were produced from the manuscripts of the speakers, and appeared in duplicated form. They came to 24 sides of foolscap. These were successful, and the 1956 and 1957 reports came out duplicated in book form under the title "The Wisdom of our Fathers" and "Servants of the Word". About 500 of these were circulated and, as might be expected, they are out of print.

In the earlier Conferences I remember there was a sense of expectation every year as the Conference grew in size. Dr. Ernest Kevan, who always attended, was noted for his ability to contend with the Chairman. It was grand to see iron sharpening iron as important points of truth were hammered out in debate. In later years there seemed to be a decline. When do you think the Conference reached its peak in influence and attendance?

These two seem to go together, and December 1959 was the high-water mark. The numbers had steadily grown (the Reports helping to this effect) until they reached 400. In later Conferences there were more present for individual papers, such as those given by Dr. Lloyd-Jones and Dr. Packer, but this was clearly the largest overall. It was the second to be reported in print—under the title "How shall they hear?"—and about 3,000 copies were sold. The Conference had proved a blessing to so many that news had travelled far and wide, and the response had gathered momentum. The previous year the report had been printed for the first time. It was entitled "A Goodly Heritage". At the same time it must not be forgotten that a growing number of Reformed books had become available. Mr. Grier had kept a witness going for decades through his bookshop in Belfast, and for some years had been sending across to England American books from Reformed publishing houses. Jay Green's "Sovereign Grace Book Club" was selling over 15 titles of Puritan reprints at this time, and Arthur Pink's books were being re-published and publicized. The Banner of Truth had recently begun publishing books, and brought their first book out in the February of the previous year. The Banner of Truth magazine had itself been in circulation for about four years. As books were printed and reports circulated the interest widened, and the need to attend the Conference in order to learn about the Puritans diminished. Numbers began to decline slowly. They held at about 250 to 300 for some years, but latterly dropped to 150 to 200.

This was not due, however, to a lack of interest but the availability of help elsewhere. I gave up the Secretaryship after the 1960 Conference since I felt that things were going so well and were absorbing so much time I needed to concentrate more on my pastoral work.

Have you any comments to make in general about the last ten years of the Conference?

I am hesitant to do this since not only are the Reports available even now, but very many people attended so that personal observations are not necessary as with the earlier Conferences. I think it was noticeable, however, that the papers became more technical and that those who gave them tended to be specialist experts rather than pastors. This was to some degree inevitable since the Conference was making progress each year in its understanding of the writings of the Puritans. The Chairman did very well, as one might expect, in applying the papers to the present situation, and his closing address, which became a feature from 1960 onwards was always directly applicable. It must be admitted, however, that latterly the length and heaviness of some of the papers made it difficult for a good number, especially those new to the Conference, to get as much benefit as they hoped. However, the reports could always be digested at leisure.

On looking back have you any particular criticism to make, or suggestions to offer?

One factor has impressed me, I must confess. We have neglected the local church in the subjects dealt with. In all of the 20 years we have not had a single paper that dealt specifically with a local church or local churches. One paper came near to it, that of Dennis Downham on "Discipline and the Puritan Congregation" in the 1958 Conference. He dealt with principles that were useful. However, we did not come into contact with any actual situation. In 1966 Dr. Lloyd-Jones took as his subject, "Henry Jacob and the First Congregational Church". This was very useful in dealing with matters of church polity and how these things were worked out, but again we did not get to grips with the local congregation. The nearest we got to these practical and personal matters was the remarkable paper by Elizabeth Braund, "Daily Life Among the Puritans", in the 1957 Conference.

It is true that to deal with a local church and actual situations needs considerable research, and there is not so much available on early 17th Century Church life as there is later; but it is a fact that after all these conferences we know very little about the outworkings and effects of the fine preaching and sound theology in the life of the congregation. The reason why this is so vital is that the contrast between spiritual standards among the people of God contrast most sharply with things as they are today. It is possible, without too much difficulty, to adopt a Puritan theology in a superficial manner, and to imagine that one can quickly become part of the Puritan tradition and heir to the Puritan heritage; but it requires the power of the Holy Spirit, through tremendous labour and diligent application, to produce a Puritan congregation. We have many who agree with Puritan doctrine, but where are the Puritan congregations? Is there not a terrible danger that our Reformation will be superficial, like that in the days of Josiah?

Reformation for Husbands

THE SUPREME TEST OF A MAN'S GODLINESS IS HIS BEHAVIOUR IN THE HOME. There are many who keep a halo hanging outside the front door and a pair of horns hanging on the inside.

Let us picture one of our friends as he sets off to work. Leaving his horns behind, he becomes a gentleman of the first order. Before his business associates he is charming, while the lady secretaries admire his knightly bearing. By the end of the day his reserves of energy and patience are running low. There might have been affability at lunch, but underneath lay the perpetual anxieties of business. Our friend approaches home. Soon he can relax. Tossing the halo onto its peg, he enters. The exertions of the day are now over. He is no longer on his guard. Here he is too well known to deceive anybody. Before long his ire is aroused. Something is lost, the children are naughty, or the wife has dented the car. He loses his temper and shouts. The horns are on. The saint abroad has become a devil at home. At church you would think you were seeing an angel; at work, a gentleman; but at home—a grizzly bear!

Reformation should begin at home. It starts with the husband-wife relationship. This is the foundation upon which the home is built. If the husband and wife maintain their spiritual union before God the effects will be reflected in everything else. Here is the fountainhead. Together they share their lives before God. Any inconsistency or grievance can be discussed and corrected at the level of their union together in Christ. Generally speaking, if this is not the case, differences are quarrelled about rather than settled in a spiritual fashion.

Where do all these interests find their focal point? The answer surely is when husband and wife pray together. Here we find them committing their affairs to the Lord. Their spiritual concerns, their home life, their church interests—everything ultimately finds expression in intercession. Hence the burden of the apostle Peter is that the prayers of marriage be not hindered (I Peter 3:7). The safeguards the apostle recommends to husbands for the maintenance of these prayers fall under three headings:

Husbands should:

1. live with their wives according to knowledge;
2. remember that their wives are the "weaker vessels";
3. honour their wives as "being heirs together of the grace of life".

Before proceeding with these points we should not assume that the time of prayer together is a reality. When do we pray with our wives? We gather daily with the whole family, sometimes we sing; we always read

the Scriptures and one, two, or more, lead in prayer. The catechism is also used from time to time. To this daily family exercise we pray at mealtimes—short, varied, and to the point. All this is fundamental. But what about husband and wife praying on their own? The pressures of responsibility increase as time goes on, but surely it is vital that at specific times every day, at least once, preferably twice, wife and husband should pray together. If this is not so, reformation is called for. If in that better part, which Mary chose, we are at fault, it may be that we are not helping them to be good Marthas either! Both areas are essential.

We now turn to the safeguards which Peter provides to ensure that our prayers be not hindered.

1. Husbands should live with their wives according to knowledge.

The “living together” includes not only the conjugal sense, without which a marriage is not consummated, but also the complete daily routine. In every sense there should be partnership. Obviously this cannot be achieved if a man spends a great deal of time away from home. A Christian should seek to avoid a vocation which will militate against his home life, that is if he is a married man. This can be illustrated from the life of George Whitefield. At the age of 24 in 1739 it was pretty obvious that he was in love with a beautiful young woman by the name of Elizabeth Delamotte. In every way she seemed an ideal partner for him. He did not manage his love affair very well and the possibility of marriage fell through. Two years later, at the age of 26 in 1741, Whitefield married a widow ten years older than himself. Within a week of marriage Whitefield again started out on his evangelistic travels, leaving his newly wedded wife behind him in Wales. It is obvious that his itinerating life was incompatible with a domestic role. Cornelius Winter, one of Whitefield’s closest friends in later life, observed that he was “not happy in his wife”. We may well wonder whether he would have been happy with anybody under the circumstances of being away for most of the year. Had he married Elizabeth Delamotte it is doubtful whether he would have made her happy.

But there are other ways of breaking the idea of “living together”. Our age is an age of multiplicity in committee meetings. Some men are away so much at their meetings that they spend very little time with their families. It is probable that we have too many committee meetings and too many members on these committees. This shows a lack of trust. We should acknowledge gifts and let men get on with their work without having to consume the time of others. (The same principle applies in the home. The husband should let a wife get on with domestic affairs and not always be prying into her realm. Such lack of trust can be very discouraging to a wife.) At any rate we should be jealous to safeguard a healthy balance in our affairs so that we do not neglect one area of

life at the expense of another. If asked to join a committee we should enquire whether our contribution would be great enough to warrant our acceptance, or whether the invitation comes only to give us a sense of importance! It is not always easy to maintain a right use of time in handling outside and domestic responsibilities.

If at all possible, husbands should take their wives with them when they travel or when they go out in the evenings. Peter, the apostle, “led about” his wife. The expression “to lead about” is used because the apostles travelled from place to place in the course of their ministries. Mrs. Spurgeon tells the story of how she was left high and dry by her fiancé in a milling crowd on the way to a meeting. Such was the burden of the message carried by the famous young preacher “that he forgot my existence”. She was angry with him, rightly, for if he was to be her partner he would have to do better than that.

When it says in the text “according to knowledge”, I take this to mean according to the knowledge which the Gospel imparts. John Brown, in his excellent three-volume commentary on Peter’s first epistle, takes knowledge to mean intelligence. “Let him conduct himself intelligently, wisely, prudently.” Christian husbands should act “circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise”. The latter applies particularly to the intimate side of the marriage relationship. But the term “according to knowledge” can mean the knowledge of the Gospel, which includes all its doctrines and ethics as an integrated whole. The way in which the word “knowledge” is used in the New Testament, and particularly by Peter in his second epistle,¹ provides warrant for this view.

This knowledge of the Gospel has brought us into union with the Father and the Son. It is the truth which has made us free. As we continue in the Word we are Christ’s true disciples and His light shines upon the different areas of our living.

Couples should not neglect art, music and culture. We can be sure that if we do not forge cultural activities of our own then our children will take over the pagan ideas and practices that increase on every hand. Without being extravagant the general work of making the home an attractive, hospitable place can be shared.

Most fruitful of all passages providing light on how we are to love our wives is that of Ephesians 5:25-33. We are to live together “in love”. The dominant message of the passage is that husbands should model their love for their wives on the pattern provided by Christ in His love for His Church. “Even as Christ also loved the Church and gave Himself for it.” Gethsemane and Golgotha’s Cross were endured for her.

¹ cf. 2 Peter 1:6; 3:18.

Greater love has no man than that he should lay down his life for his friends.

A husband's love should resemble that of Christ's for His Bride, the Church. Christ's love for the Church is distinguishing, constant, tender, holy and generous. Space allows comment on the first two features only. Christ's love for His Church is a *distinguishing* love. He gave Himself in particular for His Church, "I pray not for the world but for them which thou hast given me" (John 17:9). So ought a husband to have eyes for his wife alone. Let no other woman be contemplated as a better object of affection or desire, either with eye or imagination. In this generation, hell-bent on sensuality, let us reform our minds in purity and have our imaginations washed in the blood of Christ. At all times we ought to regard that great day when the secrets of man shall be known before all the world (Romans 2:16). "Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled, but whoremongers and adulterers will God judge" (Hebrews 13:4).

Christ's love for His Bride is *constant*. The Lord does not forsake His Church when she is distempered, rebellious, ungrateful or indifferent. Surely this is a pattern and example for Christian husbands.

It is necessary to guard against "woolly" ideas of the meaning of love. The well-known thirteenth chapter of Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians reminds us of the meaning of love in practical terms. Paul tells us that love is more excellent than the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit. Though we do marvels by way of good works, all is vanity without love. Love bears evils and injuries, is cheerful and generous in doing good—is always allied to humility. Love is the opposite of envy, selfishness, censoriousness and bad temper.

As far as husbands are concerned the reference to selfishness is particularly relevant as is the matter of bad temper. And then we might ask ourselves whether reformation is not required in the point concerning bearing injury. As Adam blamed Eve when called to account by God, so husbands are peculiarly prone to blame their wives, especially when through carelessness they lose things. It is not always easy to apologise when it is discovered that the husband is the culprit after all!

2. Husbands should remember that their wives are the "weaker vessels".

The word translated "vessel" seems to mean framework or fabric. Although in some respects the woman may have more stamina than her husband (if she has several children she will need it), she is not as strong physically. Her emotions are subject to monthly cycles and depressions. Her judgment on this account is often defective. This may be one reason why women are not to have authority over men in the Church. Intellectually women are often superior to men and sometimes can be more perceptive in moral discernment, but *always* there is a danger of weakness (and sometimes fickleness) in the emotional life. The woman

is the weaker of the two. Satan attacked Eve. He always preys on the most vulnerable. He strikes when we are at a low ebb.

Husbands should be perceptive in their discernment and observe that there are times when their wives need more than the usual encouragement. They should be helped and supported with sympathy and affection at all times.

The need for reformation as far as conversation is concerned may be needed. It is very easy by harsh reproof to injure one's wife. Unnecessary suffering can be inflicted by thoughtless rebukes or by hard words.

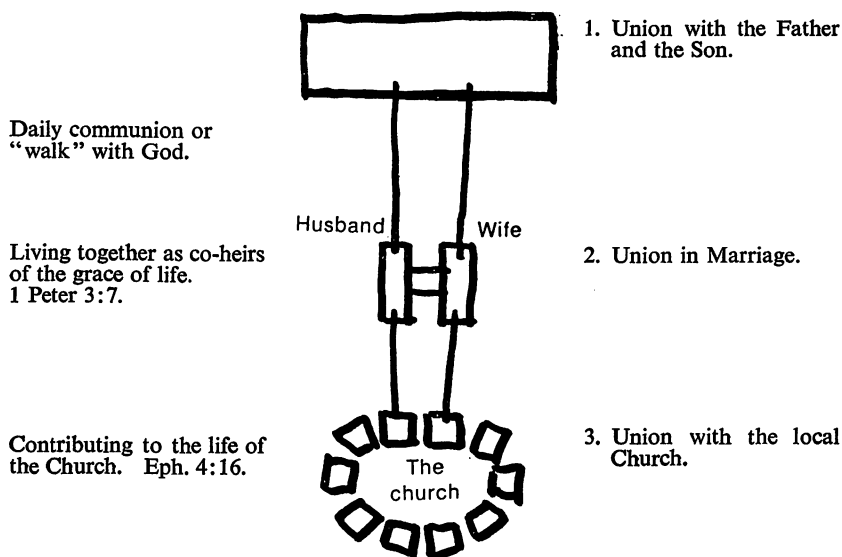
It is well to mark how a passing word—
Too lightly said, and too deeply heard—
Or a harsh reproof, or a look unkind,
May spoil the peace of a sensitive mind.

The weakness of the wife in some respects underlines the need of leadership. The predominant exhortation in the New Testament to husbands is "to love their wives". The main exhortation to wives is "to submit themselves to their husbands". The story is told of the case put to Martin Luther concerning a learned and godly man who had set his heart on the ministry. His wife, because she had a haughty spirit, was altogether unwilling to consent to that kind of life. The question was asked, "what should the good man do? Should he abandon his wife or the ministry of the Word?" Luther's reply was typically rugged. "If there were a real government there, it could compel the old hag. For a wife is bound to follow her husband, not a husband his wife. She must be a wicked woman—indeed, a devil—to be ashamed of the ministry in which the Lord Christ Himself and the dear angels were. The devil tries to slander and defame the ministry." He then went on to point out that the trouble in that household was that the government was not there. In other words, if the man was properly governing his household he would not be overcome by this difficulty—a timely reminder that we should lay hands suddenly on no man. Let both husband and wife be observed together. Let them weather a few storms. Let them overcome some crises. Let them resist temptations. When it is observed that both grow better and stronger through trial and adversity then is the time to recognise public office. But if a husband cannot control his wife how can he rule in the Church of God?

3. Husbands should honour their wives "as being heirs together of the grace of life".

The original reads, "assigning honour as indeed co-heirs of the grace of life". A converted couple have the unspeakable blessing of eternal life through the salvation which is in Jesus Christ. Together they are united to Him. Husbands are to have due regard for these facts. The diagram may help to illustrate the union that husband and wife have together,

with Christ the Head, and with the local Church, from which they benefit through the means of grace.



It is the husband's duty to see that all these unions are maintained. The severance of any of them will damage the others. For instance, if a husband and wife do not maintain their prayers together this will weaken their other spiritual relationships. If the local Church is not what it should be this will likewise have a weakening effect.

Reformation may well be needed to establish the three unions illustrated in harmony and balance with each other, so that there is spiritual health and vitality all round. And then it is not enough that husband and wife should pray daily together. Spiritual reality and power should be present at these times. Too easily a dead formality can characterise this vital area of the Christian life.

Let husbands seek the power of the Holy Spirit as they endeavour reformation knowing that perseverance and time will be required for success. Paul told Timothy that if a man desired the office of an elder, he desired a good work. But he must be "blameless, the husband of one wife . . . given to hospitality . . . one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity". The apostle then adds; "For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the Church of God?"

Reformation in the home is the best precursor to reformation in the Church, and reformation in the Church the forerunner of revival. "Revive thy work, O Lord."

Dr. Jack Milner describes how he came to study the life of William Kiffin as follows: "A few years ago, Verduin's book, The Reformers and Their Stepchildren, was very helpful to me, and led, incidentally, to an interest in the Anabaptists. However, after further study, I found that I had no real theological sympathy, by and large, with the Continental Anabaptists since so many seemed to believe in free-will. This then led me to wonder about the origins of the English Particular Baptists whose confession of faith of 1689 has always impressed me. Attached to this confession are the names of the representatives of the various churches and many of them really intrigued me. William Kiffin, Benjamin Keach, Hansard Knollys, Hercules Collins—surely, I thought, people with names like these must be real characters. Then a friend told me the well-known anecdote about Kiffin and Charles II¹ and this aroused my curiosity further. Finally I was asked to prepare a Christian biography lecture for some friends. I joined the Evangelical Library² so that I could borrow Joseph Ivimey's Life of Kiffin and the 1st volume of his 4 vol. History of the Baptists. I also referred to Underwood's History of the Baptists and Burrage's Early English Dissenters. I thought I would take the opportunity of finding out what I could about at least one Baptist worthy. What follows is offered with some diffidence and I would urge readers to find out more for themselves."

William Kiffin—Merchant, Pastor—"grand ringleader of that seduced sect"!

BORN IN 1616 DURING THE REIGN OF JAMES I WILLIAM KIFFIN LIVED through the reign of Charles I, the stormy Parliamentary Wars, the Protectorate of Cromwell, the reign of Charles II after the Restoration, the brief reign of James II until the Revolution of 1688, and he died in 1701, during the reign of William and Mary, aged 85.

Up to 1688, except for a period of respite during the Protectorate, life was very difficult for the Separatists, *i.e.* the Baptists and others who rejected the idea of a State Church. Whatever ecclesiastical group happened to be in power seemed to be intent on making life uncomfortable for those who differed from them. Anglicans, Presbyterians, even some Independents (*e.g.* those who colonised Massachusetts in New England) all believed in uniformity in religion and in *compelling* those who differed. Baptists, therefore, received the same treatment whoever was in power and

¹The story goes that Charles once asked Kiffin to lend him £40,000. The Baptist merchant replied that he could not possibly lend His Majesty so large a sum, but he would be pleased if he would accept £10,000 as a gift. Kiffin used to say afterwards that he had thereby saved £30,000 by his liberality! In 1663 twelve General Baptists were condemned to death for contravening the Elizabethan Act and attending a conventicle. Kiffin interceded on their behalf and obtained their release. The King disliked the idea of offending one who could let him have £10,000.

²The address of the library is 78a, Chiltern Street, London, W1M 1PS.

were persecuted. We must bear this in mind when we read about such men as William Kiffin. It is easy for us to change our views over such matters as baptism and be baptised in a nice warm baptistery. It was rather different when believers were baptised in rivers with the constant fear of arrest, and worshipped in meeting houses rather than the parish church knowing that they could be imprisoned and heavily fined.

Early Life and Conversion

Kiffin lost his parents during the plague of London in 1625 when he was only nine. When they died he himself suffered from the plague but recovered—he was then cared for by some relations who were more concerned to avail themselves of his parents' property than to fulfil their obligations towards him.

He was apprenticed as a brewer's clerk when he was 13—an occupation which he described as “a very mean calling”. When he was fourteen the Lord started to deal with his soul. One day he was reflecting on his condition in life and he says that he became very melancholy. In other words—he looked at the poor and, no doubt, boring job he had and the thought of a lifetime of it was too much for him. He just could not stand it and ran away. As he wandered through the London streets he saw people going to hear a Mr Foxley preach and went with them since he had nothing to do. To his amazement he was expounding the Fifth Commandment and showing that it extended to masters and servants as well as parents and children. Young Kiffin thought that Mr Foxley surely knew all about him and was speaking only to him. The effect of the sermon was to cause him to return to his master the same day that he ran away. No one even knew what had happened!

We can see the goodness of God in dealing thus with him and effectually preserving him from the viciousness of London life and the sure degradation that awaited waifs and strays. However, the effect of that sermon was to provoke a desire in Kiffin's heart to hear more of the same sort. Mr. Foxley was one of the Puritan preachers and we find Kiffin after this listening to the preaching of several of those who were nicknamed “Puritans”.

Soon after this incident we find this young lad listening to a Mr. Norton, who later became one of the New England ministers. The text was from Jeremiah:—“There is no peace saith my God unto the wicked.” Mr. Norton showed how no man could obtain true peace apart from an interest in Christ and young Kiffin knew that *he* had no peace and that he was utterly ignorant of what it meant to have an interest in Christ. He became aware of his state and he said, to quote his own words, “I every day saw myself more sinful and vile; pray I could not; I thought myself shut up in unbelief; and although I desired to mourn under a sense of my sins, yet I saw there was no proportion in my sorrow suitable to that

evil nature which I found working strongly in my soul.” The young lad now attended diligently to the most powerful preaching he could find. Sometimes he obtained some comfort in a belief in the *possibility* of mercy. He also resolved to amend his life but found he had no power to perform what he wanted to do. At fourteen years of age Kiffin was under deep conviction of sin. He saw he was a sinner and knew that he was a slave to those things which provoked God.

Eventually Kiffin heard Mr. Davenport (another Puritan who later emigrated to New England) preach on I John 1: 7 “And the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.” As a result of what was said he found his fears to vanish and his heart filled with love to Jesus Christ. He saw sin viler than ever and felt a detestation of it in his heart. Shortly after he heard Mr. Norton again, this time on Luke 1: 69 “And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David.” Mr. Norton showed that Christ had all the power and ability necessary to save His people and young Kiffin was assured of *his* interest in Christ. The power of corruption was weakened and his heart became ablaze with love to his Redeemer. He says, concerning this time, that he was greatly puzzled to hear older Christians talk of their fight against inbred corruption and sin—he was sure that he would never feel its power again in *his* heart. He rejoiced in his new found salvation for over three months until, to his dismay, he found his heart to grow cold and his sins arose to beset him once more. He became alarmed and wondered if he was one of those described in Hebrews 6 who are merely *tasters* and fall away since they are not truly saved.

His hopes were revived somewhat on hearing Mr. Moline preach on the question “What is the least measure of grace?” He said that an assurance of being in a state of salvation was a large measure of grace and then went on to describe the characteristics of true grace—however weak. Kiffin says that he found some small beginnings of *the signs* of true grace in his own soul and he was greatly encouraged. The encouragement was not, however, the return of his assurance but rather a strengthening of his resolution to wait upon God in preaching and prayer and meditation *whatever, at the end, might be God’s pleasure towards him.*

In recording the dealings of God with his soul, Kiffin realised on looking back, that all his perplexities arose from the fact that he was trying to find something within himself whereby he might obtain greater victory over sin and merit, thereby, his approach to Christ for pardon. His perplexities were aggravated by one of the characteristic emphases of the Puritan preaching he heard. All the ablest preachers that he listened to pressed the *necessity* of a deep conviction of sin brought about by the preaching of the law. Not only so, they stressed that this preparatory law-work was the *only* way God took to convert a sinner. Young Kiffin, who *was* convicted of sin, looked within himself and concluded, inevitably,

that he had never experienced the deep harrowing of soul described by the preachers. The result was that he was on the verge of concluding that all his comforts had been a delusion and that God had never dealt graciously with him.

By now he was seventeen years old and his release from bondage came as a result of the ministry of John Goodwin who arrived in London in 1632. This preacher (who was, it seems, tainted with Arminianism and not very highly thought of) took the more Scriptural view that God had not tied Himself to any single way to bring a sinner to Christ. He denied that it was absolutely necessary to preach the terrors of the law in order to prepare a soul for Christ. Indeed, he said, the tendency of the terrors of the law was rather to keep a soul away from Christ. He dealt with the matter in great detail considering the many scriptures used by the other preachers to prove their point of view.

Kiffin says "this was of great use to me, so far as to satisfy me, that God had not tied Himself to any such way of converting a sinner; but according to His good pleasure took several ways of bringing a soul to Jesus Christ. I had for some time seen the want of Christ, and believed that it was by Him only I must expect pardon; and had also seen the worth and excellencies that were in Him above all other objects: so that I now felt my soul to rest upon and trust in Him."

Here is a noteworthy instance of the sovereignty of God. Although the other, more famous, preachers were used to some extent, God used the despised Arminian John Goodwin to bring Kiffin to rest and peace in Christ.

Church Fellowship and Entry into the Ministry

For two years Kiffin attended the ministry of John Goodwin and each Lord's Day spent an hour or so in fellowship with some other godly apprentices he had come to know. They gathered before morning service to pray and read the scriptures. It was here that Kiffin first learned to delight in the scriptures and discovered something of his pastoral gift.

It was during these two years that Davenport, Hooker and others left for New England because they found it impossible to conform to the ceremonies of the Church of England which were being rigidly enforced by Archbishop Laud. This caused Kiffin to study the reasons for the departure of these men and he began to realise "that God was very jealous of His worship and had left many examples of His severity when men added to it," for example, Nadab and Abihu offering strange fire and Uzzah touching the Ark. Yet he found that there were many able ministers who did conform so he visited those he judged the most able, hoping for some resolution of his puzzlement. Poor young Kiffin found

that they would not even consider his questions but, instead, rather passionately reminded him of his youth. Yet later on, during the Parliamentary period, in the Westminster Assembly these same men were found condemning the very things which Kiffin questioned them about and which had caused them to be so annoyed at him. Perhaps the truth of the matter was that they resented the fact that a mere youth was, although he did not realise it, bringing to their notice matters they would rather forget for the time being!

Now aged about eighteen or nineteen, the young man Kiffin had become disillusioned with the national church and the Puritan preachers. As a result we find him a member of the first separatist congregation formed in England. This church had been formed by Henry Jacob in 1616 then in 1624 John Lathrop became the pastor. The year Kiffin became a member, 1634, Lathrop went to New England with about 30 of the congregation. Kiffin intended to join them as soon as he could but was prevented, it seems, for reasons unknown to us. Kiffin was a member of this congregation until he was 23 (for five years). It was during this time that he met his wife. His own description is brief but informative—"in a little time it pleased God to provide for me a suitable yoke fellow, who was with me in judgment, and who was joined to the same congregation with me".

It was at this time that Laud's persecutions were at their height and, to avoid detection on the Lord's Day, they met very early in the morning and stayed together until night-time. The very early nonconformists were opposed to singing during their worship and I should imagine the omission of singing started out of sheer necessity to avoid being caught. The necessity was later, as so often happens, elevated to a principle. During these days together Kiffin was urged by the membership to minister to them and was able to improve his ministerial gifts which the people detected in him in spite of his youth.

The year before Kiffin became a member there had been a division in the congregation over baptism. The first members had all taken the radical step of forsaking the national church and eventually some of them took the further step of rejecting infant baptism also. They then regarded their fellow members as unbaptised and as a result sought to separate from them which they did, without any ill-feeling, in 1633 under their pastor John Spilsbury. This was the first Calvinistic or Particular Baptist Church in England. Kiffin transferred his membership to them, after being baptised in 1638. The reasons for his change in views are best described in his own words:—"I used all endeavours, by converse with such as were able, and also by diligently searching the scriptures, with earnest desires to God that I might be directed in a right way of worship; and after some time concluded that the safest way was to follow the footsteps of the flock, namely, that order laid down by Christ and His apostles, and practised by the primitive Christians in their times; which

I found to be, that after conversion they were baptised, added to the church, and 'continued in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and breaking of bread and prayers,' according to which I thought myself bound to be conformable."

After one year at Mr. Spilsbury's church at Wapping, Kiffin left to become pastor of the congregation meeting in Devonshire Square, London. This congregation still exists today, I believe, but has sadly declined from its first days as have most of the Baptist churches.

At this stage of our narrative, William Kiffin is about 23 years of age, married and pastor of the second English Particular Baptist Church.

Difficulties and Deliverances

We now turn to examine a few instances of trials through which Kiffin had to pass during the course of the next 48 years and see how the Lord delivered him from them all.

When Kiffin was 25 he fell seriously ill and was given up for dead by his friends and the physicians. His wife eventually persuaded a Dr. Trigg to visit him and he was inclined, like all the rest, to leave Kiffin to die. However after some persuasion he did care for him and aided his recovery. What increased Kiffin's affliction during his illness was that both his and his wife's relations kept back from them money which had been left to them. The relations' reasoning was that Kiffin would be undone anyway sooner or later since he differed from the nation in general in his religious sentiments and therefore his wife and children would fall to their care, so, as provision against such an event, they failed to hand over what was rightfully theirs.

Dr. Trigg cared for Kiffin for three months, often coming twice a day. He would take nothing for his visits or medicines saying he would receive payment for it all together at the end. When Kiffin recovered the doctor said he owed him a French crown (5/-) which was a minute sum for all that he had done. Kiffin thought he was mocking him at first but he would take not a penny more. Kiffin said "What should have moved him to take so small a matter I know not; but this seemed exceedingly wonderful to me, that a man who was a stranger, with whom I had never spoken in my life, should show such kindness to me. He has since told me that in all his life, he was never more engaged to save the life of any man so much as mine. This providence I looked upon to be very great to me at that time, and did wonderfully lead me to cleave unto the Lord in the discharge of my duty, that good word being made good—"Trust in the Lord, and do good, and verily thou shalt be fed'."

In his 28th year he visited Holland to trade in woollen-cloth made in Exeter and made sufficient profit to last two years, during which time he

devoted himself wholly to study of the Scriptures and his pastoral work. At this time his wife also "diligently employed herself to get what she could," their aim in life being that they could support themselves and not be burdensome to a poor people. When his funds were almost exhausted he recommenced his trading, with the result that ultimately he became one of the wealthiest merchants in London. Yet his wealth did not corrupt him, the spiritual prosperity of the churches being always his chief concern in life. His position as a leader among the Baptist churches and as a wealthy merchant involved him in difficulties because of his prominence but also gave him influence whereby he could press for the alleviation of the sufferings of some of his brethren.

In the period from 1640-1660 Kiffin was frequently singled out for attack of one form or another. A Presbyterian merchant, Mr. Josiah Ricraft, wrote "A Looking Glass for the Anabaptists" in which he claimed that the "Impertinencies, Incongruities, Non-consequences, Falsities and Obstinacy of William Kiffin, the grand Ringleader of that seduced sect, is discovered and laid open to the view of every indifferent-eyed Reader that will not shut his eyes against the truth. With certain Queries, vindicated from Anabaptistick Glosses, together with others propounded for the Information, Conviction and (if possible) Reformation of the said William Kiffin and his Proselytes." Opposition of this sort, though violent, is harmless, yet his opponents were not content with a pamphlet war. The Presbyterians had obtained an ordinance of Parliament for the punishment of blasphemies and heresies. In 1655 Kiffin was brought before the lord mayor for breaking the ordinance by preaching that the baptism of infants was unlawful. However the mayor refrained from passing sentence since the Protector had effectively neutralised the act of Parliament with his instrument of government. In the providence of God the persecuting spirit of his opponents was this time restrained.

During the reign of Charles II Kiffin was frequently seized and imprisoned, usually on a charge of plotting against the king. It seems as if the desire of the baptists to worship God quietly and not meddle in politics was misunderstood. Their having to meet secretly was interpreted as being subversive. However the charges could not be substantiated and he was usually released after a few days. I should imagine that his position as a well-known merchant was used of God to protect him, in a measure, from the unjust treatment meted out to such insignificant men (in the eyes of the world) as Bunyan.

There is an amusing example of the way in which the attempts of his enemies to incriminate him came to nothing. He had been accused of plotting with his church members to overthrow the government and the accusers claimed they had a witness. Kiffin replied that they only met for edification and did not meddle with political matters. A party of soldiers was sent to search his house and ransacked his papers but found

nothing. Then they discovered a book hidden in his clerk's desk and gleefully thought they had found the incriminating evidence. However it turned out to be a novel "Reynard the Fox" which the clerk used to read and hide when he saw his master coming!

His Character and Influence

We have already learned something of Kiffin's character but I think the following two extracts will inform us further of the true Christianity which dwelt in this man's heart.

In 1682 Kiffin lost his wife and he records it thus:—"It pleased the Lord to take to Himself my dear and faithful wife with whom I had lived nearly forty-four years; whose tenderness to me and faithfulness to God were such as cannot, by me, be expressed, as she constantly sympathised with me in all my afflictions. I can truly say, I never heard her utter the least discontent under all the various providences that attended either me or her; she eyed the hand of God in all our sorrows, so as constantly to encourage me in the ways of God: her death was the greatest sorrow to me that ever I met with in the world."

This extract tells us as much about Kiffin as his wife. Only a faithful saint of God would value such spiritual characteristics in his partner and only a person whose heart had been transformed by the gospel could write with such tenderness. Writing when he was 76 he recalls one of the sorrows endured by himself and his wife—the loss of his eldest son at the age of 20. Kiffin says:—"It pleased God to take out of the world to Himself my eldest son. In the midst of my great distress it pleased the Lord to support me by the word in Matthew 20: 15. 'Is thine eye evil because I am good? Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?' These words did quiet my heart, so that I felt a perfect submission to His sovereign will, being well satisfied that it was for the great advantage of my dear son and a voice to me to be more humble and watchful over my own ways."

We have then the picture of a humble saint, chastised by his loving Father on the one hand and persecuted by the authorities on the other. These trials yielded in him the peaceable fruit of righteousness and it is not surprising that we find him as one of the leaders among the Particular Baptists. In spite of the persecutions the number of congregations grew quite rapidly. In 1639 we saw that Kiffin was pastor of the Second Particular Baptist congregation in England yet in 1644 there are seven congregations in London publishing their confession of faith. This confession was largely the work of Kiffin and Spilsbury. Kiffin and others went about preaching the gospel and due to their labours we find that by 1689 we have this confession being assented to by representatives from all over the country. The churches were not built by stealing from

paedo-baptists but, rather, by many souls being converted to Christ directly from unbelief.

In most of the circular letters that were sent out to the churches during these years we find Kiffin's name attached first or second and we gather that he was influential and his opinion very much respected.

For example in 1652 an Obadiah Holmes was flogged in Boston, Massachusetts for baptising a believer and an account was sent to London. Holmes wrote as follows:—"Unto the well-beloved John Spilsbury and William Kiffin and to the rest in London . . .". I simply give this to indicate the esteem in which he was held.

In case I have given the impression that these early Baptists only thought about baptism I will close by giving one further example of Kiffin's influence. In 1675 there was some disagreement among some baptist ministers in the West of England concerning the obligation of all men including the unconverted, to pray. Andrew Gifford of Bristol wrote to his friend Joseph Morton in London requesting that the London ministers would give their opinion. This they did very promptly and since the reply was first signed by Kiffin we can regard it as representative of his views. The letter is a long one yet I hope the following summary will be helpful since the relationship between the guilt and inability of the sinner still perplex many of us today. It will show Kiffin and the early Baptists to be thoroughly orthodox.

The letter starts:—

"Dear Brother Gifford, We had a sight of your letter to brother Morton and are not a little grieved to hear of those differences among you, and the more that they should be on such grounds as you mention, which can have no other tendency than to render us contemptible to all serious and judicious persons."

First of all, it is pointed out that prayer is part of the worship of God and that man was made to worship and serve his Creator. Therefore man by nature is obliged to pray. The inability of men to pray in no way alters the obligation since the inability stems from man's sinfulness.

If it is argued that men now can only pray by the Spirit's assistance and unconverted men have not the Spirit, the answer is that without the work of the Spirit men are not moved to any good at all and if unconverted men are not obliged to pray they are not obliged to do anything.

If a duty only becomes a duty when we are moved to it then sinners who have no inclination to any good can have no duty to God and therefore must be sinless—which is, of course, an absurd conclusion.

Inability and deadness in unbelievers *and* believers in no way affects their obligations. The deadness simply highlights their wickedness—it does not take away their responsibility for their neglect of God.

Their conclusion, then, is that the unconverted *ought* to pray. The fact that they cannot is irrelevant as far as their duty is concerned. The fact that they *do not* increases their sin.

Conclusion

Kiffin lived to the ripe old age of 85 but unfortunately I have been unable to find any information about his last days. I think it is unnecessary for me to try to draw any lessons by way of conclusion. The depth of the experience and firmness of conviction of a man like William Kiffin stand in such a marked contrast to ours that I leave his life to speak for itself.

Searching Jerusalem with Candles¹

And it shall come to pass at that time, that I will search Jerusalem with candles, and punish the men that are settled on their lees: that say in their heart, The Lord will not do good, neither will he do evil (Zephaniah 1: 12).

IN THE DAYS OF JOSIAH IT PLEASED THE LORD TO SEND A REFORMATION, BUT HISTORY was to prove that it was too little and too late. Zephaniah was contemporary with Jeremiah. His task was to warn the people of impending judgment. The sins of several generations had accumulated in their effect. Captivity in Babylon was the only way to purge the nation and preserve the truth. Soon the Chaldeans would be searching the attics and cellars of Jerusalem with lamps for those trying to escape. Not even Zedekiah the king would escape, cf. II Kings 25, II Chron. 36. Zephaniah's words were directed particularly to the lukewarm and the indifferent. Let us heed the text as follows:

1. There is a Time of Judgment—and it shall come to pass at that time.

A time of God's reckoning comes to individuals and nations. Egypt, the Exodus, Jericho, Ai, and the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans are specific instances. Local churches are also judged by the Lord at specific times. That is what the second and third chapters of Revelation are all about (Rev. 2: 20-23). When churches begin to decline the Lord sends them ministers to search hearts and encourage reformation.

2. God's Judgment is Searching—I will search with candles.

In recent years the Lord has sent a doctrinal awakening. We have begun to realise that we have wandered far away from the Faith of our fathers. Doctrine

¹ Outline of a sermon preached by the Editor at Pretoria Central Baptist Church, Lord's Day morning, April 25, 1971.

can never be divorced from practice. Shallow doctrine leads to shallow living. Cherished ideas and practices have been challenged. Many of us have realised that we have neglected the place of the moral law and the doctrines of grace in Scripture. Some of us have been convinced of lack of discipline. Yet others have been convinced of sin as never before and have even questioned whether they are really born again (II Cor. 13:5).

3. God's Judgment is Personal—*and punish the men that are settled on their lees.*

On their lees is an expression drawn from winebottles that have been left for a long time. The sediment has collected at the bottom. It is a figure used to describe laziness and sloth. By pouring from vessel to vessel the wine can be purified (Jer. 48:11). By daily dealings with the Lord we are purified. But there are those who have sunk down in a backslidden state. They are at ease in Zion. They are worldly and careless. Their children are wild and undisciplined. Such professors of the Gospel are an insult to the Lord. He will come and deal with them personally. It is the duty of the pastors (elders) to maintain discipline in the church. When this has been neglected you can be sure that those settled on their lees will resent being disturbed. Some might even march off to some other church where they can do as they please. The elders must not shrink from duty. They must seek help from the Lord to be faithful. "Cursed is he that doeth the work of the Lord deceitfully, and cursed be he that keepeth back his sword from blood" (Jer. 48:10).

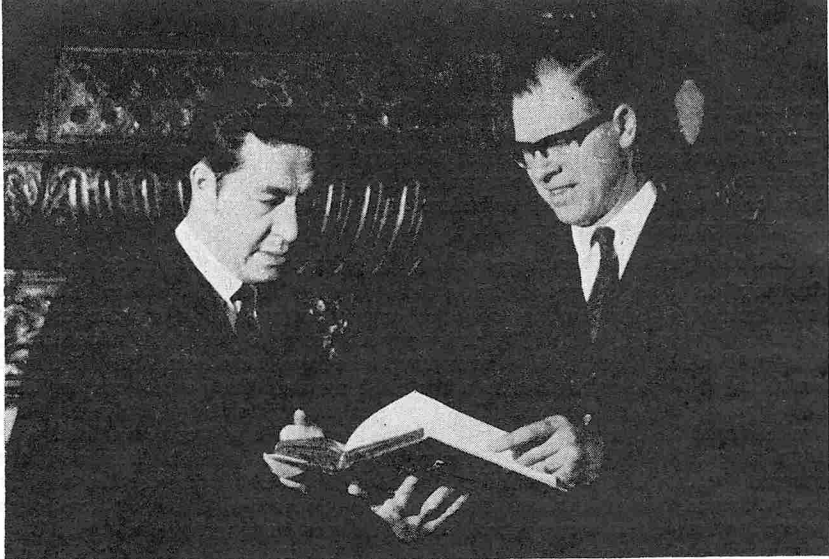
4. God's Judgment is Discriminating—*that say in their heart, the Lord will not do good, neither will he do evil.*

The Lord deals with individuals personally. He discerns specific sins. He knows our thoughts altogether (Psa. 139:1-10). The indifference and complacency of the people of Jerusalem angered the Lord. They assured themselves that all was well. Their counterparts today are those who hold a cheap and superficial Gospel, who oppose that which challenges their slick notions. Be sure of this, the Lord is arising in many parts of the world to restore truth. Our ideas are being shaken. The lights are being turned on. The searching lamps of truth are beginning to shine. Evil habits are being exposed. Those who attend the Lord's house only once a week and who do their own pleasure on holy day are being reproved. Those who seldom come to the prayer meeting are being exposed as well as those who talk about witnessing but fail to do so. They may be nominal believers only. Those who think they can indulge in slander, lust and neglect of good works may not be Christians at all. Those who despise reading, study and doctrine may do so because they fear correction. They are afraid of the candles which will expose their lukewarmness and indifference.

Brothers and sisters, let us seek a change of heart. Let us encourage reformation and renewal. Let us heed the voice of the Lord as He speaks to us from His Word.

The Carey Conference

As explained in number four of *Reformation Today*, where details are provided for the forthcoming arrangements at Nottingham during the first week of July, the purpose of this gathering is to make progress in our thinking in areas where we have been lacking in the past. This Conference is not in any way exclusive. All evangelical ministers and workers sincerely concerned to make progress are welcome and there is still room for you if you have not made a booking. Between seventy and eighty are expected and a most profitable time is anticipated. If you are booked to come resist the temptation to withdraw on account of pressure. Times for reflection, fellowship and conference are essential if we are to maintain a high standard in the ministry.



Pastor Bill Clark, of Marseilles, and the Editor at Pilgrim Hall, Sussex.

What can we do for our young people?

Is your Church like ours? We have dozens of young people, all at different stages of development. They must be provided for not only in regard to Biblical teaching but in regard to social contact. We reject the notion that we can ignore the application of the Gospel to every part of life and every area of activity. For instance we would like to see schools controlled by Christians who are Reformed and Evangelical in outlook. This may seem impossible but such are the pressures of an increasingly a-moral society that Christians are being compelled to think more about what can be done. In the meantime we can at least provide weekly activities and get-togethers for our young people.

Family conferences are popular with some churches. Here in Sussex Mr. Eddie Vince (one who attended the first Carey Conference last year) is busy transforming an old country home into a Conference centre, called Pilgrim Hall. Magnificent wood panelling and tasteful decor lend atmosphere to the capacious rooms on the ground floor which are ideal for study sessions or debates. Rooms on the second floor have been turned into attractive bedrooms and dormitories. At present the centre is particularly suitable for young people and when extensions are completed will be ideal for conferences of all kinds.

An aerial view of Pilgrim Hall is shown opposite together with a picture of young folk playing on one of the lawns. It may be that a family conference could be profitable if organised from your area. If your fellowship is not large enough why not forge links with others of like mind and arrange something which will be edifying, either for whole families or for young people? If you are interested in Pilgrim Hall as a possible venue write to the Executive Director, Pilgrim Hall, near Uckfield, Sussex.



Reformation Today is a quarterly magazine published by
Cuckfield Baptist Church, Sussex.

Editor

ERROLL HULSE.
3 Quarry Hill, Haywards Heath, Sussex.

Associate Editors

DAVID KINGDON, N. Ireland.
67 Sandown Road, Belfast 5.

JOHN DAVISON, Scotland.
23 Muircroft Terrace, Perth.

JIM VAN ZYL, South Africa.
Box 1918, Port Elizabeth.

STUART FOWLER, Australia.
*87 Atkinson Street, Templestowe. Victoria
3106, Australia.*

Agents

Agents to whom subscriptions should
be sent.

GREAT BRITAIN	<i>David Guthrie, 4 Gander Hill, Haywards Heath, Sussex.</i>
AUSTRALIA	<i>Ray Levick, 25 Amaroo Avenue, Mt. Colah, N.S.W. 2079.</i>
U.S.A.	<i>Bill Carey, 205 Victoria Avenue, Wilmington, Delaware 19804. Tom L. Daniel, P.O. Box 1757, Waco, Texas 76703. Ron Edmonds, 4443 Linden Avenue 3, Long Beach, California 90807.</i>
CANADA	<i>Alan Wilson, P.O. Box 282, Galt, Ontario.</i>
SOUTH AFRICA	<i>Jim van Zyl, P.O. Box 1918, Port Elizabeth.</i>

Subscriptions

GREAT BRITAIN	50p per annum
AUSTRALIA	A \$ 1.10
U.S.A.	U.S. \$ 1.50
CANADA	C \$ 1.50
SOUTH AFRICA	R 1.00

Single copies one quarter the
above in each case which includes
postage.

Gifts are welcomed and those who wish to support the Magazine
should make out their cheques to 'Reformation Today'.