



# Assembly Testimony



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## *"This Is The True God"*

The Maker of the universe  
As man for man was made a curse;  
The claims of laws that He had made  
Unto the uttermost He paid.

His Holy fingers formed the bough  
Where grew the thorns that crowned His brow.  
The nails that pierced His hands were mined  
In secret places He designed.

He made the forests whence there sprung  
The tree on which His body hung.  
He died upon a cross of wood,  
Yet made the hill on which it stood.

The sun which hid from Him its face,  
By His decree was poised in space;  
The sky which darkened o'er His head  
By Him above the earth was spread.

The spear that spilt His precious blood,  
Was tempered in the fires of God;  
The grave in which His form was laid  
Was hewn in rocks His hands had made.

The throne on which He now appears  
Was His from everlasting years;  
But a new glory crowns His brow,  
And every knee to Him shall bow.

## BRIEF MEDITATIONS ON THE OFFERINGS

by JOHN M. COWAN, Motherwell.

### THE SIN OFFERING (continued)

FROM chapter 4 to the end of the chapter, it seems to be the sinning persons which are in view. In Chapter 5. 1-13 it is the kind of sin they have committed. Sin no doubt is sin no matter the person who has committed it, but there is a sense in which the sin of one might involve the liberty of others according to the position that the sinning one should occupy.

This very evidently was the case in connection with the sin of the anointed priest: if the priest was out of communion with God, then the people had no representative with God, and the sin of the priest not only affected his own communion, but also the communion of the people whom he represented before God. "The priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they (the people) should seek the law at his mouth, for he is the messenger of the Lord of Hosts" (Mal. 2. 7). Being divinely instructed as to the requirements of God's Holy Character, their responsibility was infinitely greater than one of the common people and, consequently, "to whom much has been given, much shall be required of them".

Thus, while sin might be the same in different individuals, the effect of the sin of one will have a much further reaching effect than the same sin in another with a lesser degree of responsibility. Such was the far reaching effect of the sin of the anointed Priest, that it defiled the entire sphere of service in which he served. Before the veil, the incense altar and out to the brazen altar had now become inoperative and must remain so until the required sacrifice had been made. The sin of Miriam held up the progress of the entire congregation for seven days. (Num. 12. 15). The sin of Achan caused the death of about thirty-six men and brought the judgment of God upon all the nation of Israel. Truly no man liveth to himself. (Joshua 7). Sin must not go unpunished; thank God there has been found One who was willing to stand in our stead and to bear for us the entire fierceness of the wrath of the Almighty God. Chapter 4. 3-12 gives us the ritual for the anointed priest. I do not think that this takes Aaron in, as that would spoil the type. All the priests were anointed and I think that this would embrace the sons of Aaron and would be expressive of the sin of his priestly ones to the exclusion of Aaron himself.

Here then is the ritual: "he shall bring for the sin which he hath sinned, a young bullock for a sin offering. (Fit

offering for a serving one): he shall bring the bullock to the entrance of the tent of the congregation and he shall lay his hand upon the head of the bullock and kill the bullock before the Lord. And the Priest that is anointed shall take of the bullock's blood and bring it into the tent of the congregation (I believe that this is one of the other Priests): and the Priest shall dip his finger in the blood and sprinkle of the blood seven times before the Lord, before the veil of the sanctuary and the Priest shall put some of the blood upon the horns of the altar of sweet incense before the Lord which is in the tent of the congregation: and shall pour all the blood of the bullock at the foundation of the altar of the burnt offering which is at the entrance of the tent of the congregation: and he shall take off from it all the fat of the bullock for the sin offering: the fat that covereth the inwards and all the fat that is upon the inwards and the two kidneys, and the fat that is upon them by the flanks, and the caul above the liver with the kidneys it shall he take away, as it was taken off from the bullock of the sacrifice of peace offerings, and the priest shall burn them upon the altar of the burnt offering. And the skin of the bullock, and all his flesh, with his head, and with his legs, and his inwards, and his dung, even the whole bullock shall he carry forth without the camp unto a clean place, where the ashes are poured out, and burn him up on the wood with the fire: where the ashes are poured out shall he **be burnt up.**"

In this descriptive ritual there are ten distinct movements and are all necessary to the complete recovery of the sinning one. In this brief meditation we feel that too much space would be required to enter into all the fulness of the detail, but sufficient must be given in order that a clear sense of the Divine requirement may be gathered up, and a deeper appreciation of the seriousness of sin in the sight of a Holy God, with a greater insight into the awfulness of the sufferings of our Lord Jesus Christ, that these requirements might be met.

It will be observed that those deep exercises on the part of the anointed priest were not because of extreme waywardness or an indulgence in wilful sin, but were occasioned by ignorance or inadvertence. How careful and watchful must His priestly people be, a consciousness that they handle holy things should ever be theirs and if, through ignorance or inadvertence they should slip, their slip is firstly against God. Human grief, so excusable in others, was not permitted to His priestly ones; possibly something of this character might be seen in the failure to eat the sin offering in Lev. 10. Things which were perfectly permissible in others were prohibited to priestly ones. His

priestly people then were expected to have a sensitiveness towards sin of a greatly developed degree, the outcome of their superior knowledge of the Holiness of God and their constant handling of His holy things in which even a thought of foolishness would be sin.

Enlarged conceptions of sin would mean large conceptions of Christ, consequently a sin offering for a priest must be a bullock. "The wages of sin is death." Blood, the expression of life, must be poured out and the application of the virtue of that blood has to be firstly Godward: "Against Thee, Thee only have I sinned": "The priest shall dip his finger into the blood and sprinkle it seven times before the veil": perfection of satisfaction Godward. "Then some of the blood on the horns of the incense altar": communion restored, and moving outward to the brazen altar, all of the blood poured out at the foundations thereof: established relationships with regard to service in the sanctuary resumed.

To be continued (D.V.).

## **NOTES ON THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS** **(Chapter 8)**

by R. WOODHOUSE BEALES, Ipswich.

### **THE RENT VEIL**

"**T**HROUGH the veil"—which is the antitype of the veil of the temple which, directly He cried, "It is finished" was split by God from top to bottom indicating that the way into that Holiest was now for ever open to all the redeemed. It is a new way, by which we are informed the meaning is "newly slain", the sacrifice of Calvary will always be fresh in the sight of God. But not only slain, but "living" for He who died is alive again for evermore. And consecrated or dedicated for us, through the offering of His holy body, which had been prepared for Him for this very purpose, for without it, how could He possibly die? Not only His death and sacrifice are here spoken of but His ever living priesthood and the words in the Greek are here "a GREAT priest", that which Aaron never was, over the house of God. Previously we saw He was Son over His house, now He is also Priest over the house or household of God.

Thus we arrive at the threefold exhortation "Let us" (vv. 22, 23, 24). "Draw near"—this is as we have said a spiritual and not a bodily entrance and therefore the allusions to the heart and body are spiritual also. It is not the actual heart, nor the actual body, nor the actual water. We are to have full assurance, the assurance not of self but of faith, the subject of the epistle, the evil consciences

as we have seen have been set at rest by the blood of Christ, the washed body refers to the manner of life, the ways of the believer especially seen as one who has been born again, "washed all over" just as Aaron and his sons were to have the blood sprinkled upon them at their consecration, and also to be washed all over by Moses before entering on their service. (Exod. 29. 4, 21; see also Eph. 5. 26 referring to the whole Church).

We are also to hold fast the confession of the HOPE (see R.V.) without wavering. That it is the hope can be seen by the words following in verses 25, 36 and 37. The hope of the return of the Great Priest in Person. And it was the confession of this that was so essential for now their earthly national hopes were all gone. That which had waxed old was ready to vanish away. The word "provoke" is "paroxism", a very strong word, but to apply this to brotherly love is a challenge indeed. This would in its turn affect the assembling together. If there is faith, hope and love, this would of itself draw believers together. A neglect of this in assembly life might well be the first step towards going back to the temple worship with all its powerful attraction, but it was no doubt the manner of some. (Is it the "manner" of the reader?). We are to exhort one another, and suffer words of exhortation (13. 22). The day would not only indicate the day of His appearing, but may have a suggestion indicating the day of judgment for the nation, when temple, priesthood and sacrifice would all cease.

There can be little doubt but that the priests, who would be ministering in the Holy Place when the veil was rent from top to bottom, when the Saviour cried, "It is finished", could see that that inner shrine was quite empty. There was no ark, no mercy seat, no glory, and that had been the case ever since the captivity. What an indication that God had no place now for Israel, but for the time being had finished with them. The glory had departed. It is interesting to see how reluctantly God had left them. This can be seen in the captivity prophet Ezekiel—Chapter 1; 8. 2; 10. 4,18; 11. 23; but in days to come when Israel is restored it will return—Chapter 43. 2-4; 44. 4. These are most instructive passages.

It is quite evident however that Christendom has never learned the lesson, that God is not to be approached any more in this way. They have devised a "priesthood" nearer to God than the "people" which is utterly foreign to N.T. teaching. There is no such distinction between "clergy" and "laity", both Greek words indicating ALL the people of God, "kleros" and "laos". They have devised elaborate material "aids" to worship, magnificent buildings, music

and vestments, a material "altar", an exclusive enclosure called the "sanctuary" from which the "laity" are barred or at least divided by an "altar rail" or "communion rail", which is a counterpart of that very veil which God has destroyed. And God's people are kept in comparative bondage to an earthly priesthood not knowing that they are themselves now a holy priesthood, able to draw near to God without any intermediary.

It may be objected that worshippers entering in spirit within the veil do not need to be in a building where there is an "altar rail" and earthly priesthood, but can do so in their own private devotions, and that the spiritual priesthood exercised by them is normally individual and not in company. This is true yet the scripture does envisage "the assembling of yourselves together", and if there is human bondage there, it must affect the worshippers approach on other occasions.

It is a remarkable fact that what Korah, Dathan and Abiram said and did (Num. 16), saying to Moses and Aaron, "Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy", which was utter rebellion against the priesthood which God had set up and which brought upon them immediate and condign punishment, that very thing is now a fact and absolutely true, there is now no God-ordained separate class of priests, it has been completely done away in Christ. Nothing could more clearly show how absolute the change is and that done by God Himself, so that it is now rebellion and self exaltation for any man to raise himself up or be raised up above his fellow Christians. Differences of gift and of their administration there may be and there is, and this is taught most clearly in the N.T., but NOT an exclusive priesthood, or mediator of any kind. There is now no Holy Place or building on earth as there once was on earth in Jerusalem. (Deut. 12).

It will be noticed that we have now passed to the subject of the priesthood of all believers, which is really to be found in 1 Peter where the Priesthood of Christ is not. Inasmuch as in Hebrews worshippers passing within the veil are spoken of, then, there is implied the fact, that we too are priests. This was the first thought of God regarding Israel (see Exod. 19. 5, 6) and this before the law was given and the Levitical priesthood set up, because of Israel's sin.

The warning following is similar to that in chapter 6 but even more emphatic. This "sinning wilfully" would be in rejecting the word of Christ and Christianity itself, and again it indicated one who had gone as far as possible in the way of profession without being truly born of God.

"In 10. 26-31, we see that again the Jewish nation (the

"we" of v. 26) is in view; it had received the knowledge of the truth both in the O.T. scriptures and especially in Christ (John 1. 17), and if it persisted in its attitude there was nothing but judgment, as happened under Moses' law; the covenant (v. 29) was the Old covenant, the blood of the old covenant refers to the Passover lamb and the sacrifices which derived sanctifying effect and value by pointing to Christ. In rejecting the Son of God ('trodden underfoot') they had counted the blood (i.e. the blood of the sacrifices of old which they professed to respect) as an unholy thing, and they were ripe for vengeance. The "but" ( as in 6. 9) introduces a section which shews that vv. 26-31 did not refer to Hebrew Christians nor Christians at all.

"So far therefore, from even suggesting that a true believer can be lost or even come under vengeance . . . . the passage confirms the eternal security of the believer . . . The first instalment of the experiences described by the terms "rejected", "cursing", "burned", "fiery indignation", "sorer punishment", "vengeance", "judge" . . . was at the fall of Jerusaem, the final experience will be in the day of "Jacob's trouble", the Great Tribulation (Jer. 30. 7), which will precede Christ's return to the nation as their Messiah for their regeneration and blessing". (End of quotation from P. Parsons).

The reader is asked to note in vv. 26, 28, 32 and 36 the pronouns used. In the first "we" the writer puts himself back in the nation (this is often the case with Paul, see Galatians 4. 3, etc.), then "he", "he", "he", after that "ye" and "your". Similarly in chapter 6. 4 and 19 he firstly says "they", "themselves" after that the better things of "you", "your", "ye". It is absolutely essential to note these if one is coming to a right understanding.

The Son of God, the blood of the covenant and the Spirit of grace are the things which have been expounded as characteristic of salvation. After such a warning there is as usual the word of comfort and assurance as in 6. 9, 12, as though the writer was almost afraid the warning was too sharp and would discourage the faint-hearted, and so calls to mind the endurance under persecution and fellowship with those who were so used; the fierceness of the trial is given prominence. Warnings are not given so that we should cast away our confidence, which some are tempted to do, but the eye is to be set on the coming day of reward. Again the key word "better" is used. Yet a very little while (lit. "how little, how little") and He shall come. It is remarkable how that in all the N.T. epistles the return of Christ is spoken of as an imminent hope. Although we may be unable to reconcile this with the long wait there has been and still is, yet the indisputable



fact remains, that is the language used by the Holy Spirit. For the third time in the epistles the quotation from Habakkuk 2. 3, 4 comes in and it cannot be merely as it appears in the O.T., "the justified one shall live by his faithfulness". The Holy Spirit takes up very often His own words and gives them new and emphasised meaning, indeed often adding a fresh meaning to them, and so here, we believe, There it is connected with the tarrying vision, here with the tarrying Christ. In Romans 1. 17 the emphasis is upon the word "the just" as the subject there is justification. In Gal. 3. 11 the emphasis is upon "shall live". Here it is upon "by faith" which now has a whole chapter devoted to the theme.

## **NEW TESTAMENT ASSEMBLIES**

### **A PLEA FOR DIVINE SIMPLICITY**

by **ROBERT McCLURKIN**

**T**HE great commission of our Lord, the four parts of which are seen in the last chapters of the four gospels, was threefold: the disciples were commissioned to preach the gospel and by the truth of the gospel, to **make** disciples out of all nations; they were to **mark** disciples in the waters of baptism and they were to **mould** disciples by the teaching of the whole Word of God.

The Book of Acts reveals how this was carried out. When souls were saved through the preaching of the gospel, they were baptised and gathered in congregations unto the precious Name of our Lord. The apostles never became pastors over each congregation but put the burden of responsibility on the shoulders of the converts. Then, as soon as possible, they moved on and allowed the faith of the saints to work.

There were three reasons for the planting of New Testament assemblies: worldward, they consolidated the gains of the gospel and became outposts for the further advancement of the gospel of Christ.

Churchward, they were to be places of holy concord where the saints could share their joys and sorrows. They were to be for mutual edification and care and the training ground for the development of spiritual gift and leadership.

Godward, they were to be little sanctuaries from which the incense of worship and praise would ascend continually.

**By what names are they to be known?**

There is one Divine principle that guides us in this. Any name or names that do not embrace the whole, is sectarian.

Paul rebukes the Corinthians for factionalism when they said, "I am of Paul, and I am of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ." Each name only embraced each party, to the exclusion of all others.

The Spirit of God points to three serious sins that are committed in assuming unscriptural names: it is a sin against the Person of Christ, "Is Christ divided?" It is a sin against the work of Christ, "Was Paul crucified for you?" It is a sin against the Name of Christ, "Were ye baptised in the name of Paul?" (1 Cor. 1. 12-13). The one Name of our glorious Lord is set over against all other names, as the only Name that can unite the saints in a practical way (v. 10). The truth of gathering in His Name alone, means to gather in subjection to the authority of Christ which is enshrined in that Name. There only can true unity be realised.

### **By what features are New Testament churches to be distinguished?**

Let me point out a few.

1. By the weekly celebration of the Lord's Supper. The Lord's Supper was the centre of the church life of the early saints. It was the hub from which all their activities radiated. Paul, by the Spirit, taught the Corinthians that in the Lord's Supper they expressed a fellowship (10. 16-17); they proclaimed a fact (11. 26); they remembered a Person (11. 24); and they cherished the Hope of the Lord's return (11. 26).

It is this weekly feast that has preserved the assemblies from the apostasy of the religious world, for in it the Spirit of God interprets the meaning of the Cross every Lord's Day.

In the early days of assembly testimony, godly saints recognized that a physical circle was a beautiful symbol of our gathering around our Lord Himself, and of His presence in the midst of His own. The seven churches in Revelation 2 and 3 formed a physical circle to give us the picture of our Lord in the midst of His own. Moreover, the physical circle lends itself to the type of meeting that we seek to conduct in the fear of God. We do not go to listen to a lecture where the seats are arranged for the audience to see a man on the platform or in a pulpit. We go to meet around Himself and where the Spirit of God has liberty to use the variety of priestly functions and spiritual gift, for the glories of Christ to every saint.

But the Devil could not leave these little companies alone. He hates Divine simplicity and Scriptural order. To-day, some have an obsession to change everything. They seek

to push the Lord's Supper into a corner and make it secondary to other things. As other things crowd in, the worship of the saints is disturbed. When the emblems are passed around, there is no time for that word of ministry, when the hearts of the saints, melted by the felt presence of the Lord, are ready to receive it. Some assemblies are getting used to going through the procedure without the Word of God being opened at all. This new emphasis has created a restlessness among the Lord's people so that, not infrequently, two or three hymns are given out, one after the other, with no exercise on the part of brethren to rise up and worship.

In many places the physical circle is destroyed. It is too much trouble to have to fix the seats for a more important meeting to follow. Thus the emphasis on the Lord's Supper is only superficial, compared to those early days when it was so precious to the hearts of God's people. A new generation has risen up, with its emphasis on youth and religious entertainment. Yet with all the unbounded activities among the young, there are few that come out with deeper convictions on the things of God and a deeper knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

2. The New Testament church was distinguished as the repository of Divine truth (1 Tim. 3. 14-16). Truth is embodied in Christ, "the truth as it is in Jesus". It is enshrined in the Scriptures. "Thy word is truth," and entrusted to the church, "the pillar and ground of the truth." A casual acquaintance with the religious world will reveal that, in all, many truths are ignored or denied. Interdenominationalism exposes God's people to the errors of all. The safety of the assemblies lies in their separation. The role of the assemblies is to maintain a simple testimony to the whole truth of God. Only then will they become a haven of rest for weary saints, who, when tired of the whole sham and mixture, seek a resting place for their confused spirits.

3. Another mark is the freedom of the Holy Spirit to work. In His sovereignty He imparts gift (1 Cor. 12. 11), and in His freedom He uses it as He pleases (1 Cor. 14). In all ecclesiastical systems this important feature of the New Testament pattern is ignored. One, only, is recognised with the right to teach and to preach and that by human ordination. We must insist on the Spirit's unfettered activity in the assembly, if we are to keep to the New Testament order. Here again we must sound the alarm among the people of God. Any professed assembly that appoints one man to be a pastor over them, runs contrary to the Word of God and challenges the Sovereignty of the Spirit of God in His own House. Pastors are shepherds and shep-

herds are overseers. These are appointed by the Holy Ghost and are in the plural in every New Testament church.

To be continued (D.V.).

## THE CAVE OF ADULLAM

by the late JOHN RITCHIE

Read 1 Samuel 22. 1-3; 2 Samuel 23. 8-21.

THE first Book of Samuel is of immense importance and value to us at this present time. It treats of **Rule** among the people of God. Literally, the Kingdom of Israel in the hands of Saul, the man of the people's choice, and afterwards in the hands of David, the man after God's own heart. Typically, it shows the various forms of rule (under which God's people may be found) in what professes to be the Church, from that which He has appointed, down to that which He has utterly rejected. It shows how that even the people of God are to be found associated with, and in subjection to, that form of rule which has rejected the commandments of the Lord, and which as a consequence has been rejected by Him. It tells how comparatively few are found ready to snap every link with the popular thing, and cast in their lot with God's anointed, although earth-rejected, King. The same principles are at work, and the same struggle, between the false and true, goes on now, as in the days of Saul and David, for there is no new thing under the sun. May the solemn and holy lessons of this neglected book be applied with unction and freshness to our hearts and consciences, while we seek together for a little time to ponder them in the fear of God.

I suppose we have all observed that the early books of the Bible present a continuous line of truth, given in Divine order, concerning the calling and conduct of the people of God.

Genesis gives their **election** and **calling**; Exodus their **redemption** and **separation** from the world; Leviticus their **communion** and **worship**; Numbers their **walk** and **wanderings**; Deuteronomy their **testimony** and **obedience**; Joshua their **warfare** and **victory**; and Judges their **failure** and **democracy**. The order of the books as well as their teachings is Divine. We need to know redemption by the blood of Christ and separation from the ungodly, before there can be communion and worship—for there is none in Egypt. It is the way of the Lord therefore to establish a saint in the knowledge of His salvation and relationship with Him, before He begins to instruct Him as to worship, walk, and warfare. As he goes on with God, other truths

begin to dawn upon him. The subjects of

### DIVINE RULE AND ORDER

in the Church begin to exercise his soul, and to bring his spiritual discernment into action. He begins to test his position and practices, his ecclesiastical associations and service, by the Word of God, and—if he has learned to bow to its authority—to arrange all accordingly. Traditions lose their hold, and the rule of man its sway over him. He finds himself led on in fellowship with others, who are being guided by the same authority and owning the same rule. Happy would it be for the saints of God if they went on in simple obedience to the Lord's commandments. The path of rejection would then be sweet, and gilded with the smile of the Lord. But alas! it is just here where the many stop short; it is here where the measure of true devotedness to Christ, and subjection to His authority are tested, and where they so often fail. There is nothing so tests the spiritual condition of a child of God, as his readiness to bow implicitly to the Lord's authority, especially when his obedience involves, as it generally does, the brand of the cross, and rejection with his Lord. Sometimes it will cause the loss of friendships and the severing of links dear as life; all this is too severe to be popular. Many are willing to own Jesus as their Saviour from wrath, but His claims as Jesus Christ the Lord have but little authority over them. Yet "God hath made that same **Jesus both Lord and Christ**" (Acts 2. 36), and "given Him the name which is above every name, that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, . . . and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is **Lord**" (Phil. 2. 9-11, R.V.). The time for His claims to be universally honoured, and His rule acknowledged in the world has not yet come, for "we see not yet all things put under Him" (Heb. 2. 8). But the time **has** come when the Lordship of Christ should be owned among His people and in His Church. The wider circle of the world is yet in the hands of the usurper Satan, its god and prince; the time has not yet fully come for the kingdoms of this world to become the kingdom of the Son of Man. That day will come at its appointed time, but meanwhile His "kingdom is not of this world" (John 18. 36). It is among His own redeemed. They have been "delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son" (Col. 1. 13). Individually and collectively they have become by grace the subjects of His rule. He is the Lord of the individual; the Head of His body, the Church. His alone is the place of authority, and His the right to legislate and rule. His people have simply to obey. How far they do we shall see in the sequel.

To be continued (D.V.).

## THE LAST DAYS

by A. M. S. GOODING

LOOKING over this black list of the features of the last days one would have thought that this was a portrayal of the irreligious, the pagan, the idolater far removed from the influence of Christianity. We have pointed out before the similarity between the conditions outlined here and those found in the close of the first chapter of Romans. There it is the Pagan world, but here, amazingly enough we read: "Having a form of Godliness, but denying the power thereof." Not the history and condition of the descendants of Ham! Not the state, in the apostle's day, of Rome; but Christendom, Apostate Christendom, still possessing all the ceremonial, creeds, articles and great names which tell of the glory of a former day. She has now only a form of Godliness! The shell, the exterior, the profession, but no power. She has a form of Godliness without the knowledge of God. She takes the name of Christ but no longer owns Him as Lord. She has the word of God (appointed to be read in churches!) but blatantly denies the foundation truths of the word of God and sneers in her lofty arrogance at those who are designated "fundamentalists." From the pulpits of the established church and from Non-conformist sources comes a constant stream of words which display an awful ignorance of God and His word, and which sink on occasion to awful depths of blasphemy. There is hardly a fundamental truth of Christianity that is not being denied to-day by men who are being paid to preach the truth of God. "Woe unto them . . . they ran greedily after the error of Balaam!" In fact, it would almost seem that the best way to become a popular preacher to-day is to deny the basic truths of Christianity and propagate in their place error and blasphemy. The press will then take notice and advertise the beliefs propounded. Fellow ministers and congregations will rally to support such men who are so evidently "of their father the devil", and any who dare to oppose are looked upon as 'cranks' and are politely bowed out.

A form of Godliness in a setting of Godlessness. The empty shell, the loud profession, surely akin to the voice of Laodicea—"thou sayest, 'I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.'" Spiritual Poverty! Nakedness! Blindness! and Christ outside! and like Samson of old, "He wist not that the Lord had departed from him."

Of vital importance to us to-day are the closing words of this section:

## "FROM SUCH TURN AWAY"

We are living in days when there is a cry on every side, from all sections of Christendom for Unity, Unity, Unity at any price! How salutary for us to notice that in these last days our instructions are clear and plain—"From such turn away." Not "go in", or "link up", or "federate", or "interchange communion". Not hold discussions to see what common ground one can find! No—after the graphic description of the conditions of the last days and the undoubted association of these things with Christendom do not the words of Paul become undeniably applicable:

"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? and what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty".

(2 Corinthians 6. 14-18).

Notice the instruction of the Word of God, so plain and clear—

### **Come Out! Be Separate! Touch Not! Turn Away!**

Is it not strange that there are evangelical Christians to-day who are being deceived by the cries for unity? The Devil is to-day adopting his ancient strategy by quoting the Word of God in order to achieve his ends. We know how skilfully he used the Word of God against our adorable Lord in the days of the temptation in the wilderness and how he was defeated by the correct use of the Word of God. One of the sad features of our day is that there are those who take the place of being leaders amongst the people of God, who turning from the things most surely believed among us, are easily deceived by pleas for so-called "Christian" or "Church Unity" based upon a misapplication of the wonderful prayer of our Lord Jesus in John 17. This chapter definitely has to do with those who belong to Christ. Note these quotations:

- (a) "He should give eternal life to as many as Thou hast given Him" (v. 2).
- (b) "I have manifested Thy name unto the men which Thou gavest Me out of the world" (v. 6).
- (c) "I pray . . . for them which Thou hast given Me;

for they are Thine" (v. 9).

- (d) "Holy Father, keep through Thine own name those whom Thou hast given Me" (v. 11).
- (e) "Those that Thou gavest Me I have kept" (v. 12).
- (f) "Father, I will that they also which Thou hast given Me be with Me where I am; that they may behold My glory" (v. 24).

It is evident that the subjects of the prayer of the Lord Jesus are those who are truly His own; i.e. "Born Again Christians" not mere professors: This term, six times mentioned, "those whom Thou hast given Me" indicates that they are the Father's gift to the Son. The Church of God, composed of every true believer in the Lord Jesus, in every place, covering the period from Pentecost to the Rapture is called by various names in the New Testament—it is called "the church which is His body" (Eph. 1. 23); "An holy temple in the Lord" (Eph. 2. 21); "One New Man" (Eph. 2. 15); "One Flock" (John 10. 16); The Bride of Christ (Wife, Rev. 19. 7; Bride adorned for her husband, Rev. 21. 2; cf. Eph. 5. 25-33). Here it is designated "those who Thou hast given Me"—the Gift! Certain things are said in this notable chapter about those who form this company.

- (a) They have been given eternal life (v. 2).
- (b) They know . . . the only true God and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent (v. 3).
- (c) They belonged to the Father, were given to the Son, and kept the Father's word (v. 6).
- (d) They have known that things given to Christ were of the Father (v. 7).
- (e) They were given the Father's words by the Lord Jesus, they received them and knew with certainty that He came out from the Father and they believed" (v. 8).
- (f) They are the subjects of the prayers of Christ in contradistinction to the world (v. 9).
- (g) They belong to the Father and to the Son and the Son is glorified in them (v. 10)

and so we could go on, but space and time does not permit. Would anyone be so foolish as to suggest that the things recorded above are true of the people who make up Christendom—to be plainer, are these things true of professing Christians in the world to-day? The church of England, or Scotland, or Ireland, the Methodists, Congregationalists? Would anyone be so willingly foolish as to suggest that the congregations of people who are called by these names are truly born again believers, genuine children of God, that they have Eternal Life, that they received



and believed in the Son and know the Father? Let us not deceive ourselves. The vast majority of those who find themselves in these particular denominations where there is so much clamour for unity have never been born again, they are not members of the true church of God. The unity after which they strive is not the Unity of the Spirit but the Unity of the World Church, which is but the Devil's counterfeit of that Body of which Christ is both Lord and Head. And yet one reads such expressions as these—"the relevance of the story (of the origins of the brethren movement) to the ecumenical movement in our own generation, for the pioneers of the Brethren movement—especially J. N. Darby and those who shared his outlook—were deeply concerned for the visible unity of the church on earth". How foolish can such comparisons become! The pioneers of the movement with which we have the privilege of being associated were born again believers, concerned with expressing the oneness of the Body of Christ. That was a movement of the Spirit of God! The Ecumenical Movement is a movement of professing Christians (the majority of whom are not born again) seeking the manufacture of a unity based upon a small amount of doctrine and a large amount of compromise. This is not a movement of the Spirit of God but in contrast is a movement toward the establishment of that awful system to be seen in its fulness after the Church has been raptured Heavenward—"Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots and Abominations of the Earth." This is a movement of "the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience."

Notice this quotation from the Swanwick Conference of Brethren (June, 1964): "Lawrence indeed is so unduly optimistic as to write:—'In the British Isles we have reached a point from which we ought to be able to attain full visible unity within the next ten or twenty years between at least Anglicans, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Methodists and many Baptists. I would add the Society of Friends and the Salvation Army'."

The speaker went on: "Herein lies a crucial test of our opinions. Do we in fact want such a united church? It is no secret that many evangelical leaders do not want it at all".

We note his question! We note too with satisfaction what is said about many evangelical leaders! But we are more concerned with the attitude of assemblies of the Lord's people who seek humbly to carry out the New Testament Pattern in 1968. We repeat the question: "Do we in fact want such a united church?" The answer is clear, definite, firm—"NO, we not only do not want it, but we are entirely opposed to it. We will not have it!

To be continued (D.V.).

## HOW I WAS CALLED TO SERVE THE LORD IN TRINIDAD

by DANIEL USSHER

OF old it was written of Timothy, "From a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim. 3. 15). This was a great privilege for Timothy as it has been for many others since. The writer had this privilege also. Being born of Christian parents and taught the things of God from earliest days. We do not remember the first time we were taken to meetings or Sunday School but we do remember the first thing that we were taught at Sunday School. It was "Man's ruin by sin, God's remedy through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ." This Sunday School was held at Killykergan Gospel Hall, Co. Derry, Northern Ireland.

On 12th January, 1949, we had the joyous experience of accepting Christ as Saviour after Gospel meetings conducted by Mr. Frank Knox in Ballylintagh Gospel Hall, the Holy Spirit giving us assurance of sins forgiven through the words of John 5. 24. After conversion we went around different places where the Gospel was preached and it was not until February, 1955 that we were baptised and received into fellowship in the Limavady assembly. The matter of gathering to the Lord's Name gave us as much exercise as conversion. Brethren Ball and Thompson (Evangelists) came to Limavady and held a truly memorable series of meetings which lasted something like 36 weeks. Many were saved at that time and many who had been previously saved were spiritually blessed. The evangelists took a keen interest in us and gave us much help in the things of God. It was the truth of "The Priesthood of All Believers" that gave us exercise about gathering to the "NAME". At that time or even yet we do not know of any company outside of a scripturally gathered assembly where the priesthood of all believers can be carried out. We are assured there are born again people in the systems but for the obedient and exercised soul there is only the place where the Lord is pleased to place His Name.

In the assembly at Limavady we were encouraged to take part in the meetings. We derived much help by visits of godly men as well as those in the assembly. At Bible Readings and Ministry Meetings we were taught much of the truth of God. Visits from missionaries on furlough also

kept us in touch with the Lord's work in "the regions beyond." We looked forward to annual events such as the Easter meetings in Belfast and the October meetings in Lurgan. On these occasions we heard ministry and also missionary reports from foreign lands. On a visit to the Easter meetings in Belfast in 1960 we first heard about the Lord's work in Trinidad. On that occasion a report was given by Mr. Henry T. Spencer. My wife and I were impressed about the need that existed in Trinidad and decided to make it a matter of prayer. Prior to this we had both thought of other spheres of service.

Several months passed and we just kept praying about the matter. In the month of June that year we went to a Conference in Strabane at which we met Mr. Edward Fairfield of Venezuela. We thought he could give us some help about our exercise in respect to Trinidad. We asked him several questions about the country, etc. He asked us if we had any exercise about the country and advised us to write to Mr. Spencer who was then in Cardiff, Wales. This was done and in due course we went over to Cardiff and met Mr. and Mrs. Spencer. My wife being a qualified school-teacher had exercise about serving the Lord in that capacity. Mr. Spencer visited our families in Ireland before returning to Trinidad in 1960. Before going to Wales we had told a few of our brethren about our exercise in going out to serve the Lord in Trinidad. For quite some time previous to this we had been much exercised by the question in Acts 9. 6: "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" The answer was found in Romans 12. 1-2. After our return from Wales the assembly was informed about our exercise.

In the month of March, 1961 we were commended by the assembly at Limavady to the work of the Lord in Trinidad and elsewhere as the Lord may lead. A farewell meeting was arranged which was attended by many friends from our home and neighbouring assemblies. Brethren Harold Paisley and David Craig gave goodly words of counsel and cheer. We left Northern Ireland on 7th March, 1961 and arrived in Trinidad on 20th March. Some 7 years have passed since that time and we have proved much of the goodness and faithfulness of our God. We were back in Northern Ireland on furlough during 1965 and had the joy of meeting many friends again. To all who have prayed for us or helped us in any way in the work of the Lord we would tender our thanks in His Name. There is a Day coming when all things will be seen in their proper perspective. All who have been faithful in the sphere to which the Lord called them will get the "Well Done" of the best of all Masters.

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Blessed is he that **READETH, HEARETH and KEEPS**

Revelation 1. 3,

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