

John Heading

On 3rd January 1991 John Heading passed into the presence of the Lord he served unreservedly from his conversion and baptism in Norwich many years ago. Few have evidenced the degree of commitment to the Lord and His work, as our brother. Not surprisingly he has left much as an enduring contribution to the saints now engaged in that same work.

In professional life Professor Heading was a mathematician world-renowned in the applied fields in which he worked. He never short-changed his earthly master but was at his desk at an early hour, even during vacations and, as was so typical of the man, he undertook much more than the minimum requirements of his post. Just prior to his home call, although officially retired, he discussed with the present writer problems he was having in editing an international series involving authors whose first language was not English.

Our brother's secular calling took him to Cambridge, Woodford Green, Southampton and eventually to Aberystwyth. There the assembly is small, having been established within the last thirty years, and conscious of that he arranged his preaching itinerary and professional commitments to ensure he was at the local gatherings more than any other in his position would have attempted. He set about teaching the saints systematically and so much of his extensive range of publications emanates from his public ministry in Aberystwyth. There is an example there for aspiring teachers.

Some years ago in the pages of this magazine John Heading stressed his conviction that preachers should not distract audiences by excessive gesticulating or other diversions. Those who have heard him preach will know that he answered to his own ministry. Indeed there was no embellishment with either his oral or written ministry.

It was for the written word that a wider audience knew him. He edited the *Precious Seed* periodical with customary diligence for twenty-five years. He authored books on Chronicles, Daniel, Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts, Corinthians, Hebrews, Revelation and other themes such as daily readings. But he took a great interest in the writings of others. *What the Bible Teaches* was a particular concern of his. Although not charged with the editing of the series he constantly reminded the editors that few would ever understand the immensity of their task. Over many months communications between him and the editors dealt with matters of style, depth of treatment, house-style (where any slackness would be challenged) and (another of his concerns) the accuracy of references. Often in the course of one week the present writer received two or three letters from our brother. The editors of this magazine and of *What the Bible Teaches* owe a considerable debt to brother Heading and will find few as well equipped to assist.

A few days before his death, our brother received a request from the editors of the BM soliciting an article for the Centenary Year. Within a few days that article was forwarded, ready for publication. Even when in employment, there was that eager response to the demands of service. When *Matthew* was being prepared for *What the Bible Teaches* one chapter (and sometimes two) flowed per week from his pen. Indeed he often said any contributor should give a firm commitment to meet a particular deadline and see any slippage in terms of breach of promise. So he lived, ever conscious that he must redeem the time. Only at that cost can any leave a lasting contribution to the work of the Lord.

Our brother leaves a dear wife and two sons. During his days of service they paid a price and would value our prayers.

T. W.