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Living Water

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ISSUE NUMBER 100 – A NOTE FROM THE PUBLISHERS

The publishers of “Living Water” feel it is appropriate with the 100th issue of the magazine to acknowledge the devoted commitment of their colleague Mark Lemon as editor, and Tim Knappett as production editor, in ensuring the regular delivery of your copy.

The Stone Publishing Trust was originally established to take over the publication of the children’s magazine “Youthful Days”, (at that time edited by the late Jan Taylor). Soon after, we received a number of requests for the publication of other current ministry. After prayerful consideration the Trustees committed themselves to a new magazine and Mark was asked to act as its interim editor. We are most grateful to him for agreeing to continue in this role. The blend of material he has used, from earlier writings and poetry to personal testimony and current ministry, provides an insight into the service of the Holy Spirit among believers across the years.

Production has been facilitated by the labours of Tim Knappett in providing scanning and transcription services for the editor and preparing computer files for the printers.

“Living Water” has a wide distribution reaching across the world into places where we have had no previous contacts with believers. One of the most encouraging answers to the prayers of the Trustees has been the desire of some of our contacts overseas to translate portions of both magazines into local languages. Print runs of selections published in Ghana, India and Burma far exceed the number circulated from the United Kingdom. The Lord has blessed the magazine to many.

Our prayer is that He will continue to bless and support the editor in his work. We would particularly value your prayerful support, especially for its use among believers overseas.

David Mutton
Chairman, Stone Publishing Trust

Recent Ministry

FIVE FEATURES OF THE CHRISTIAN HOUSEHOLD

FAITH – Rahab’s House (Joshua 2:18-19)

Rahab’s house, in Joshua chapter 2, was marked by faith. God had worked in her and brought about faith and belief in the fact that His people were going to occupy the land. She, by faith, judged the world, which is what the city of Jericho represents. She turned her back on Jericho and made her outlook that of the people of God. That is what she was able to do by faith and all who came into her house, in that momentous time in Jericho, were preserved.

What a wonderful thing the believer’s household is! It is marked out in a wicked world. Jericho represents the evil of the world that has come under judgement. Yet there are those secured out of it as having faith in God and who have put their trust in Him.

COMMITMENT – Joshua’s House (Joshua 24:15)

Joshua marks out his house in a wonderful way: “As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord”. Whatever the path of those around him, he and his house were set to serve God. What commitment there was in that.

Joshua’s commitment began when he was a young man: “Joshua the son of Nun, a young man, departed not from within the tent” (Exodus 33:11). He was also one of the spies sent into Canaan who brought back a true report. He was marked by faith in that matter (see Numbers 14:7). But here we see him and his house marked by commitment to God. I think that is something for us to take into account in the present time.

We live in a day when many things have gone wrong in the public expression of Christianity and they are still going wrong. We need to be wholeheartedly committed to God and not influenced by what is around us.

OBEDIENCE – Lydia’s House (Act 16:13-15)

In Acts 16 we find a woman, Lydia. It does not say anything

about her husband but she had a household and her heart was opened to attend to the things spoken by Paul. I think Lydia represents the obedience of faith. God had opened her heart and she was willing to attend, not only just to listen to Paul but to take account of the word of God through him.

She took to heart what God was saying through His servant. She took it to herself as the word of God and was obedient to it. She and her house were baptised and as a result she said, "If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house and abide there". Her house was not only marked by faith but it was marked by obedience to the word of God. This is something that, again, is of great importance in our day.

HELP AND INSTRUCTION – Aquila and Priscilla’s House (Acts 18:24-27)

In Acts 18 we read of the household of Aquila and Priscilla, who took Apollos home "and unfolded to him the way of God more exactly". What a help and service to a beloved man of God this couple provided. We are thankful for our meetings, for times of gathering and fellowship, but there is still valuable work to be done in the homes. They took Apollos home; it was a private matter. They helped him and set him forward so that when he went into Achaia he was able to contribute much to those who believed through grace.

They were able to set him forward with an enlarged and correct understanding of the things of God. Well, that is a challenge and a test to us as to how we can help souls in our households. May it be that we are able, as Aquila and Priscilla were, to bring in help. Wherever they are mentioned in Scripture we find them bringing help, blessing and encouragement.

PRAYER – Daniel’s House (Daniel 2:17-19)

When we come to Daniel, the great feature there is prayer. Daniel had a house and it was marked by prayer and dependence. What a wonderful thing. Twice we get mention of Daniel going in to his house and praying.

Daniel was in the habit of having his windows open to Jerusalem

and praying three times a day. His outlook was towards Jerusalem. So our outlook should be towards the church of the living God which He has purchased with the blood of His own (Acts 20:28). Daniel's outlook was there. I do not think he ever returned to Jerusalem but his heart was there; his outlook was there and through prayer he was able to come into the secret of God's mind for His earthly people and not just them, but bringing it right through to our day. How much can be achieved through prayer.

All these things are matters that should mark Christian households in a day like ours: faith, commitment, obedience, help and prayer. May these features be developed in all our households for His name's sake.

Marcus Chapman,
Croydon — July 2009

BIBLE CHAINS

THE GOSPEL CHAIN AND THE PURPOSE CHAIN

Introduction

I would like to occupy you this afternoon with the gospel chain and the purpose chain. I am using the word 'chain' as people do today when referring to, say, the 'food chain' where it refers to the process from seeds being planted to the food that we finally eat, or to the 'supply chain' where goods progress from raw materials to manufactured goods.

There is a need among the people of God, myself included, to look at what I would call the 'big picture'. God is interested in the detail of our lives. Jesus said when here that your heavenly Father knows that you have need of all these things (Matt 6:25-34) and that even the hairs of your head are all numbered (Luke 12:7). He is interested in us and wants to help us in every practical detail of life but there is a tendency with myself as with others to become obsessed with some difficulty or some problem that emerges. Whether it is a problem in our personal lives, or in our health, or our work—even in Christian work, or in relationships

among God's people—all our attention and energies become directed on it and sometimes we lose sight of the 'big picture'.

I think too that we should seek to understand the scope of divine truth and look at the end from the beginning. Sometimes believers open their Bibles randomly, maybe in a time of trouble, and find a verse to encourage them. There is nothing wrong with doing that. Every scripture is divinely inspired and we can all get something from individual verses of the Bible (2 Timothy 3:16). I have a calendar at home and I tear off a leaf each day to view a new text. It is good to read a scripture, even at random.

Then it is also important to see the settings of scriptures, and see how aspects of God's truth fit together. Everything initially centres on the realisation that we are sinners and must come to know the Saviour. But we do not want to stop there! We need to come to a knowledge of the truth and see how each experience fits into the big picture.

The Gospel Chain (Romans 10:13-17)

In the passage we read, Paul says, "the same Lord of all is rich unto all that call upon him" and "every one whosoever, who shall call on the name of the Lord, shall be saved". These statements show the attitude of God towards the world today. Irrespective of nationality, irrespective of the state of soul, irrespective of age or social status, the same Lord of all is rich towards all who call upon Him. Then it says, "every one whosoever, who shall call on the name of the Lord, shall be saved". A Christian is a person who calls on the name of the Lord, who has a living link with the Man in the glory, who is blessed through the riches of the Lord Jesus Christ.

When Paul writes to the church of God in Corinth he adds "with all that in every place call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 1:2) using that expression as a definition of a Christian. Initially, we call on His name to be saved from our sins, but we keep calling on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. We find our resource, we find our help, we find our motivation,

we find everything in Him.

Paul then goes backwards in the gospel chain ending with, “how shall they preach unless they have been sent?” It is interesting to view an illustration of this chain. Paul and Barnabas were sent by the Holy Spirit from Antioch. Other believers committed themselves to them in their service and away they went on their first missionary journey. One of the places they visited was Antioch of Pisidia where Paul, being a Jew, had the opportunity to preach in the synagogue (see Acts 13).

So here we see Paul sent by God and he began to preach. “How shall they hear without one who preaches?” and then it says, “and how shall they believe on him”—on Him, notice—“of whom they have not heard?” So what did Paul preach about? He preached about Jesus. The gospel is about a Person, a living Person.

He preaches about this Person in his address to these Jews and God-fearing attendees in the synagogue. Paul explains how Jesus was the subject of Old Testament prophecies and how they were fulfilled. He tells about His crucifixion, death and resurrection and God’s offer of the forgiveness of sins stating that, “that through this man remission of sins is preached to you”.

“How shall they hear without one who preaches?” Paul preached, he preached Jesus and the resurrection. He preached the way of salvation that was set out through Him. And what happened? Some believed and some, alas, did not believe.

“And how shall they believe on him of whom they have not heard?” Thank God there were a number who heard. Thank God, even more, there were some who believed! And what did they do? They called upon Him. Those in Antioch who received the message rejoiced and “glorified the word of the Lord”. Why? They had a link by faith with this Man who is now in heaven.

There is the gospel chain. Paul being sent, Paul preaching, persons hearing, a number of them believing who then called upon the name of the Lord and were saved.

For us believers there must have been a point in our lives when we heard about the Saviour. I heard about the Saviour at home and by going to Christian meetings. But there had to come a point when I believed. Some people are converted today not directly through a preacher but by reading the Bible for themselves.

**Every one of us,
according to our
measure, can be
a workman.**

Let us remember the Bible was written by people who were sent by God.

We should note too that the gospel message has content. Paul speaks about the report. "Faith then is by a report, but the report by God's word". People hear or they read about Jesus and the way of salvation through Him. The message centres in the glorious Person who lived, who died and who lives at the right hand of God and who is coming again.

How shall they hear without one who preaches? It is important that people hear, that they come under the sound of the message. Paul and Barnabas, of course, as others in the New Testament times, were special messengers raised up by God. But Jesus said to His disciples to supplicate the Lord of the harvest that He send out workmen into His harvest (Matthew 9:38). Every one of us, according to our measure, can be a workman.

It is very encouraging to read in Acts: 11 that when believers were scattered from Jerusalem through persecution they spread the word. Initially they spoke to Jews only but then they spread the word to others and the Lord's hand was with them and a good many believed and turned to the Lord. I would encourage everyone here to seek to spread the good news about Jesus. How shall they hear without one that preaches?

Many consider that today things have gone to the wall in this country; it is not like it was years ago. That is true; it is not as it was in Reformation times, in the days of John Wesley or in the 19th century. But there is today even in this land an ear for the gospel. Earlier this week I was speaking to two Christians active in open air gospel work who remarked how many people are

open for the message. I know it is also true that there are many opposed but let us remember there are persons open to the message.

Let us seek that according to our measure we who know the Saviour and call upon the name of Jesus might have our part in spreading the word so that others might hear. Believing on behalf of others is not our responsibility, but praying for gospel blessing, spreading the word and telling others about Jesus is our responsibility.

The Purpose Chain (Romans 8:28-30)

In this Scripture Paul refers to God's purpose. If you are a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ something very wonderful happened long before you were born. God knew about you. He foreknew you and predestinated you to be conformed to the image of His Son. God always predestinates to something—"to be conformed to the image of his Son". Realising that God purposed us for blessing gives great stability in the souls of believers in the Lord Jesus.

If you are a believer you have felt the awfulness of sin and have put your trust in the Lord Jesus. But this scripture also teaches you that long, long ago God foreknew us and has predestined us to be "conformed to the image of his Son, so that He should be the firstborn among many brethren".

Paul then says, "But whom he has predestinated, these also he has called". This is not us calling on God, but He calling us. God calls us through the gospel. It is not just a general call. This is God's sovereign call to those that He has foreknown.

Then it says, "and whom he has called, these also he has justified". Here is a chain, again. God foreknowing, predestinating, calling and then justifying—"these also he has justified". It is marvellous to be justified. The epistle to the Romans sets out God's righteous basis for blessing believers: "being justified freely by his grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus" (Romans 3:24).

Whom He has called, these also He has justified; "but whom he has justified, these also he has glorified". If you are justified you are clear of every charge against you in God's sight, although not necessarily in the eye of the world. If you are a criminal with a criminal record you still may have a criminal record in the court but in the sight of God each believer is cleared of every charge through the completed work of Jesus.

We can rest on God's purposes while pilgrims on earth.

Then we read, "these also he has glorified". What does that mean? I think it looks on to the believer having a body of glory like to the Lord's own body of glory. But meantime everyone who comes to Jesus, everyone who is justified by the grace of God, is sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of glory. The Spirit of God comes to indwell the believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. Is this not a wonderful chain? Foreknown, predestinated, called, justified and glorified.

Sometimes we should stop in our busy lives to reflect on what a blessing it is to be called by God, to be justified by God, to be glorified by God. We can rest on God's purposes while pilgrims on earth.

Immediately before this chain we read, "But we do know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to purpose". There are many things that happen in our lives. Sometimes strange things take place, or things happen that we wish had not happened. Sometimes we have plans but other events intervene and they do not work out. This is so both in our personal lives and among believers. There are also many events that we do not fully understand. Yet in the light of this scripture and in the enjoyment of the purpose of God we can be restful and stable.

I believe there is a great deal of instability among believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. I think that is why often so many are carried away with wrong and unscriptural ideas. But we can be stabilised

by knowing that God has thoughts about you and me. I say to every believer in this hall this afternoon, you have been foreknown, called, justified and glorified.

Whatever the good times, the bad times, the dark days and the bright days, we do know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to purpose and we can be restful, settled in our souls as a result.

In the Old Testament Abraham at one stage built an altar by the oaks of Mamre. There he was settled in the knowledge that God was for him, God had chosen him and God would bless him and his descendants. He trusted in God. It is a wholesome experience to be restful in an unsettled world. We live in a very unsettled world today, financially unsettled, politically unsettled. But God has a great plan for every believer in the Lord Jesus. He has predestinated us to be conformed to the image of His Son. One day you and I are going to be with Jesus. We are going to have bodies of glory like Him. We will see Him face to face and He will shine in all His glory as the firstborn among many brethren.

Ken Hollands

Part of an address at Bromley, 28th March 2009.

In the next issue DV: The Fruitfulness Chain and the Love Chain

Poetry Selection

ALL MY HOPE IN GOD IS FOUNDED

*All my hope in God is founded,
He doth still my trust renew,
Me through storm and change He guideth,
Only good and only true.
God, well known,
He alone
Calls my heart to be His own.*

*Pride of man and earthly glory,
Sword and crown betray his trust;
What with care and toil he buildeth,
Tower and temple, fall to dust.
But God's power,
Hour by hour
Is my temple and my tower.
Still from man to God eternal
Sacrifice of praise be done,
High above all praises praising
For the gift of Christ His Son.
Christ doth call
One and all:
Ye who follow shall not fall.
Joachim Neander (1650 – 1680)*

A PRAISE SONG

*Now may He who from the dead
Brought the Shepherd of the sheep,
Jesus Christ, our King and Head,
All our souls in safety keep!
May He teach us to fulfil
What is pleasing in His sight;
Perfect us in all His will,
And preserve us day and night!
To that dear Redeemer's praise,
Who the covenant sealed with blood,
Let our hearts and voices raise
Loud thanksgiving to our God.
John Newton (1725 – 1807)*

Testimony Section

MARTYRS OF THE MARIAN PERSECUTION

In 1555—exactly 455 years ago, there commenced in England a severe persecution of those who were faithful to the Lord Jesus Christ. Many persons were burnt at the stake because of their faith. This issue of the magazine contains the first of a short series of articles on some of those who were martyred, for we should remember and honour such.

J. N. Darby, writing of the martyrs of the early church says: 'I pay unfeigned honour to those men thus honoured of God. It is good for us in these days of ease to remember them. They were members of Christ, of that one true church, true saints, as all Christians are, and specially honoured in suffering for the blessed Lord.' It is in this spirit that the accounts of some of the martyrs will appear in "Living Water". Let us remember too, and pray for, all those in the present day in many parts of the world who face persecution and who lay down their lives in faithfulness to Christ.

The first of the series is the story of George Tankerville who was martyred at St Albans on 26th August 1555.

MADE STRONG OUT OF WEAKNESS

If during the morning of the 26th of August 1555 you had looked into the guest chamber of a St Albans' inn you might have got quite a surprise, for here was a man sitting all alone who appeared to be about to take bread and wine as at the Lord's Supper. The man was George Tankerville, a twenty-seven year old cook who was about to be martyred because of his faith in Christ. He was one of many ordinary folk who gave their lives for the truth during the reign of Queen Mary in England. While we often hear of more famous people, such as Thomas Cranmer or Nicholas Ridley who were martyred, the majority of those who suffered were labourers, carpenters, butchers and similar people. Probably today we would not even know who they were, had not John Foxe—a contemporary—carefully sought out the details of as many of the martyrs as he could and recorded them in his 'Book of Martyrs'.

George Tankerville had suffered doubts about what he was taught by the priests about the mass. He had been taught that the bread

and wine at the mass, through the priest's blessing, were translated into the actual body and blood of the Lord and also that in celebrating the mass there was a continual repetition of the sacrifice of Christ at Calvary. The burning of men who rejected these ideas, such as Rowland Taylor, John Rogers and John Hooper, who had been burnt at the stake earlier in 1555, caused him to question things in earnest. He began to pray that God in His mercy might show him the truth so that he might be fully persuaded as to whether what he was taught by the priests was of God or not. He was then moved to read the New Testament in English and through this reading was brought to living faith. Having trusted in Christ for himself, he began to preach to others and this led to his arrest. He was examined by Bishop Bonner who declared that he was a heretic and condemned him to death by being burned alive.

Tankerville had lived in London but it was decided to burn him at St Albans as a warning to others who might have similar views. On the journey to St Albans he met some who shared his true trust and faith in Christ, who encouraged him to stand firm in his convictions, others who urged him to recant to save his life, while others shouted at him condemning him as a heretic and as one who should not be allowed to live. All this must have been a great trial to Tankerville, since it seems to reflect the struggle that was going on in his own mind—should he go on, or should he save his life by recanting?

On the day set for his execution he was held all morning at an inn because the senior officers who were in charge of the burning were attending a wedding. Tankerville was filled with fear during those hours of waiting. He put his foot into the inn fire to see how well he could bear the pain, but quickly withdrew it. One part of his mind told him to recant and save himself from the dreadful ordeal ahead. Another part urged faithfulness to his Lord.

Under the pressure of the moment George Tankerville wanted to remember the Lord. He was aware that to celebrate the Lord's Supper on his own was quite irregular and he prayed about this before asking the inn keeper for Malmsey wine and a loaf of bread. He read the parts of the gospels and of Corinthians which relate to the night on which the Lord was delivered up and then he gave

thanks for the bread and the wine. According to John Foxe's account, he then prayed earnestly to God. In this way, through occupation with the sufferings of the Lord, Tankerville found strength.

At 2.00pm the Sherriff came to lead Tankerville out for execution. He was taken to an open space called Romeland, near St Albans Abbey, and chained to a stake. As the fire was about to be lit the Lord provided special support for His servant. A man stepped out of the crowd and took Tankerville by the hand saying, 'Good brother, be strong in Christ.'

'Thank you, Sir, I am so', replied Tankerville. He then turned to the crowd and asked for their prayers. Many people did pray but others ignored the request. There are records which show that on some occasions Sheriffs and others responsible for executions said that they would rather pray for a dog than for a martyr. The fire was lit, the flames leapt up and soon George Tankerville was absent from the body—present with the Lord.

John Foxe should be allowed the last word. He describes Tankerville as '...a true servant and saint of the Lord, not such saints as the Pope makes, or which are mentioned in the Legend of the Saints...but such as are spoken of in the book of the Revelation of whom it is written, "These are they that follow the Lamb wheresoever he goeth, and who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."'

Today the site of the execution is part of Romeland Garden and there is a small plaque that reads: *Near this spot George Tankerfield was burned at the stake – a witness to his faith 26th August 1555*
In the next issue D.V.: the story of Hugh Latimer, martyred at Oxford on 16th October 1555.

A NEW SONG

Late one afternoon in 1864, just as John Betteney was about to leave his office in the Manchester Town Hall, the door opened and Philip Heron, the Town Clerk, walked in. 'Ah, Betteney', he said, 'I am glad I have caught you before you went home. My little daughter is being christened on Saturday week, and we are having a party at the house afterwards. We would like you to come and sing for

us. Can you manage it?’

Betteney paused for a moment, then said, ‘Yes Sir, I am quite free to come, but I must tell you that I shall be singing a new song.’

‘Well of course’, said the Town Clerk laughing, ‘That is just what I would expect.’ Not only was John Betteney known as a talented singer but he had a happy knack of composing his own songs and light-heartedly referring to one and another of the audience to the amusement of all. Philip Heron knew from past experience just how a song from Betteney could contribute to the success of a party.

‘But this time it will be very different’, said Betteney. The Town Clerk looked puzzled. ‘Look, Sir,’ said Betteney, ‘suppose you sit in that chair and I will sing my new song to you now? Then you will be able to tell me what you think.’

‘Excellent’, said the Town Clerk, sitting down, ‘Nothing would please me more.’

So John Betteney began to sing:

*There is a fountain filled with blood
Drawn from Emmanuel's veins;
And sinners, plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains.
The dying thief rejoiced to see
That fountain in his day;
And there may I, though vile as he,
Wash all my sins away.*

Philip Heron stirred uneasily in his chair. This was not at all what he expected and the words were being sung with such deep conviction that it was all rather troubling. Did Betteney really think like this, or was it some passing phase? The singer continued:

*E'er since by faith, I saw the stream
Thy flowing wounds supply,
Redeeming love has been my theme,
And shall be till I die.*

*Then, in a nobler, sweeter song,
I'll sing Thy power to save;
While this poor lisping, stammering tongue
Lies silent in the grave*

The song finished and the singer said, 'Well, do you still wish me to come and sing at your party?'

'You don't mean it, Bettaney,' expostulated the Town Clerk, 'You are joking. You don't really mean to sing that?'

'Yes, indeed,' said Bettaney, 'I have come to know the Lord Jesus Christ as my Saviour and Lord. All my songs have been changed. I want to sing of His redeeming love and grace wherever I go. May I come and sing in your house, Sir?'

Slowly the Town Clerk got out of the chair, shaking his head and saying, 'No, I am sorry, but it really would be better not.'

Years passed, years in which John Bettaney sought faithfully to serve his Master and he became the means whereby others were brought to trust in the Saviour. In 1891 he was called to join in the 'nobler, sweeter song' in the presence of the One whom he loved and had served so devotedly.

Some while after his death, a young woman visited his widow. 'You will not know me, Mrs Bettaney,' she said, 'But I am sure you have heard of the new song that your husband offered to sing at the Town Clerk's christening party some thirty years ago.'

'Why, yes, of course', was the reply.

'Well', said the visitor, 'I was the baby whose christening had been arranged and I have come to tell you that as a result of your husband's words my father put his trust in the Saviour. Not only that, the blessing has spread through the whole family!'

"Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days" (Ecclesiastes 11:1).

The above is based on an article appearing in "Youthful Days" in 1990.

"Youthful Days" is a magazine aimed at younger readers. For a free sample copy please write to the Stone Publishing Trust. For the address, please see the inside front cover.

A Voice from the Past

NAMES OF HONOUR AND NAMES OF DISHONOUR

Every believer has a name according to divine purpose and grace, by which they are known and loved, but also each of us, in greater or less degree, acquires a name in connection with our relation to the testimony of our Lord here, a name that may be honourable or that may be the reverse; but each of us will acquire a name of some sort.

2 Timothy 4:9-15

I read 2 Timothy 4 because that epistle shows that individuals come into evidence and are taken account of by reference to their relation to the testimony of our Lord. The apostle urges energy. He says to Timothy, "Use diligence to come to me quickly". In the closing days of the testimony here he would urge diligence on every one of us. Here the apostle says, "Use diligence to come to me quickly: for Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica". What a name to have! I suppose Demas was a true believer, having his name according to divine purpose, having his own place in the heart of Christ; but what sorrow he would cause to Christ! "Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world." God forbid that you should come under such a designation as this. Is it not better to covet that we should acquire, through divine grace, a name that meets with divine approval?

Notice the names that follow. The apostle says, "Only Luke is with me", and then, "Take Mark, and bring him with thee: for he is profitable to me for the ministry". It is remarkable that these two men should be brought together. Four gospels were written, two by apostles and two by servants who were not apostles, and these two are found with Paul at the close. They are men who have been feeding on Christ, for only by feeding on Christ would they be qualified under the Spirit's hand to write gospels to present Christ according to the light in which they had apprehended Him. Only one who had closely followed Christ could write a gospel; and what a man Luke was!

I think we may safely assert that Luke was a man who would pray. He speaks more than the other gospel writers of Jesus praying; he tells us that Jesus withdrew Himself into the wilderness, and prayed, Luke 5:16, and on another occasion that He went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God, chapter 6: 13. In chapter 9 he tells us "he went up into a mountain to pray. And as he prayed the fashion of his countenance became different". It is only Luke who tells us that it was as Jesus was praying that He was transfigured, and he had doubtless received by the Spirit a distinctive impression of the kingdom of God. The Lord had said to the disciples that there were some standing there who should not taste death until they had seen the kingdom of God, and as Peter and James and John went up the mount of Transfiguration they would expect to see the kingdom of God, and they saw Him praying, and would receive the impression that the power of the kingdom of God would connect itself with a praying man. Luke records it for us, and Paul in his service insists on the necessity for prayer, and I have no doubt he found in Luke a man who went through right to the end in the intelligent appreciation of the truth of the heavenly calling, and supported the apostle in unceasing prayer.

Luke was a man who would pray.

Now as to Mark, he was, I believe, one who had learned in Jesus absolute purity of motive. He had had to judge in himself impurity of motive; he had, alas, failed when he turned back from the work and had gone back to Jerusalem. He had not been marked by purity of motive when he started out. His uncle, too, had not been marked by purity of motive when he went to Cyprus and took him with him. But Mark writes his gospel. He does not tell us Jesus was praying on the holy mount. He gives us the feature that impressed him, and he tells us, "his raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them." He was impressed with the exceeding purity of Jesus, the absolute singleness and purity of heart in all His movements, and as judging what was contrary to this in himself, he became

profitable to Paul. It is well for us to covet names like these. Luke is named in an honourable way here, in connection with continuing with the testimony right to the end, and Mark is named, and Tychicus is named, and then another man is named, Alexander the coppersmith. The apostle said, "He did me much evil". How terrible to think of it. How challenging the testimony of our Lord is, and it tests us where we are, as to whether we are single-hearted or whether, alas, we may even be opposed. Anyone who is not single-hearted, who like Demas turns aside, gets a name accordingly. He becomes known by that name, a name that must cause grief to the heart of Christ. The name of Alexander the coppersmith has been handed down century after century, that all the saints may understand that the names of those who oppose the testimony of our Lord are recorded.

3 John 1:1 & 4-12

In the epistle of John it is a question of the truth of the children of God here on earth, and the affections proper to them as here expressive of God, and in this epistle, too, we get names. Gaius is named in an honourable way, but he was not, so far as we can gather, a prominent servant, but one who was walking in the truth, not only stating or teaching it, but walking in it. The truth as to God, that He is love, had taken hold of Gaius, and he was walking in it. He was receiving without partiality the servants who came along, showing them hospitality and sending them on their way worthily of God. He was one who supported the truth in that way, and he is named in an honourable way by the Spirit of God in order that we may see that the presence here of the truth of God involves a challenge to us, as to the extent to which we ourselves are walking in it.

Then the apostle makes mention of another man—Diotrephes. It would be a sad thing for any of us to have a name like that. His name is placed on record that we may be warned against the tendency with us to seek a place of dominance among the people of God, when the One in whom the light of God has come to us is One who made Himself of no reputation and took upon Him a

bondman's form. But Diotrephes acquired a name that was the very opposite of that way of love.

do not allow Diotrephes to make you resentful in your spirit

But then, what is our attitude to be? The apostle's word to

Gaius is very encouraging. He says, 'do not allow Diotrephes to make you resentful in your spirit'. He says, "Beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is good". With the light of God as it has come to us in Christ, let it be that which we follow after, that is what is good; that which is evil will be exposed, but the apostle's word to Gaius was to go after that which is good. "He that doeth good is of God: but he that doeth evil hath not seen God". Then he brings forward another name, "Demetrius hath good report of all men, and of the truth itself: yea, and we also bear record; and ye know that our record is true". He does not give us much as to Demetrius, but he was so in keeping with the truth that he not only had a good report of all men, but also of the truth itself. He was a brother who in his movements was expressive of God.

I hope I have said enough to encourage a desire with us to have a name that God can approve. There is no thought in these names of ourselves being glorified. You remember in the book of Revelation, the twenty-four elders each have a crown, which they cast before the throne, and bow before Him that sits upon it. Whatever distinction the saints may acquire from fidelity in the testimony, all is made contributory to the glory of Christ, and so when the Lord Himself comes He will come to be glorified in His saints and admired in all them that believe. Any distinction that is of God that may be secured by anyone of us is a part of that in which the Lord Himself will be glorified when He comes, and at the same time a part of that in which God Himself will be expressed when the holy city comes down from heaven having the glory of God.

Alfred Gardiner

Extracted from an address in London (Circa. 1940)

COMPLETING THE COURSE

And as John was fulfilling his course he said ... I am not he. But, behold, there comes one after me, the sandal of whose feet I am not worthy to loose (Acts 13:25).

For David indeed having in his own generation ministered to the will of God, fell asleep, and was added to his fathers... (Acts 13:36).

And say to Archippus, Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord to the end that thou fulfil it (Colossians 4:17).

I read these Scriptures, not to detract from the side of sympathy and sorrow that is in our hearts at this time, in regard to the bereavement of those who mourn—for we mourn with them over the departure of our brother—but just to call attention to another feature connected with the end of his life, and that is the idea of completion. One has a sense, shall I say, of satisfaction in thinking of one who has here completed his course in the will of God. We think of him, as taken home by and to the One whom he served with great devotedness, and as such having completed his course.

We look back over his life of service, and the words spoken by John as recorded in Acts 13 seemed to be peculiarly applicable to him, for it says, "And as John was fulfilling his course he said ...I am not he. But, behold, there comes one after me, the sandal of whose feet I am not worthy to loose" (Acts 13:25). As we think of our brother, we can say that what marked John as he was fulfilling his course also marked him. The spirit that marked his service was not the spirit of self importance, but rather the spirit of self abasement. So one thinks of our brother as bearing this feature that marked John as he fulfilled his course—he delighted to speak of and to exalt the worthiness and the surpassing excellence of our Lord Jesus Christ. This is the mark of a person who is truly fulfilling his course in the will of God, not calling attention to themselves, but, as our brother did so delightedly, and, at times, so blessedly, speaking of the glory and greatness of his Saviour, our Lord Jesus Christ.

So as he served Him in his life, he knew Him in his death. When, in the moment of his extreme weakness, I suggested that the Lord was with him, he replied quickly, 'He is with me'. Those were the

last words that I heard from him. What a delightful thought, that our brother in the moment of weakness was conscious of the precious and sustaining company of our Lord Jesus Christ.

There may be some here this afternoon who have heard our brother speak in the gospel. I would ask you whether, in anticipation of that moment through which our brother has passed, you can count on the company of the Lord of whom he delighted to speak. A moment will come for us all, when every earthly friend will recede from our vision and presence. How blessed if we are able to say, as our brother did, 'He is with me'. He was conscious of the presence of One who could say "Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee" (Isaiah 43:1-2). Nothing would have more delighted our brother than this—that some who have heard his voice in the past in the glad tidings may even now turn to the Saviour in whom he rejoiced.

So he has fulfilled his course, and when he was withdrawn from the service that he loved, one thinks of him like David as ministering to the will of God. When physically unable to continue his service, how beautifully he accepted the will of God that laid him aside, and rested in the love of God that lay behind that will. His satisfaction was not found in his service, but in his Saviour and Lord, and in the love of God Himself. So that when circumstances—weakness of body—necessitated his withdrawal from active service, he could retire into that which is greater than service—the love of the One that he delighted to serve.

So I feel the appeal, at this time, bearing on ourselves, that he was one who filled out the exhortation Paul gives to Archippus, "Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord". Our brother has completed the ministry he received in the Lord and he remains for us now as an example of one fulfilling his course and as fulfilling it, not calling attention to himself, but to that blessed One the latchet of whose shoes we are not worthy to loose. May we be stimulated each one by the example of our brother, as having completed his service, for 'the Lord has given to each his work' (See Mark 1:34). Let us each seek that grace, in which our brother

shone, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, to fulfil any ministry that we too may have received in the Lord.

Word at the burial of F. W. Bettenev, Manchester, 28th November 1946, taken from the notebook of Mr John Hemmings of Hampton—now with the Lord.

(F. W. Bettenev was son of John Bettenev whose story is told in the "Testimony Section" on page 14)

A word for today

PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY SHOWN IN THE EPISTLE OF JAMES

It is of great importance that every true Christian should be impressed with the practical character of Christianity, so that it becomes an essential factor in the everyday life and shines out, not in word only, but in actions. The apostle James was inspired to write an epistle which deals in a unique manner with the working out of Christianity in practical life. While little is known of the writer himself, the effect of his personal contact with Jesus is clearly seen in his epistle.

He assumes that those to whom he writes are grounded in the fundamental truths of Christianity, for he refers to God as "the Father," and to the Lord Jesus Christ as "the Lord of glory". He mentions "the Spirit that dwelleth in us" and also refers to the church and he speaks of the coming of the Lord as though all these truths are known.

James illustrates his exhortations by familiar objects, as the Lord did in His ministry. For instance, "a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed", aptly describes a man who asks for wisdom, but does not ask in faith; a mirror is used to teach the value of considering what manner of man one is; "the flower of the grass" remind him of the fading character of everything here; the bit in the horse's mouth, and the rudder of a ship illustrate the necessity for control in our speech; a fountain proves the need for purity; a vapour teaches the solemn lesson of the uncertainty of life; the

rain conveys the thought of the coming down of heavenly blessing. This epistle deals definitely and powerfully in turn with essentially practical subjects, such as temptation and endurance, pure and undefiled religion, avoiding partiality, the necessity for good works, the ordering of the tongue, the wisdom which is from above, our friendships, the spirit of humility, behaviour as brethren, subjection to God's will, the danger of the selfish life, the coming of the Lord, the power of prayer, and the value of one soul recovered for God. The apostle, full of affection, addresses Christians as "brethren" fourteen times in this short epistle, twice as "beloved brethren". He solemnly exhorts them to the end that Christianity may be livingly expressed both in their speech and in their works, for he says, "So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty".

A distinct principle may be noted in each chapter.

Chapter 1 – Purity

The climax of the first chapter is found in the remarkable definition of "true religion," so different from the human idea, for he emphasises its purity. "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." Pure motives and affections should control the followers of our Lord Jesus Christ, as they are found where there is sorrow and affliction, and in love to Him they will desire to walk as delivered from this present evil world.

Chapter 2 – Good Works

In the second chapter he urges the necessity of good works.

According to the epistle to the Romans we are "justified by faith" before God, but this does not lessen the truth that we need to be "justified by works" in the sight of others. Those who profess faith in Christ are urged to show their faith by their works, for Christianity is not a theory or system of doctrines, but is living and practical. There is to be a witness in the believer's works as expressing the reality of faith.

Chapter 3 – Wisdom

In chapter 3, after calling solemn attention to the danger of an unbridled tongue and urging the need of speaking a pure language, the apostle furnishes a key to a Christian life in the supply of wisdom that is from above. How encouraging it is that a Christian can be guided and governed by the wisdom that is “first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy”. Christianity can only be displayed as this wisdom is received and its features expressed.

Chapter 4 – Lowliness

In chapter 4 the writer is concerned lest there should be a spirit that is not pleasing to God, for “God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble”. The spirit of lowliness is essential if the testimony of Christ is to be effectual, for He was meek and lowly in heart. It is not sufficient to do that which is right; it must be done in the right spirit to please God. God the Holy Spirit is here spoken of as “the Spirit that dwelleth in us”, and He alone furnishes the true secret of lowliness.

Chapter 5 – Power

Finally, the apostle in chapter 5 leads on to the value of one soul and life that is recovered for God, but connects this with the power of prayer, for “the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much”. Elijah was a man subject to like passions as we are and he prayed earnestly. One of the greatest evidences of Christianity is the recovery of those who have erred from the truth and this is effected in the power of prayer.

The consideration of this important epistle is commended, to the end that the practical lives of God’s people may be increasingly for the pleasure of God and the testimony of Christ.

F. S. Marsh