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Living Water

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'Living Water' is published by the Stone Publishing Trust (Registered Charity 1034689)

'The Eagles', Headcorn Road, Staplehurst, Kent, TN12 0BU

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Editor: Mark Lemon

Picture: Scotney Castle, Kent; David Mutton

Printed by Lakeside Printing,
Unit 4A, Munday Industrial Estate, Morley Rd, Tonbridge, TN9 1RA, UK

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(November — December 2012)

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Recent Ministry

ADORNING THE TEACHING OF GOD OUR SAVIOUR – PART 2

Introduction

Paul, writing to Titus, exhorts believers to *“adorn the teaching... of our Saviour God in all things” (Titus 2:10)*. God is looking for the expression of divine teaching in the lives and conduct of men and women just like ourselves. Paul, writing to the Corinthian believers, says, *“Ye are our letter, written in our hearts, known and read of all men” (2 Corinthians 3:2)*. That is, there was something about the work of God in these saints that was an adornment.

Adornment expressed in the character of a little child

“And all were astonished at the glorious greatness of God... Jesus... said to his disciples, Do ye let these words sink into your ears. For the Son of man is about to be delivered into men’s hands. But they understood not this saying, and it was hid from them that they should not perceive it. And they feared to ask him concerning this saying. And a reasoning came in amongst them, who should be the greatest of them. And Jesus, seeing the reasoning of their heart, having taken a little child set it by him, and said to them, Whosoever shall receive this little child in my name receives me, and whosoever shall receive me receives him that sent me. For he who is least among you all, he is great” (Luke 9:44-48).

In Luke 9 we read of the three disciples who have been on the mount with Jesus. They have witnessed His glory there, they have heard the Father’s voice, *“This is my beloved Son: hear him” (Luke 9:35)*, yet coming down from that mountain they, together with the others of the twelve, get occupied with ‘Who is going to be greatest?’ In answer the Lord brings forward a little child – one in whom the features of lowliness, humility and childlike simplicity are seen. Those features are ones which adorn the believer in God’s sight. This is a true feature of the kingdom

of God and it will be seen in the world to come as well - *"A little child shall lead them"* (Isaiah 11:6).

There are great things on hand here. This is probably at the beginning of the last six months of the Lord's life on earth. He was setting His face steadfastly to go to Jerusalem, to suffer and die – yet these disciples who had been so close to Him, their concern is, 'Who is going to be greatest?' Where is the meekness that was manifested in Moses, the meekest man in all the earth? Where is the humility that was seen in Christ as a Man here? It is missing. And so the Lord takes forward a little child and places it by Himself.

Think of these disciples: there were fishermen, there was a tax gatherer, and various other occupations; how humbling that He has to place a little child alongside Himself to teach them a lesson about the features that would adorn the kingdom of God. And so it is with us. Paul exhorts the Philippians: *"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant..."* (Philippians 2:5-7). The mind which was in Christ Jesus is the kind of mind that becomes an adornment in the life of the Christian here.

The mind to go down is completely opposite to nature but the passage in Philippians 2 is the key to it for us. It is occupation with the One who came down from the height of glory and went to the depths of the cross. Think of the language of that section: *"And having been found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross"* (Philippians 2:8). The cross really should have a humbling effect on our lives; if He humbled Himself to such an extent, surely some of these features of the little child could be seen in me? This was the One who was there amongst them and they had a lesson to learn – a lesson that is needed for our hearts too.

The disciples did not learn that lesson. Luke shows us in chapter 22 that they still had the same problem. The Lord had partaken of the Passover with them, He had introduced the supper, He

The lesson of the little child is hard for any of us to accept

had told them that the Son of man had to go as it is determined, going to death, yet we also read that there was at that time, *"a strife among them which should be held to be the greatest"* (Luke

22:24). The lesson of the little child is hard for any of us to accept. In John chapter 13 the Lord gives a demonstration of lowliness when He takes the lowest place, washing the feet of the disciples. Then He told them that in doing this, *"I have given you an example"* (John 13:15). He is saying, 'Let what you have seen in Me, the lowliness, the meekness, let that adorn your life' It is a challenge to us all.

Paul appealed to the Corinthian believers, *"by the meekness and gentleness of the Christ"* (2 Corinthians 10:1). Paul had once been an insolent and overbearing man but he had come to appreciate these features of humility in Christ Himself. In a public setting, the spirit of a little child would not be regarded as an ornament but be considered insignificant. But that is the feature that the Lord writes up here so His own might learn the lesson.

Peter, when he writes his first epistle shows that he has learnt the lesson. Firstly he writes: *"for Christ also has suffered for you, leaving you a model that ye should follow in his steps"* (1 Peter 2:21). Then, later, he speaks of binding on humility (see 1 Peter 5:5), not holding it loosely but seeing that it comes into expression. The apostles, as they encountered the different circumstances in the Acts, would reflect back on this and come to it that God supported the feature of the little child. The Lord ends the lesson saying, *"he who is the least among you all, he is great"* (Luke 9:48). So it is not the most prominent person that greatness is attached to; it might be the lowliest one.

Alex Mowat

Based on a Bible reading at Chester, 24th March 2012.

In the next issue (God Willing) "Adorning the teaching of God our Saviour – Part 3 – Adornment seen in the widow who cast two mites into the treasury"

FEATURES THAT MARKED THE CHURCH AT THE BEGINNING

PART 1 – “THE TEACHING AND FELLOWSHIP OF THE APOSTLES”

And they persevered in the teaching and fellowship of the apostles, in breaking of bread and prayers. Acts 2:42

Introduction

I want to encourage us all to be committed to the Lord Jesus. The scripture we have read shows the commitment that marked the early disciples, how they continued together and persevered after the Lord Jesus had ascended into heaven. This verse describes conditions right at the commencement of the Christian period in which we are living. There has been a great deal of change in the church, and in many other things, since the early believers met together and persevered in the teaching and fellowship of the apostles, but nevertheless it provides a wonderful pattern for us today. I hope we will be encouraged and helped as we look into this pattern and see that it is possible to follow it and find great blessing in doing so.

After the Lord’s resurrection there were 40 days when He was amongst His disciples, teaching them. One thing that He said to them was that after His ascension they must wait for that moment when the Holy Spirit would come to them. In Acts chapter 1 we find the disciples patiently waiting; they were together and were praying. Then in chapter 2 we read, *“And when the day of Pentecost was now accomplishing, they were all together in one place. ...And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit”* (Acts 2:1 & 4). It was a unique event. The Holy Spirit came to indwell believers and form the church.

The church (or the assembly, as it is sometimes referred to) is a ‘called out people’—that is what the original Greek word ‘ecclesia’ means – so the church is a people called to follow the Lord Jesus and be committed to Him. The church is not a building but a company of persons. That is how it was in the time the Acts

was written. It is no different today. That is how God looks upon the church—as a company of those who are following the Lord Jesus. Every believer indwelt of the Holy Spirit belongs to the church. Sadly, you cannot find them all together in one place today, but that is how it began and the mighty power of the Holy Spirit did wonderful things in that day, as we read, *“there were added in that day about three thousand souls”* (Acts 2:41). That was as a result of Peter’s preaching in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Now, in verse 42, the Holy Spirit records that those early believers persevered in four things: teaching, fellowship, breaking of bread, and prayers. For each of these things I want to speak of:

- the focus
- the result, and to
- Give a warning

The Teaching of the Apostles

- The focus of the teaching is **the truth** as it is in Jesus (see Ephesians 4:21).
- The result of the teaching is **growth**, both numerically, as was the case in Acts, but also, importantly, growth in our understanding and appreciation of the things of God.
- The warning as to the truth is found in Paul’s 2nd epistle to Timothy when we are told of a time when people will not bear sound teaching. **It is to put us on our guard,**

Let us follow up these features related to the teaching of the apostles.

The teaching referred to in the passage in Acts relates particularly to what the Lord revealed to them during His life and during the 40 days before He ascended to heaven. You will remember that after He was raised, the disciples did not quite understand what had happened. Gradually they understood that He had been raised. They found that the tomb was empty. The angel delivered the message to the women that He was raised, and then Peter and John ran to the tomb to see for themselves. Then, the Lord

Himself appeared on various occasions and He revealed the things that were written in the Scriptures about Himself.

All of a sudden, things that were in the Old Testament that they had not fully understood were being explained by the Lord Jesus, and the disciples saw how He had fulfilled those very Scriptures. The two that were on the road to Emmaus had the Scriptures explained to them. From Moses and all the prophets the Lord Jesus *“interpreted to them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself”* (Luke 24:27). I would love to have heard that. That is what occupied the disciples and the apostles in those 40 days. It is what they persevered in at this point.

For you and me, we need to persevere in the things that have been revealed to us through the Lord Jesus, and through the apostles’ teaching as recorded in the Scriptures. All the truth is in the Scriptures, but we grow in our understanding of it. I find the truth is continually being opened up to me. I trust I can find something fresh in the Scriptures every time I turn to them. The Holy Spirit helps us in that respect. If we approach the Scriptures in that way and ask the Spirit to unfold things that are in them to us He will do so. In that sense the teaching continues and we can persevere in that teaching and grow in our understanding of it.

The reality is that we need to get to the Lord and we need to invite the Holy Spirit to help us in our understanding of anything we might be worried about or questioning. Certainly the ministry of others - what has been handed down - is valuable and is a good guide but do not just accept what someone else has said. We need to go to the Scriptures for ourselves – there we have the word of God. That is the only real source of authority today. The Lord will help us to understand and provide answers to our questions. We may be surprised; the answers can come from quite unexpected quarters. It might be in something that someone says to us, maybe, a few days later and suddenly we see a connection with what we were thinking about. That has been my own experience. Sometimes the same thing can happen through a book that we may be reading. More often than not the

answer will come from the Scriptures themselves. Whatever the route, we get an impression from the Lord and from the Holy Spirit and we develop in our understanding of the truth. The result is growth.

In persevering in the teaching we need to make sure that the focus is always on the truth, not on what men say, not on anything that is not substantiated by Scripture. I think that is the pattern that is established for us by the apostles and disciples in the beginning and I think we can see the blessing that came from it.

Now for the warning; in 2 Timothy 4 we read, *“I testify before God and Christ Jesus, who is about to judge living and dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom, proclaim the word; be urgent in season and out of season, convict, rebuke, encourage, with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time shall be when they will not bear sound teaching; but according to their own lusts will heap up to themselves teachers, having an itching ear; and they will turn away their ear from the truth, and will have turned aside to fables”* (2 Timothy 4:1-4).

2 Timothy is among the last of the scriptures that were written in the New Testament. Paul is writing towards the very end of his life. Paul had learned a lot from the Lord and he was passing on to Timothy, who was a younger brother, a warning in relation to this matter of teaching. The warning helps us answer the question ‘Where do you go and who do you listen to in order to get good teaching?’

He was encouraging Timothy to be a teacher. Timothy was exhorted to remember the things that he had learned and to pass them on and Paul was encouraging him here in this section to convict all, to proclaim the word—that is the gospel message. But also it says to encourage *“with all longsuffering and doctrine”*. Notice that word doctrine. That is really the same word as truth, which I was speaking about as the focus of teaching. So Timothy was to carry on that teaching and presenting the truth, right doctrine.

‘Doctrine’ is a word that sometimes frightens us. But it is simply the truth. It is simply what God has presented to us in the

Scriptures and in the Lord Jesus Himself, as absolute truth. Paul says that there will come a time when people will not bear sound teaching. They will want to hear things that please them. It says that they will have “an itching ear” which is an old fashioned way of saying that they only want to hear the things they like to hear – things that do not challenge them, do not point them to the truth. They will only hear what makes them feel comfortable, things that make them feel good about themselves and that puff them up. That is the sort of thing that Paul would warn us about in relation to teaching. He says people will turn away their ear from the truth and will have turned aside to fables. I do not want any of us to be on that line but to try and recognise sound doctrine and persevere in the company of those who are following that sound teaching. That is the pattern that has been set on for us.

The Fellowship of the Apostles

- the focus of fellowship is **one another**
- the result of fellowship is **encouragement**
- the warning is ***“Be not diversely yoked with unbelievers”***

We have been speaking of teaching and that brings us to the matter of fellowship because teaching is best attained when we are in the company of one another. I could sit on my own at home and read the Bible, pray, and be taught that way. I am not saying that does not happen; indeed, it is an essential part of a believer’s life, personal time with the Lord. Yet there is a very valuable part of our learning that comes from being together with other believers. We get benefit from one another in sharing our experience with, and our understanding of, the Lord. That is the way we learn together and that is all part of fellowship.

The word ‘fellowship’ in the original Greek is a word that means ‘sharing’. It really means sharing together. It can also mean partnership and partaking together in something. That is what I mean when I say that the focus of fellowship is ‘one another’ — sharing with one another in the things of God. In speaking of fellowship in this way I am thinking of it as related to our links with one another. I do not at all set aside that God has called us

“into the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord” (1 Corinthians 1:9) and that the centre of fellowship is one glorious Person through whom God is revealed in grace and love.

However in this scripture it is the fellowship of the apostles. So it is sharing with those that are marked by sound doctrine and sound teaching. Then the teaching and the fellowship build together into a collective expression of the way the church should function according to the pattern that was established.

If there is anyone who is particularly looking for where they can meet with other Christians and where they can enjoy this pattern that was set on in the beginning, look to see where this type of teaching and this sharing of sound doctrine is enjoyed and where there is a commitment to it. I think you will get a sense that that is the place where God would have you enjoy fellowship while here on earth until the time when the Lord comes to take us to be with Himself. The result is encouragement.

The Lord Jesus is nourishing and cherishing His church, His assembly, until the day when He presents it to Himself all glorious (see Ephesians 5:24-29). That is the day that we are all looking forward to. Paul in speaking of the rapture in 1Thessalonians 4 adds *“so encourage one another with these words”* (v.18). But until that time we need to persevere in this teaching and fellowship of the apostles and in doing so we shall be encouraged.

Now the warning is found in 2 Corinthians: *“Be not diversely yoked with unbelievers; for what participation is there between righteousness and lawlessness? or what fellowship of light with darkness? and what consent of Christ with Beliar, or what part for a believer along with an unbeliever? and what agreement of God’s temple with idols? for ye are the living God’s temple; according as God has said, I will dwell among them, and walk among them; and I will be their God, and they shall be to me a people. Wherefore come out from the midst of them, and be separated, saith the Lord, and touch not what is unclean, and I will receive you; and I will be to you for a Father, and ye shall be to me for sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty”* (2 Corinthians 6:14-18).

I read that scripture because it very clearly lays out fellowship as God intends it to be. What fellowship is there of light with darkness? John, in his epistle, also says that if you say you have fellowship with His Son and

**What fellowship
is there of light
with darkness?**

walk in darkness you are a liar (see 1 John 1:6). The two do not go together. So it says, *“be not diversely yoked with unbelievers, for what participation is there between righteousness and lawlessness?”* We do well to remember that, whenever we think about fellowship with one another. It is just a warning and the scripture is very clear about fellowship. It is well worth thinking about and it preserves us from going astray.

Phil Coldrick

An address at Basildon, 1st October 2011

From “Living Water” No 14

MEEKNESS

Meekness seen in the Lord Jesus

“Say to the daughter of Zion, Behold thy king cometh to thee, meek, and mounted upon an ass...” Matthew 21:5

Meekness came out in all the Lord’s pathway here. We see it in the gospels in the way in which He drew near to different ones until finally the moment came when He entered into Jerusalem on His way to the cross. Matthew speaks of Him as the King but the feature he stresses is that of meekness. In chapter 9 of his book Zechariah introduces this subject with the words: *“Rejoice greatly, daughter of Zion” (Zechariah 9:9)* but Matthew in quoting from it says nothing of rejoicing. No! The Lord Jesus was going to Jerusalem to die. At Calvary He was going to meet the dreadful condition that marks all of us as sinners under the dominion of Satan and at a distance from God. He was going to meet it by going into death.

In going to the cross Jesus was going to face accusations that were untrue. Most of us, I suppose, have read many a time of the awful trial of Jesus by Pilate and those who were there. Yet despite all the provocation it says that, *“He opened not his mouth” (Isaiah 53:7)*. That was the meekness that was found when Jesus was taken by wicked hands and led to the cross. He went that way for you and me. It is as we contemplate such scriptures that the hardness of our hearts can be softened. Even as believers in Jesus we can be hard-hearted. We can be thankful for the knowledge of forgiveness of sins; we can be thankful for the certainty of eternal security but it is possible – I know it in my own heart – to be hard-hearted. What is going to make us soft? The contemplation of the One who went into death and withstood so much against Himself. So many lies, so many untruths were spoken about Him and so much false witness given against Him, yet, *“He was led as a lamb to the slaughter and was as a sheep dumb before her shearers, and he opened not his mouth” (Isaiah 53:7)*.

What did Jesus do when He came to Jerusalem? It says that *“He wept over it” (Luke 19:41)*. Think of the meekness displayed in the fact that the Lord Jesus wept over the very city that was about to reject Him. He felt the indifference of man; the indifference of His own people: *“He came to his own, and his own received him not” (John 1:11)*. Did He become hard as a result? Did He turn away? No! He showed the most wonderful meekness of spirit. He was prepared to endure that mockery of a trial by Pilate as fulfilling His Father’s will on the one hand and out of love for you and me on the other. As we contemplate the pathway of that precious One it would develop in us features of that One. How necessary it is that the features that mark our Saviour should now mark those whom He has saved. What a testimony is to be borne by groups and companies of believers on the Lord Jesus in the very world that has rejected Him.

Meekness seen in believers in the Lord Jesus

“What will ye? That I come to you with a rod; or in love, and in a spirit of meekness?” 1 Corinthians 4:21.

Now when we come to the scripture in Corinthians we get a reference to the *spirit* of meekness. Despite all the serious problems there were

**How much damage
has been done by a
lack of meekness**

in Corinth, Paul was concerned not to come to them with a rod, which in one way would have been an easy thing to do, but to approach them *“in love, and in a spirit of meekness”*. He also speaks of sending Timothy to them, *“who shall put you in mind of my ways as they are in Christ”* (v.17). Paul longed to come to them in love and in a spirit of meekness. That is a challenge to the heart of each one of us. How do I approach things? When there is a problem is my first thought to go with the rod? Or is it *“in love, and in a spirit of meekness?”*

“Brethren, if even a man be taken in some fault, ye who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of meekness, considering thyself lest thou also be tempted” Galatians 6:1.

The scripture read in Galatians shows that a spirit of meekness is needed to bring in healing and restoration. The problem in Galatia was much more subtle than that in Corinth. The Galatians were legal. To bring it down to the present day no doubt scriptures were quoted but things were added to enforce matters beyond the teaching of scripture. Paul felt it deeply because he knew the damage that it would do. He tells them in the verse read, *“ye who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of meekness, considering thyself lest thou also be tempted”*.

How much damage has been done by a lack of meekness! In these last days of the testimony here the Lord Jesus is longing, and I say that with all reverence, longing that our hearts may be more filled with Himself, that there may be a demonstration of the spirit of meekness in the way that awkward problems are met and difficult matters judged. If that is not present there will be loss and God’s heart will be grieved.

“Who is wise and understanding among you; let him show out of a good conversation his works in meekness of wisdom” James 3:13.

The epistle of James is a very interesting book, written, I think, so that believers might mature in their Christian pathway. So he writes in chapter 3, *“Who is wise and understanding among you; let him show out of a good conversation”* (or that can read ‘manner of life’) *“his*

works in meekness of wisdom". Now that is a most remarkable expression, especially coming as it does in this chapter which tells us about the damage that can be done by the tongue. Anyone interested in wild animals will know that even quite vicious animals can be tamed but when it comes to the tongue, no one can tame it! James describes it as a "*little member*" (James 3:5), but what damage it can do!

Now it is in this very chapter where James speaks about the tongue and what goes with it, that he also says "*Who is wise and understanding among you*". That is a question I think that the Lord Jesus in His love for us would raise with each one. When the Lord sent out the disciples two at a time, they were told to be as "*prudent as the serpents and guileless as the doves*" (Matthew 10:16). There is a great need for wisdom and understanding in our Christian pathway. We need to understand the scriptures, understand their scope, not just to take a verse out of context but to understand the context.

Perhaps I can pass on something especially for those younger ones who are here. When you are impressed with something specially in a meeting, make a note of it and when you get home try to follow it through the Bible. It will help you to grow in spiritual things. Go to the scriptures first. They never have to be changed. Every statement in Scripture is given by divine inspiration and remains.

Then when we read the scriptures we need to do so in a spirit of meekness. If we do not do so, I have found from my experience that we will not get very much from it. Read it in the spirit of meekness as if you want to be taught right from the beginning. Do not approach it with the view, 'I know all about this passage' but allow it to speak freshly to you. Every time we take up the scriptures let us read them in the spirit of meekness, ready to be taught. I feel I need this as much as anyone.

James says, "*Who is wise and understanding among you; let him show out of a good conversation*" (or that can read 'manner of life') "*his works in meekness of wisdom*". I have thought a long time over what "*meekness of wisdom*" might mean and my impression is that while we may have understanding in a matter, it is the application of that understanding that really counts. I think that is what James is intending

to convey. First of all there is our manner of life which is so essential. Even the world takes account of that. It is no good being one thing one minute and the next doing something that is directly opposed to it. Manner of life is most important. Then “*let him show out of a good conversation his works in meekness of wisdom*”. So the application of wisdom and understanding is done in the spirit of meekness and gentle, tender understanding. If you are ridiculed as a result of something you might say, do you retaliate? Or is this spirit of meekness in evidence? Well, I feel I need this as much as any. May we know what it is to keep close to our Lord Jesus, to learn from Him, “*for I am meek and lowly in heart*” (Matthew 11:29). The same heart is to be found in the Lord Jesus now He is glorified as was found in Him as Man here. He has been into death and is now raised and glorified; His heart towards you and me and towards all is just the same as when He was here. We sometimes sing:

*But Thy love remains, that entered
Into death to make us Thine;
In that death all love was centred –
O the depths of love divine!*

So, firstly, it is from the Lord Himself that we learn meekness. Then scripture shows the importance of meekness if we are to be taught and shown the right way. Finally, meekness will be demonstrated, as in the last scripture, in “*works in meekness of wisdom*”.

May the Lord use these scriptures particularly, along with the word spoken, to promote among His own a demonstration of the spirit of meekness for His glory.

Arthur Coldrick

These extracts from an address at Sevenoaks in September 1995 printed in “Living Water” No 14 were selected by David Greeves.

If there is an article (or part of an article) from a back number of “Living Water” that you would like to see reprinted, I would be very glad to hear from you. Ed.

Poetry Selection

THE VICTOR

*O Lord, with joy we hail Thee now
The Firstborn from the dead!
The Victor's crown is rightly placed
Upon Thy head.*

*The keys of Hades and of death
Are in Thy hand, O Lord;
Thou art the mighty Conqueror,
Be Thou adored!*

*The Father's glory claimed Thee. Lord,
When all Thy work was done;
And death no longer could detain
His Holy One.*

*And now the Father finds His rest
In Thee, the glorified;
While to our hearts Thou art more dear
Than all beside.*

*Thou, Lord, our satisfaction art,
The well-spring of our joy;
Thy praises shall, through endless days,
Our lips employ*

T. Willey (1847 – 1930)

CROWN HIM WITH MANY CROWNS

*Come let us sing the matchless worth,
And sweetly sound the glories forth
Which in the Saviour shine;
To God and Christ our praises bring,
The song with which high heaven will ring,
Praises for grace divine.*

*How rich the character He bears,
And all the form of love He wears,
Exalted on the throne!
In songs of sweet untiring praise
We e'er would sing His perfect ways,
And make His glories known.*

*And soon the happy day shall come,
When we shall reach our destined home,
And see Him face to face;
Then with our Saviour, Lord, and Friend,
The one unbroken day we'll spend
In singing still His grace.*

S. Medley (1738 – 1799)

Testimony Section

MY TESTIMONY

During the late 1940s and early 1950s there was on Lewis and other of the Scottish Western Isles a very distinct work of God and there were numerous conversions. In the last issue Kenneth MacDonald recounted his story. In this issue we have the story of Catherine Campbell, another of those converted. Duncan Campbell, whose name appears in the testimony below, was prominently used of God during this time, though he always maintained that he was one preacher amongst many.

From childhood my memory is of godly conversation, prayer and the singing of hymns in the home. The 1939 revival was still fresh in the memories of my parents and their friends and they were very burdened for the lost – always! When we went to the barn to milk the cows, my Mother took us to the hay rack and we prayed there every day. Mother told me years later, that as a child I said to her on one occasion, ‘Mummy, be sure to remember to pray even if I’m not there.’ She was always burdened for souls. The 1939 revival was born in prayer and that spirit of prayer continued, eventually increasing until the 1949 revival broke out.

I knew the Spirit striving with me ever since I was a little girl, but it did not change my way of life. I knew that the Lord’s people had something that I did not possess but strangely I felt quite comfortable in their presence. My Christian upbringing kept me from the vilest sins but I entered into the entertainments enjoyed by young people: concerts, dances, cinemas and the like. I used to envy my friends who could enjoy these pleasures without any qualms of conscience. The home in which I grew up spread its godly influence, but that was not enough to cause me to yield and I used to try and fight off conviction.

I began nursing training. One day I was out for a walk and the church bells began to ring. I occasionally attended church, and as I listened to the bells, I thought, 'What if this were the last trumpet sound, and I was going in the opposite direction?' Shortly afterwards I began to feel a great emptiness in my life. I was on night duty at the time and suddenly it began to dawn on me that it was Christ I needed.

About this time Duncan Campbell had come to Barvas, where my home was. A patient told me that revival had broken out and that my brother was one of the converts. I reacted very negatively, saying to her, 'Wait till I get home; I will soon reverse that!'

On my day off I made my way home with mixed feelings. My brother John Murdo met me in the doorway of our house and quoted to me a verse of a hymn he had just composed. He was newly converted and was the first convert on Lewis to begin composing hymns.

As I entered the house my mother was singing, 'The valley will be full of light when Jesus comes!' The power of God gripped me there and then and I rushed to the privacy of a room where I could weep without being seen. That night I went to the meeting, trying hard to look composed and uninterested, determined not to give in. I had been so rebellious. The meeting was mighty and I was overwhelmed with conviction although I do not remember what was said.

Duncan Campbell preached and in the course of his address he mentioned a verse which my mother used to quote to us as children. She was sitting right behind me. She touched my back, whether by accident or deliberately, I do not know, but I could hold back no longer. When I got out of the church I fell on my knees oblivious to all that was happening around me. I didn't care who was around! My need was of God's mercy. This was now paramount in my thinking! I sought Him and found Him!

I went home and testified to my father who was unwell and not able to be at the meeting on that evening. He cried like a baby for joy; yet another of his family had found the Lord!

My next step was to testify to my boy friend. I wrote and told him what had happened and that I still cared for him but that I had to put Christ first in my life. He arranged to meet me, but being rather apprehensive, he went to the pub first for a drink in the hope that this would give him courage. This upset me profoundly and no doubt my reaction affected him, but I was determined that there could now be no serious relationship between us, as the scripture says *"Can two walk together except they be agreed?" (Amos 3:3)*. Some months afterwards, on attending the meetings, Norman was radically converted. Later on we were married and spent many happy years together before the Lord called him home.

When I was saved I thought I was going to heaven right away. My whole outlook changed. I was now praying without ceasing for my fellow sinners – waiting for a cry for mercy here or there in the meetings. This was music to my ears. I could not stop telling all I met about the wonderful experience which could never be put into words! It was as if a river flowed out of me and I was never stuck for words. I was naturally shy and timid and would never be to the fore in company, but God loosened my tongue and made me bold for Him. Oh how I long to see revival again! The presence of God was everywhere and the cry of the penitent was sweet balm to my soul. Many tears were shed and these were commonplace amongst saved and unsaved alike.

Our hearts were so full of love that we could not keep it in. After the meetings we would make a circle in the street, holding hands and singing at the top of our voices. It was heaven on earth. Everything was made new. Why, we wouldn't even want to read a newspaper! At 9.00 pm on Saturday, all our normal pursuits ended and sewing and knitting was put away in preparation for the Lord's Day.

We had great liberty talking to our friends in the community, in the shops or at our place of work. The revival and converts were the main topic of conversation everywhere – even at secular gatherings. This caused a desire in the hearts of many to come

and hear for themselves, and many who did were soundly converted.

The abiding memory of the revival was that the presence of God was everywhere, not just in the meetings. We could not get away from the working of the Holy Spirit. God accompanied you everywhere. This was the outstanding feature of the revival.

Catherine Campbell

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A Voice from the Past

THE FATHER'S LOVE

"On this account the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it again" John 10:17

"The Father himself has affection for you, because ye have had affection for me, and have believed that I came out from God" John 16:27

There are affections between the Father and the Son into which it is impossible for us to enter. The Father loved the Son before the world's foundation, but we cannot enter into that love. The character of the love as well as its degree is altogether beyond us.

But here the Lord speaks of the Father's love to Him which we can, in measure, enter into. If the Father loves Him because He laid down His life that He might take it again, I think that we may say with reverence that we love Him for the same reason. We have thoughts and affections in common with the Father as to that blessed One. That those affections are very feeble in us we are fully conscious, but as far as they go, we have them in common with the Father. *"I know those that are mine, and am known of those that are mine, as the Father knows me and I know the Father"* (John 10:14-15). There is the same character

of knowledge and affection between the Shepherd and the sheep as there is between the Father and the Son!

He laid down His life that we might know the love of God. We perceive divine love in His death. He has made all the Father's glory to appear: *"I have glorified thee on the earth"* (John 17:4). That does not mean that He added anything to the Father, but that He has brought into view all that the Father is. The Father's love and glory have come out in a most blessed way, and thus He has been glorified by the Son. He has laid down His life that all this light and love and glory might shine forth for our hearts, and the Father loves Him because of it. Can we not say that we love Him too?

Then, also, it is *"because I lay down my life that I might take it again"*. His death is viewed as necessarily preceding His taking His life in resurrection. He has taken His life again in a new condition. He is now the last Adam able to quicken us so that we participate in His life and have His Spirit. He is the Beginning, the Firstborn from the dead, and has the first place in all things. He is the Firstborn among many brethren. In that character He is the Object of the Father's love, and surely of ours also. He appears before our hearts as the supremely worthy One. We gladly give Him praise and adoration.

Thus we come under the Father's love. *"The Father himself has affection for you, because ye have had affection for me, and have believed that I came out from God"*. In both scriptures a reason is given for the Father's love. God's love is sovereign; it flows out of its own fullness without regard to any reason outside itself. But these blessed reasons are given for the Father's love towards Christ and towards believers.

If we have in any measure common thoughts with the Father about Christ, we come under the Father's affection; we are in the circle of His complacency. *"Bring the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and make merry"* (Luke 15:22). How blessed to be brought into that circle.

C. A. Coates (1862 – 1945)

A word for Today

THE GOD OF PEACE

“But the God of peace, who brought again from among the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, the great shepherd of the sheep, in the power of the blood of the eternal covenant, perfect you in every good work to the doing of his will...” Hebrews 13:21-22.

“Now the prophets, Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo, prophesied to the Jews that were in Judah and Jerusalem; in the name of the God of Israel did they prophesy to them. Then rose up Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel and Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and began to build the house of God which is at Jerusalem; and with them were the prophets of God, who helped them”. Ezra 5:1-2.

“And I lifted up mine eyes again, and saw, and behold there came four chariots... In the first chariot were red horses; and in the second chariot black horses; and in the third chariot white horses; and in the fourth chariot grisled, strong horses. And I spoke and said unto the angel that talked with me, What are these, my lord? And the angel answered and said unto me. These are the four spirits of the heavens, which go forth from standing before the Lord of all the earth. That in which are the black horses goeth forth into the north country; and the white go forth after them...And he cried unto me...saying, See, those that go forth towards the north country have quieted my spirit in the north country.

“And the word of Jehovah came unto me saying, Take gifts of them of the captivity...and make crowns, and set them on the head of Joshua the son of Jehozadak the high priest; and speak unto him saying... Behold a man whose name is the Branch; and he shall grow up from his own place, and he shall build the temple of Jehovah; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne; and the counsel of peace shall be between them both” Zechariah 5:1-13.

It is of primary importance that believers should be restful in regard of what is happening in the world. The devil's activity is to the end that the people of God are made restless. Restlessness characterises

the world but it is the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus. It suggests that peace comes from God. It is a divine attribute. There is no trace of anxiety in the mind of God and He would have His people to be as peaceful as He is Himself.

**There is no trace
of anxiety in the
mind of God**

God is the Creator, we are His creatures. That is, we know only what is revealed to us and yet that same peace which marks God is to be found with His people. This peace is a peace of intelligence. God knows! So in Hebrews the Spirit of God would draw our attention to peace based on resurrection.

The world knows nothing of resurrection and indeed derides the idea but the Christian is entitled to consider the sphere of resurrection. Nothing this side of resurrection is abiding. People talk about the indestructibility of matter but the earth, its records and its works are all to be burnt up (see 2 Peter 3:10). Everything here is transient. The Spirit of God would turn our hearts to the world of resurrection where everything is marked by permanence. There is no enemy there; the enemy is this side of death. But it is the God of peace who has brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus. God has His rest in that Man in resurrection, the One brought again from the dead. He is not visible to material eyes but that sphere of resurrection is marked by reality while all here is marked by unreality. In that resurrection sphere He is active as the great Shepherd of the sheep. We are in the world which lies in the wicked one; the devil is striving and conspiring to overthrow the testimony of Christ but the Lord has His eye on those evil powers and He is on high to sustain us in all things here.

Now the book of Ezra opens at a point in the history of Israel where there was extreme weakness. Israel should have ruled the earth but because they had forsaken God they had been delivered into captivity and had been in that captivity for a long time. Then God moved according to His own sovereign will and put it into the heart of a Gentile ruler to open up the way for the people of God to return to their own possession. It was a time of divine intervention.

There have been many such in the history of Israel and in the history of the church.

Well, God's people are encouraged to start rebuilding the house of God. All went well for a time, and then suddenly the protection of the Gentile power was withdrawn. God would show that the work is to stand in faith. Another king arose and Israel's enemies conspire together and circulate lying stories, as Satan did at the beginning. God brings in His word through the prophets to encourage His people for the work is to go on in the face of the most determined opposition.

In Zechariah, who was contemporary with Ezra, we get the vision of the four chariots directed by the Lord of all the earth. It suggests how God works in relation to His people who are going on in faith. Christianity in its public setting today is in a very poor and weak state. Many who claim Christian ground have little time for Christ. The world is not influenced by the people of God; instead much of public Christianity is following the world in the vain hope of being recognised. Those going on in faith have little to show outwardly but they have faith. Now faith is outside the understanding of those who have not the Spirit of God. Yet the realm of faith is greater than anything that can be seen. That is a fact.

How essential it is that we should be peaceful. In the world there is calamity and break-up. The whole social order is crumbling. Governments do not govern. Politicians wonder what is going to happen. There are forces in the world which have not been known before, forces which do not recognise even such things as natural affection. Strange and new powers of Satan are evident with forceful opposition to Christ, yet God would have us peaceful under these conditions, a peace not of ignorance but of intelligence, for He is the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep. God is moving against these powers and His movements are open to the saints in the world of faith. God is not intervening directly but is counteracting.

In the account of Paul's shipwreck it says that they fell into a place "*where two seas met*" (*Acts 27:41*), so the ship got through. So God orders things to balance them. The white horses follow

the black into the North Country - they counteract. God is at work, silently and invisibly. He has power equal to every situation. How often God has worked in conspiracy! He can bring in a trifling matter like the dog flies in Egypt (see Exodus 8:20-24) – a little bit of jealousy or intrigue and so the movements of Satan are broken up. It is the *"spirits of the heavens"* acting at the direction of the Lord of all the earth. As a result of the white horses following the black horses God's spirit is quieted.

God is at rest so His people can be restful in spirit too and can take up their proper privilege which is to be occupied with Christ. The gifts of gold and silver can be brought, the crowns made and used for the exaltation of Christ. The way to peace in the Christian company is for every precious thing to be put upon Him. Consider the gifts that He had in the gospels – the woman who anointed His head and then the woman who washed His feet with her tears and then anointed them (see Luke 7:37-38), and the woman who anointed His head (see Mark 14:3).

Where we read in Zechariah, Christ is spoken of as the Branch; it is the same word translated *"Sprout"* in Isaiah 4:2, and *"a tender sapling"* in Isaiah 53:2. It would suggest how He first reaches us and our first impressions of Him. Then that first appreciation is to grow. The *"Branch"* suggests fullness and dignity – He is so great, the whole universe will respond to Him.

Then He is not only the Branch, He is the *"priest upon His throne"* and the counsel of peace is between them both. He is priest after the order of Melchisedec – a kingly priest. He is *"without father, without mother, without genealogy; having neither beginning of days nor end of life"* (Hebrews 7:2) – the king of peace! He will fill the hearts of His people now and eternally.

A. E. Myles (1880 – 1971)

An address at Dorking, 27th July 1930

This article has been prepared from hand-written notes kept by Charley Fowler and has probably not been published before.