

THE BIBLE AND
OUR TIMES



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A lady visitor demonstrates how she seeks to win even the deaf and dumb to Christ.

HUNGRY for GOD

By C. R. Bonney

THE story of the prodigal son gives to us one of the brightest glimpses of the character of God. It gives an insight into His tenderness. If Christ had come to earth to tell no other story, His coming would not have been in vain, for in this parable we have the picture of the whole plan of redemption. The cry of the prodigal, "I perish with hunger!" is the cry of anguish that arises from the hearts of men to-day. There were five steps in the prodigal's downward course which led him to this confession.

In Luke 15:11, 12 we read: "A certain man had two sons; and the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me." Here we see his *self-will*. He entertained the idea of independence. He

wanted opportunity for self-expression. He proceeded to demonstrate his freedom, but only showed the necessity of dependence on his father. A man may demonstrate his freedom by jumping from a fourth-storey window, but the law of gravity is not thereby destroyed. There are many who deny the moral law, but that does not destroy it, it merely destroys those who set themselves against it. This young man found this to be true. He could not revolt against God without revolting against himself.

The inheritance was divided. Some might criticize the father for allowing the son to go. But the father did not oppose the son's will. He was estranged already. So God has made men free moral agents with the privilege of choice. A Christian once said, "I am glad

that I do not *have* to be a Christian." He meant that he was glad that God had given him the opportunity of choosing the way of Christianity and with it its blessing. God, like the father in the parable, is not a dictator. What a responsibility we have in our choosing.

The son leaves home. As he says good-bye we note his excellent physical condition. He has a fine heritage and plenty of money. Luke 15:13 says that he "gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living." He went into the evil country of sin and gave vent to his carnal desires. Not only did he waste his material blessings, he wasted his health, and his self-respect and lived as he pleased. He lost his freedom and became a slave to self.

"And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine." He now begins to harvest the fruits of his sowing. The world for which he clamoured rejects him. God tells us through Jeremiah: "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, whose heart departeth from the Lord."

The final step of this prodigal takes him to the very lowest depths. He wanted to be free from restrictions, but now he is feeding hogs and trying to satisfy his hunger by eating the very husks they are eating. All that the world can offer the human soul to-day is husks. Apart from God there is no real satisfaction.

Is it not encouraging that this story, which is so true to life, does not leave this worldly young man in that position? There were three steps back to the prodigal's redemption.

The first is found in Luke 15:17: "He came to his senses" (Moffatt). He found that however high one may rise in the world or however low he may fall, if he turns from God there is nothing worthwhile in the end.

He now makes a decision to go back to his father. Before he did not want home or Father, but now he finds nothing else to satisfy. The father who would not compromise with evil now became to him a picture of refuge, rest, peace, and security. He sees the contrast. Even a servant of his father was better off than he.

The third step to his upward and homeward course was the carrying out of his decision. Only the father could answer the needs of his soul. So he makes his way home—filthy,

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Your Bible Questions Answered

"THE first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit." Who are these two Adams?

THIS statement is found in 1 Corinthians 15:45 and the answer is given in the following verses. The message of this whole chapter is a comparison of the two Adams, showing that in one we are condemned, but through the other we have hope. Verse twenty-two says: "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."

In the fall of our first parents the whole human family fell. The dominion given to Adam was lost to Satan.

Christ came to this earth to "seek and to save that which was lost"—not only man but also his dominion. Where Adam failed Christ overcame. What Adam lost Christ redeemed, or bought back, by His great sacrifice. In this way Christ became the second Adam in restoring the dominion and becoming the Leader of a new family "saved by grace."

DOES it matter what one believes so long as he is sincere?

In 2 Thessalonians 2:15 we read: "God hath . . . chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." The "truth" referred to here is the Word of God, for Jesus said, "Thy Word is Truth."

Sincerity is not in itself a qualification that will commend us to Heaven. One may be controlled by the devil and in all sincerity do an act that would bring disgrace upon oneself and that would not at all be in harmony with the laws of God.

No one would say: "It doesn't matter what road you are on as long as you *think* that you are on the right road."

God has given us the Bible so that we can know the road that leads to the kingdom. Truth brings us into harmony with God and heaven. True sincerity will lead one to seek the true way by prayer and study of God's Word.



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Not at any supposedly sacred shrine but from Christ alone is righteousness obtained.

If there is one fact above another that the Bible emphasizes it is that man of himself is not righteous. Paul sums it up in one verse: "There is none righteous, no, not one." Rom. 5:10. He has been reasoning that although the Jews had the oracles of God, they were no better than the Gentiles who had not this advantage. "All," he writes later, "have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Verse 23. There is no room for boasting for all are guilty before God. Paul calls himself in another place, the chief of sinners. We may feel we are better than the other man, and even our friends may agree with us, but in God's eyes we are all the same and our righteousness is as filthy rags.

On one occasion there was a recruiting campaign for a guard's regiment, with a minimum height of six feet for the recruits. Two young fellows read the poster and one said to the other, "You haven't a chance. I'm two inches taller than you." They stood back to back and it was true the one was two inches taller than his friend, but when the sergeant came around both were rejected because one was five feet four inches and the other five feet

The Way to Righteousness

By Edward A. Butters

six inches. Neither reached the required standard of six feet. So also there is none righteous, no, not one. Nobody has come up to the standard of divine righteousness.

Christ, the Righteous One

We can go back to Adam and examine every man and woman born into the world and find that of all the multiplied millions not one was, or is, righteous. In the gospel of Luke, however, a soldier discovered one righteous Man. The centurion at the foot of the cross was heard to declare: "Certainly this was a righteous Man." Luke 23:47. This Roman centurion, whose whole life and training had been alien to the truth of God, could say no other words than these, for he had been a witness of those last few hours of the life of Jesus Christ.

He had followed Him up the hill, and heard Him say to the women: "Weep not for Me, but for your children." He had seen the cruel nails piercing the tender flesh. He had heard Him pray, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." When that kindly Form was lifted high with the cross, and every bone wracked with pain as the cross was dropped into its socket, he was there. He heard the one thief cry out: "Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom." He heard the reply: "Verily I say unto thee: . . . Thou shalt be with Me in paradise." All this, together with the last words, "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit," convinced him that "certainly, this was a righteous Man." The book of Hebrews calls Him "holy, harmless, and undefiled."

A Bridge to Life

Although, as we have seen, none are righteous, yet there is another text which says: "Many [are] made righteous." Rom. 5:19. A

seeming contradiction! Yes, but the rest of the text explains that it is through the obedience of the one righteous Man Christ Jesus. He is the bridge between man's unrighteousness and divine righteousness.

A pathetic story was told by a newspaper recently. There was a father with his three children in a tenement flat, four storeys up, who discovered that the flat underneath was on fire, and his means of escape by the stairs was cut off. He saw, however, that he could reach the adjacent building by stretching over with his body. He called his boys aged seven, five, and three to crawl across his body to the other building and safety. First the seven-year-old went over and helped his younger brother across, but when the last lad was in the opposite building the father's strength failed and he fell to his death below. He made his body a bridge from death to life.

Righteousness is a gift of God, but it must be accepted to benefit anyone. (Rom. 5:17.) Why not be one of the many to accept the free gift of righteousness to-day?

It is a cheering thought that sin is not to continue for ever. The time is hastening on apace when "Thy people also shall be all righteous." Isa. 60:21. This takes us away beyond this vale of tears to the kingdom of glory that Jesus will set up when He comes



again. The men and women who attain that life will have accepted Him as their Saviour; they will have realized that sin is exceedingly sinful and destructive and will want no more experience of it. Its blighting effects are seen to-day in sickness, deformity, and death. It has reaped its random harvest. Satan and sin have had 6,000 years to demonstrate that iniquity is not worth while. The close association between sin and sickness is seen in Isaiah 33:24: "The inhabitant shall not say, I am sick: the people that dwell there shall be forgiven their iniquity."

As the death of Christ was the bridge between unrighteousness and righteousness so the second advent is the bridge between mortal life and immortal life. In Revelation 22:12 Jesus says: "Behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me." In a later verse we see the righteous ones going into the kingdom: "Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." Verse 14. Isaiah has a parallel passage: "Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation that keepeth the truth may enter in." Isa. 26:2.

More external righteousness is not enough to see us into the everlasting kingdom of righteousness. We need a righteousness that comes from having Christ within.

The Book that Points the Way

A Christian colporteur was selling Bibles to the troops and met a young soldier who told him he had no use for the Bible. As a little extra selling talk the colporteur suggested if he kept it in his breast pocket (this New Testament had metal covers) it might stop a bullet. So the soldier bought it. He took the covers off and put them in his breast pocket, but the Book itself he put in his haversack. In the battle he was struck in the back with a piece of shrapnel. It produced only a skin wound. On examination he found that the shrapnel had gone through his haversack, and the New Testament was cut through. But it had saved his life. He declared afterward to his friends: "It is not the covers that help a man, but what's in the Book that saves his life."

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There is no intrinsic virtue in the waters of the Jordan, even though Jesus Himself was baptized in them.



By A. Dixon

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"As it was in the days of Noah," the Scripture declares, it will be in the last days of history.

Will ALL Someday Accept Christ?

By Robert H. Pierson

WORLD conversion has been a subject for discussion for decades. Theologians and laymen alike have speculated upon the possibility of a merciful and loving God so working things out so that every human being born into "this vale of tears" would somehow, someway be prepared for the glories of Paradise. But what does the Bible, God's inspired Word, say regarding this interesting question? Does it really teach that someday everyone will accept Christ and that the whole world will be saved?

Let us turn to the Holy Scriptures.

As Jesus sat talking with His disciples on the mount one day He told them of conditions

that would obtain in the world just before His second advent. He spoke of wars and rumours of wars, of trouble, of unprecedented violence that would break out between nations. He told them of earthquakes and storms spreading death and destruction over vast areas.

Our Lord compared the moral conditions of the last days with the days of Noah and with the days of Sodom and Gomorrah when the moral tide of earth's history was at its lowest ebb. He told the disciples of the great progress of the Gospel message as the Spirit of God witnessed to its preaching to every kindred, tongue, and people. Said He: "This Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in

all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." Matt. 24:14.

Since that day there have been those who have read into this text a meaning our Lord had no intention of conveying. Some have said this proves that before Jesus comes in the clouds of heaven the Gospel message will bring all people of all lands to a saving knowledge of Christ Jesus and all will be saved. They picture a Utopia where sin and sinners will have given way to righteousness and righteous beings, where even before the second advent of Christ, nations will cease to settle their disputes by war and bloodshed.

For a Witness

Let us look at this text more closely. Jesus said the Gospel would be preached "for a witness unto all nations." He did not say that all would receive the Gospel and accept Him as their personal Saviour and be saved.

Commenting on this very thought, Dr. Adam Clarke, the very able Bible scholar, has this to say about world conversion: "Probably no such time will ever appear, in which evil shall be wholly banished from the earth, till after the day of judgment, when, the earth having been burned up, a new heaven and a new earth shall be produced out of the ruins of the old, by the mighty power of God; righteousness alone shall dwell in them."

Not until after the judgment and the second coming of Christ and after the wicked have been destroyed will the righteous inherit this earth made new for them.

In place of Utopia brought about by world conversion let us notice what the Holy Scriptures have to say regarding the condition of the world just before the second advent of Christ. When Jesus comes, will He find all men "born again" and ready to meet Him in the clouds of glory?

Our Saviour asked practically the same question: "When the Son of man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?" Luke 18:8.

As it Was in the Days of Noah

The Master answers His own question as recorded in this same gospel of Luke: "As it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man." Luke 17:26.

He then proceeded to describe the riotous and wicked living of the antediluvians. They had no time for God. They thought only of

their own selfish pleasures. The inspired account declares "that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. . . . And the earth was filled with violence." Gen. 6:5-11.

This doesn't sound much like world conversion in the last days, does it?

"Likewise also," Jesus continued, "as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank. . . . Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed." Luke 17:28-30.

Here again Christ compares the last days with one of the most degenerate ages this world has ever known, thus dispelling any false hope that mass conversion would ever prepare the whole world to meet Him in the clouds of heaven.

Paul, the apostle, was also given a glimpse of the world as it would be just before Christ's second coming. He has described it thus by inspiration: "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away." 2 Tim. 3:1-5.

The apostle sums it all up by declaring that instead of the peoples of earth coming closer to God as the end draws near that "evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived." 2 Tim. 3:13.

Separating the Wheat and the Tares

In His parable of the wheat and the tares (Matt. 13:24-30), the Saviour revealed to His followers that there would never be a time when all would be ready to meet Him. He taught that the righteous and the wicked, the good and the bad, would be living side by side in this world right up to the time of His second advent.

In this parable Jesus says plainly that the wheat and the tares would be growing together until the time of the harvest. When this harvest occurs, the Saviour explains in the next few verses: "The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the

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I WILL RETURN!

By DALLAS YOUNGS

DURING the dark days of World War II, General MacArthur, standing upon the protective shores of Australia after a flight of more than two thousand miles across the trackless Pacific, uttered that now historic prediction: "I will return."

Those were unprecedented words so far as United States military history was concerned. Never before had an American general uttered them, never before had an American general been forced to abandon his troops and find sanctuary thousands of miles distant. But humiliating, bitter, and distasteful as it certainly was, the enemy was at the moment victorious.

Victorious—yes, but not victorious in the heart of the courageous MacArthur. "I will return," said he. Upon what did the general base his hopes? Wherein resided his confidence? Certainly not in the ships, guns, and soldiers at hand. Certainly not in his own military acumen single-handedly to turn defeat into victory. But rather in this: the potential strength and military might of the great nation he had the honour to represent.

General MacArthur's promise to return inspired hope in the hearts of millions of native Filipinos and many thousands of American soldiers, sailors, missionaries, businessmen and others who languished and starved over wearisome months and years in Japanese prisons and concentration camps.

Important as that prediction of liberation was to the millions under Japanese bondage, yet we know of another, a greater prediction, another greater promise, made under circumstances that appeared to give even less hope of fulfilment. Strangely enough, this promise was made by one lonely Man and in almost identical language. We refer to that most important, most significant, most vital promise made by Jesus Christ to the human race:

"Let not your heart be troubled," said Jesus to His disciples. "Ye believe in God, believe

also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you," continued Jesus, "I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." John 14:1-3.

The Christian Hope

That promise, which directed the minds of His disciples out beyond that present dark hour, became their stay after the departure of their Lord. And more, it became the stay of all the followers of Christ in the two thousand years that have come and gone from that day to this. It buoyed up the Waldenses during the Dark Ages. It was the hope of the martyrs at the stake during Reformation times. It does, in fact, constitute the consummation of the hope of all Christians during all ages.

Said C. H. Spurgeon: "The day of our Lord's appearing is the day around which our chief hopes must centre."

Prayed Martin Luther: "Ah, loving God, defer not Thy coming. . . . I hope that day is not far off."

It was John Knox's hope: "Has not the Lord Jesus, in despite of Satan's malice, carried up our flesh into heaven? And shall He not return? We know that He shall return."

The fact of Jesus' return was well established in the minds of the original disciples. To them it was a bright, burning reality. They never doubted it. They talked of it. They wrote of it. In more than three hundred separate, distinct instances they made reference, in their New Testament writings, to that tremendous event.

The day of Christ's return is the day of the "saints' reward," for Jesus says: "Behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give to every man according as his work shall be." Rev. 22:12. This is the day promised

from the Garden of Eden. Abraham and other patriarchs of olden times saw it, believed it, and rejoiced in its accomplishment.

Events connected with the coming of Jesus will affect this earth as has no event since creation. The coming of Jesus will bring an end to life on this planet as we know it to-day. In that day governments will fall, armies will be destroyed, steamships will cease to ply the ocean, trains will not run nor aeroplanes fly. The wheels of industry will turn no more, the doors of great business houses will remain closed. It will be a day of confusion and tumult, a day of terror and death. It will be the day of the Lord's judgment.

But let us consult the writings of the apostles and learn something of the purpose for which Christ returns, as well as something of the manner of His coming. We shall first consider the manner of His return.

How He Will Come

Will Jesus come the second time secretly? There are many who think He will, and there are others who are equally sure that He will be seen by all. What is the truth, for this is an important matter? It is clear from one of Jesus' own predictions concerning His return that He anticipated this very question. He said:

"Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.

"Behold I have told you before.

"Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, He is in the desert; go not forth: behold, He is in the secret chambers; believe it not." Matt. 24:23-26.

Here we have Jesus' warning. He will not come to a select few in the "desert." Neither will He make His appearance in any house. Having told the disciples the manner in which He *would not* come, He then told them the manner in which He *would* come:

"For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Matt. 24:27.



As Jesus ascended to heaven so He will return from heaven.

Had we been present the day the Lord spoke those prophetic words we might well have said, "Lo, now Thou speakest plainly." There is no possibility of misunderstanding such comparisons. His return will be visible—as visible as the lightning's flash across the storm-darkened heavens. And with this agree the inspired writings of all the disciples.

Said John: "Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him. . . ." Rev. 1:7.

Said Paul: "Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation." Heb. 9:28.

Said the angels: "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven shall so come in like manner as ye have SEEN Him go into heaven." Acts 1:11.

The Gathering of the Saints

On the occasion of Jesus' return the angels still have an important task to perform. Their work is not yet finished. "The harvest," said Jesus, "is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels." The harvest referred to here is the harvest of souls. It takes place when Jesus comes, and the angels' part in it is described in Matthew 24:31: "He [Jesus] shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."

"Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." 1 Thess. 4:17. "Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." 1 Cor. 15:51, 52.

Those who participate in the first resurrection are safe with Christ for eternity. The wicked, both living and dead, face punishment and ultimate oblivion in the "lake of fire."

As it is a joyous day for the redeemed, so it is a sad and terrible day for the wicked. They have not heeded the divinely given warnings. They have despised the overtures of God's love. They had no time to prepare for heaven; now they are unready and cannot go.

"To you who are troubled rest with us, when

the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." 2 Thess. 1:7, 8. "Then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming." 2 Thess. 2:8.

The Promise Is Sure

In the passing of time General MacArthur was able to fulfil his prediction to return to the Philippines and to liberate the thousands of captives. This is now an accomplished fact. But it is not more certainly a fact than that Jesus will fulfil His promise to return and deliver those long bound in Satan's prison.

And more than that: the time of our Lord's return is at hand. Many, knowing the times in which they live, will make preparation to meet Jesus in peace. Others, careless, indifferent, and preoccupied, will fail to do so. These will not be ready. They will call out for the rocks and mountains to fall on them. Will you not, dear reader, determine now to make that needed preparation?



Hungry for God

(Continued from page 3.)

hungry, in rags and destitute—surely a perfect picture of what sin will bring forth in the life.

The father's reception reveals in beautiful outline the love of God. "But when he was yet a great way off his father saw him, . . . and ran to meet him." Love is of quick sight. Not even the degradation of the years of sin can conceal the son from the father's eyes. The father holds him close to his side and brings him home. No opportunity is given him to ask a servant's place. He is received as a son. God says: "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon."

Have you, friend, chosen your own way? Have you sought to feast upon the fruits of transgression only to find them turn to ashes? Have you wandered away from God? In His love He is waiting for your return. Why not go home to Him to-day?

Members of What?

By A. S. Maxwell

LOOKING over a crowded church some morning, a preacher is apt to conclude that he has before him a congregation of ardent Christians having a reasonable knowledge of the Bible and practising the teachings of the Master to the best of their ability. But has he? Could it be that the friendly glow on the upturned faces masks an inner unbelief, a careless indifference, or possibly an abysmal ignorance of the fundamentals of the Christian faith?

How many millions of churchmembers in this country are convinced, converted, praying, practising Christians? How many have any solid theological basis for their professed beliefs? How many read their Bibles? How many pray? How many believe in Jesus as the divine Son of God? How many would "stand up and be counted" if a time of persecution should come?

A Minister Investigates

Having doubts about his own congregation, the Rev. W. Leigh Ribble, of Richmond, Virginia, decided to send a questionnaire to the 550 persons whose names are on his church books. Replies came back from 514, and the results shocked him.

His first question had to do with a fundamental doctrine of the church, the natural sinfulness of man, and the answers revealed that the parishioners do not believe in it at all. Nearly eighty per cent declared that people are by nature good or "more apt to be good than bad."

While 272 expressed belief in a personal God and almost the same number accepted the divinity of Christ, Dr. Ribble was amazed to learn that thirteen per cent had no such faith. Forty-one answered that "to be a Christian it is not necessary to

believe that Jesus Christ is God." Nineteen even said they believed that Jesus was merely "a noble man," while one claimed He was just a symbol of good, "like Santa Claus."

Whether or not these results provide a fair picture of the state of modern Christianity, it would be hard to say. Only a world-wide questionnaire could determine that. But they certainly bring a challenge not only to every Christian leader, but to all who have the cause of Christ at heart.

Undoubtedly there are many people who have their names on a church book somewhere who have no idea what church membership really means. They belong because Father or Mother were members before them, or because it is respectable—or financially advantageous—to belong. They have only the foggiest notions as to why the church exists, what it believes, or what it stands for. Often-



times, unthinkingly perhaps, they mock at the very things which form the foundations of the Christian faith. They openly reject much of the Bible, decline to accept the divinity of Christ, ridicule the idea that the moral law is binding on Christians, and make light of the standards of righteousness enshrined therein.

They are members truly, but members of what? Of a congregation, perhaps, but not of the true church of Christ. When a person accepts Jesus as the Son of God, and gives himself to his Lord in glad and full surrender, his name is written in heaven. (Luke 10:20.) It is recorded "in the book" of God. (Dan. 12:1.) He becomes identified with God's purposes and plans, a candidate for eternal life. But those with no faith, no firm belief of any kind, no deep interest in the things of God—are their names written there? It cannot be.

A Revival Imperative

If the results of Dr. Ribble's questionnaire are an indication of the true state of Christianity to-day, it would suggest that it is high time for a mighty spiritual revival within the church itself. There must be a return to Bible study, and a preaching of doctrine, so that people will know the background and the basis of the faith they claim to hold. Most important of all, there must be a rediscovery of the glories of Christ—His miraculous coming from heaven to earth, His selfless ministry to the poor and needy, His vicarious suffering and death on Calvary, His resurrection from the dead, His ascension to the Father's throne, His promised return as King of kings and Lord of lords—that there may be a renewal of first love, a new sense of worship and adoration, a new dedication to His service.

Membership in a Christian church has become to many nothing more than membership of a club. They think of it as involving merely an occasional visit to church, without the penalty of a fine for non-attendance. Yet it is, or should be, infinitely more than that. It should mean an understanding of the divine plan for the salvation of humanity, and a grasp of the great teachings of righteousness and truth which God has devised for the development of noble character. It should mean self-denial in the service of others, consecration to a world task, preparation of heart and soul for the life to come, and, above all, fellowship,

brotherhood, kinship with the Lord of glory, here and hereafter.

Does membership in a Christian church mean all this to you? If not, it is time to think, to study, and to pray.

ONLY DUST!

By A. Cheesbrough

WHILE waiting at a London coaching station for the transport to arrive which was to carry me some eighty miles on my homeward journey, I saw a tall old man busy sweeping the covered-in concrete yard. The cleaner had one of those very wide sweeping brushes which are a source of amusement to the ladies, who invariably compare the size with their own domestic appliance.

As he approached I stepped out of his way, at the same time jokingly remarking, "You won't sweep me up, will you, although I'm only dust."

He paused, half leaning on the long handle of his brush, surprised that I should have taken the trouble to speak to him as he passed.

Perhaps, with the eyes of so many well-dressed and apparently well-to-do people looking on, he felt his work to be menial and had an inferiority complex. But it was necessary, honest work, and withal in the interests of hygiene. So I tried to lift his thoughts to something higher and said: "It's wonderful, isn't it, that the same number of elements and the same kind of chemicals that make up the human body are to be found in soil and dust?"

He perceived my intention to allude to the Creator and refused to go any further, by saying, "I only believe what I can see."

"That's hardly correct," I answered, "I don't suppose you have seen your brain, but you believe you have one!" He repeated, "I only believe what I can see."

My coach came in and there was no time for more, but when I sat down and we moved out I wondered what was at the back of his mind in using this phrase. What had embittered him? Had he lost his loved ones? Tragedy lies behind so many lives to-day. I could only wonder. When the bombs were

falling and all ran to the same shelter, all were brothers; but how soon we forget! How soon does class distinction, pride of position, and a sense of superiority come up again. How soon do priest and Levite pass by on the other side. But "Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return" was spoken to Adam and all our fallen race. "He knoweth our frame; He remembereth that we are dust." Psa. 103:14.

If God in His infinite love and mercy remembers that we are dust, why don't we? As Abraham approached God on behalf of Sodom and Gomorrah he said: "Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but dust and ashes." A realization of this fact should help to save us from that pride and arrogance which God hates.

Recalling the cleaner's foolish words, "I only believe what I can see," we can but remember the words of Isaiah quoted by Jesus when

declaring the parable of the sower and the seed: "Their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their hearts, and shall be converted, and I should heal them." Alas, how many there are who deliberately close their eyes to the truth. Friend, how is it with you?

The Queen and the Bible

In a message to the United Evangelical Exhibition at the Central Hall, Westminster, Her Majesty the Queen said: "I can truly say that the King and I long to see the Bible back where it ought to be, as a guide and comfort in the homes and lives of our people. From our own experience, we know what the Bible can mean for personal life."

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THE CHILDREN'S Pages



A Little Girl and a Poem

By Dorothy Toussiro

JANINE was a very sweet little girl who loved Jesus and liked to go to church. She used to go with her mummy every week without fail. But there was one thing which made them both very sad. It was that Daddy would never go with them. Janine loved her daddy very dearly, but she did not see him very often because in the evenings when he had finished his work, he did not come straight home. He used to go out with his friends and smoke and drink until quite late in the evening and then Janine was fast asleep in bed.

When Janine was seven years old and Christmas time was coming around, all the children at the church were preparing to give a special programme as they did each year. Janine had quite an important part to perform. She was to recite a little poem about a heathen man who learned about the Bible from a missionary, and who gave his heart to God.

Just over a month before Christmas, something terrible happened. Little Janine became very sick. She was so sick that her daddy, who really loved his little girl very much, was very worried about her.

He was so worried that he stopped going out with his friends after work, and started coming straight home so that he could sit with her for a nice long time during the evening.

As the days passed by and she did not seem to get any better, she began to realize that she might not be well

Robin in the Rain

Little Mary Martha
With nose against the pane,
Was frowning at the weather
And weeping with the rain,
Until a burst of music
Came from the cherry tree—
'Twas Robin Redbreast singing,
"Cheer up, cheer up, cheereel"

Then little Mary Martha
Bravely tried to smile.
She played with Baby Lucy
In her crib a while;
She cleared the breakfast table
And put away the food;
She coaxed the smoky hearth fire
Into a pleasant mood.

She took her little Bible
And learned her memory verse;
She counted up the pennies
And ha'pennies in her purse.
A very pleasant morning
She managed to obtain,
And all because of Robin's
Singing in the rain.

Elizabeth Rosser.

enough to say her poem after all. So one evening when her daddy was sitting by her side holding her hand, she asked him a question. She asked him that if she were not well enough by Christmas to say her poem, would he say it in her place? Of course he promised that he would, although at the time he was so worried about his sick little girl that he hardly thought what he was saying.

The days passed by and Janine got only worse instead of better, until at last, just a little while before Christmas, she died. Her mummy and daddy were very sad, but Mummy was comforted because she knew that Janine loved Jesus and would wake up again when He comes.

A few days after ward Janine's daddy remembered something. He went into her little bedroom, looked among her things, and soon found the little poem. He learned it quite carefully, and waited for the day of the children's Christmas programme.

When the day arrived, he and Mummy went along together. Then he went quietly up to the minister and explained about his promise to his little girl. When the correct time came in the programme, the minister told the people that because Janine could not say the poem, her daddy was going to say it instead. As he was reciting about the heathen man who gave his heart to God, Janine's daddy realized that he was like the heathen man and that God wanted his heart, too.

When he had finished he went quietly from the platform and thought it all over. There and then he decided that he wanted to come to church every week after that with Mummy. How happy Mummy and the minister and all the other people were about that!

LETTING YOUR LIGHT SHINE

By Elsie Pratt

At last the coach reached its destination. It had come through many counties, and covered over a hundred miles, until eventually it arrived in Somerset, and drew into the parking ground near the famous Cheddar Caves.

I expect you have heard of the wonderful things to be seen inside those caves—the stalagmites and stalactites, and the beautiful patterns in the marble-like formations. The guides tell you that a river rushed through those rocks millions of years ago, but to me it speaks most plainly of the Flood, of which we read in God's Holy Word.

But that is not what I wanted to tell you about. Those caves were discovered by a Mr. Gough about fifty years ago, and they are very, very dark. Now man has put in the electric light. Where there is light, there is life. The sun warms the earth, gives light to all, and makes the seeds grow. So also the sunlight of God's love shines in our hearts, and we grow—spiritually.

Now the sun has never shone inside those dark caves, and so we would not expect to find any life there. But the electric light shines there, and so we find some light. If you look closely, you will see little ferns growing out of the hard rock near the lights. This impressed me greatly, and then this thought came to me, and I would like you to remember it.

Jesus is the great Light. We, too, are lights, however small, and Jesus has said, "Let your light shine." We are living in a world that is darkened by sin, and no matter where we may be, there is

someone needing the light that we have. So we must not hide it at all, but let it shine brightly for Him.

Some word or deed of ours may help someone along life's dark way. Day by day someone is watching us, though we may not know it. So it is important that our lives be such that others will not be led astray if they follow us.

So, children, remember the little ferns that grow in the caves, and then think of yourself as a little light that will help the seed of truth to grow in the heart of another.

My Dear Sunbeams,

SOMETIMES even our noblest plans seem to end unhappily. One of our faithful Sunbeams, Ronald Willson, tried to rescue from a tree a bird which appeared to be injured. The branch snapped, and down he fell. So his plan to do a good deed landed Ronald in hospital. But Ronald is still shining brightly, we are glad to say.

Remember that whatever may be our set-backs, if we really mean well, that is all God wants.

Yours affectionately,

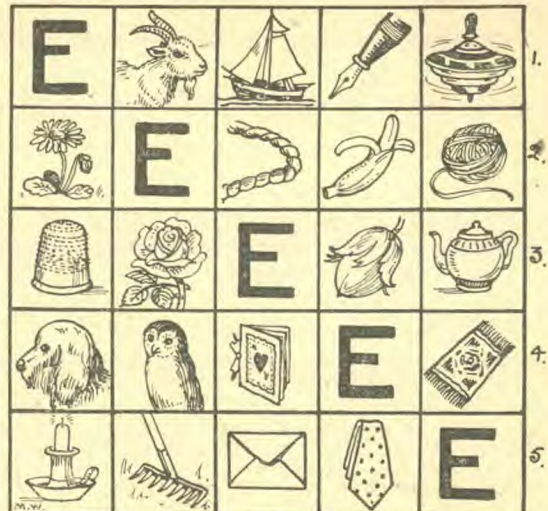
AUNTIE MARGARET.

Results of Competition No. 17

Prize-winners.—Eleonore Baron, 10 Railway Street, Church, Nr. Acering-

Competition

Here is a geographical puzzle. Line one is a country; two is a town; three is a river; four is a sea-port; five is an island. Solve the puzzle by using the initial letters of the objects. Then paint the picture and send it with the solution, with your name, age, and address to Auntie Margaret, The Stanborough Press Ltd., Watford, Herts., not later than November 1st.



ton. Age 12; Michael Tebbutt, 67 Grosvenor Road, Lower Edmonton, N.9.

Honourable Mention.—Jeffery Heath (Liverpool); Winifred Herbert (Manchester); Josephine Aldridge (Bishops Cleeve); Ann Trimble (Norwich); Avril Baker (Newport); John Schofield (Birmingham); Anne Miles (Ightham); Jean Sparkes (Clapham Common); Graham Wallis (Watford); Yvonne Tanner (Tidworth).

Those who tried hard.—Paul Johnson (Rochester); Howard Tilly (Bournemouth); A. Cornelius (Cardiff); Nigel Payne (Bishops Cleeve); Carole King (Romford); Albert Wagstaff (Rickmansworth); Amy Randlesome (Stockton); Kenneth Fletcher (Bristol); Molly Rich (Launceston); Judith Lacey (York); Shirley Smith (Hull); Pamela Price (Fleet); Wendy Jenkins (Richmond); Myra Parmenter (Richmond); Marie Glass (Reading); Sylvia Curtis (Bristol); Patricia Coleman (Norwich); Marlene Reynolds (Bristol); Lydia Harris (Cambridge); Judith Parish (Norwich); Siegfried Baron (Church); Pauline Elsdon (Ilford); Geoffrey Trigg (Churcham); Dilys Waterhouse (Oldbury); Melanie Ash (Porthcawl); Michael Cassels (Newcastle); Patricia (Watford); Ron Burton (Norwich); Christine Nunn (Southampton); Hazel Harris (Cambridge); Robert Vine (Watford); Jennifer Overington (London, S.W.6); Rosemary Woodfield (Watford); Richard Vine (Watford); Mary Ahern (Hull); Marion Paget (Wick Hill); Gloria Simpson (Wallsend); Margaret Johnson (Rochester); Stephen Rogers (New Malden); No name.

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STRAWS in the WIND

"KILOTON" BOMBS

WITH the advent of the atomic bomb, these fearsome weapons are no longer classified by the tonnage of high explosive to which they are equivalent, but in terms of "kilotons." The primitive Hiroshima bomb had a power of 20 kilotons or 20,000 tons of high explosive, but the present atom bombs are "hundred kiloton" bombs.

KUWAIT OIL FIELDS

TROUBLE in Persia has given a new importance to the six-year-old Kuwait fields eighty miles away up the Persian Gulf on the Arabian side. Production has reached a record total of thirty-two million tons yearly, which is almost equal to that of the Persian fields at their peak.

WORLD CIRCULATION OF BIBLE

THE *Bulletin of the United Bible Societies* records that during 1950 two and a half million Bibles, three and a half million New Testaments, and nearly sixteen million Bible portions, making a total of 21,800,000 Bibles and portions, were distributed. This is two millions higher than in 1949 and four millions higher than in 1948.

PROTESTANTISM'S DANGER

LISTING three grave dangers to U.S. Protestantism, Dr. John A. Mackay, president of Princeton Theological Seminary, says: "Political catholicism is the most subtle challenge." "Clericalism," he adds, "constitutes the greatest spiritual menace in the Western world of to-day."

1999

ASTRONAUTICAL scientists are working toward the first piloted rocket trip to the moon and back by 1999, after which they will tackle

Mars and Venus. The journey will be made via artificial satellite stations rotating in arranged orbits round the earth.

ONE AND A HALF MILLIONS IN KOREA

WHEREAS at the beginning of the Korean War the United States had just over half a million troops in action, they now have a million and a half there.

Will All Someday Accept Christ?

(Continued from page 7.)

tares are the children of the wicked one; the enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels." Matt. 13:38, 39.

According to the teachings of Jesus there will be no time before His coming when a sinless state is to be set up in which all men will be converted and turn to God.

During these wicked days in which we find ourselves living we need to prepare for a desperate "time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation" (Dan. 12:1), instead of a Utopian, sinless reign of peace. We must take our stand for Christ and His truth to-day instead of putting it off until some fanciful period of second probation before Jesus comes.

"Now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." 2 Cor. 6:2.

Satan says *to-morrow* when the whole world will be converted. Jesus says *to-day* while the door of mercy still stands ajar—while probation's hour yet lingers a little while. To you right now comes His Holy Spirit's entreaty: "Choose you *this day* whom ye will serve"! Joshua 24:15.

