

EXCERPTS FROM

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THE LINK

North Road Chapel (Evangelical)

BIDEFORD

Internet Edition

THE WORK OF THE MINISTRY

As was said in our last issue, the Sermon on the Mount sheds much light upon the subject of the Ministry.

In instructing His newly called disciples, Christ tells them that, not only are they "the salt of the earth," but both their role and their reception would be akin to that of the Old Testament Prophets (cf. Matt.5:12-13). The Hebrew word translated "Prophet" means, one who is "to announce," "to call," or "to declare." Their function is defined in many Scriptures. "Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins" (lsa.58:1). "But truly I am full of power by the spirit of the Lord, and of judgment, and of might, to declare unto Jacob his transgression, and to Israel his sin" (Micah 3:8). The Old Testament Prophets were to deal ruthlessly with sin amongst God's people.

Arminian evangelistic preachers are chiefly concerned with shouting their gospel texts and slogans to the unregenerate, but it should be noted that God's prophets were told to cry aloud and lift up their voice like a trumpet in exposing ISRAEL'S sins. Their main work was amongst God's people. These prophets were not sent to major on the Amalekites or the Philistines, NO! God wanted HIS PEOPLE kept pure and upright, for HIS glory; this in turn would witness to the heathen: Says Jehovah, you preach to my people and don't spare them; point out THEIR sins: In this there must be neither fear or favour, though it be the king upon the throne. If he fails and violates my law then it is required of thee to face him and say; "Thou art the man" (2 Sam.12:7).

If in worship Israel deviated from the Divine pattern the prophets were to intervene and check any departure from the God appointed order. "Thou son of man, shew the house to the house of Israel, that they may be ashamed of their iniquities: and let them measure the pattern" (Ezek.43:10). Ezekiel! you shew them once again that which I have ordained for the conduct of my house; let them be measured by MY pattern and standard.

They too were to be watchmen, set to GUARD God's people. "Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me" (Ezek.3:17). "Also I set watchmen over you, saying, Hearken to the sound of the trumpet. But they said, we will not hearken" (Jer.6:17). "I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night, ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence" (Isa.62:6).

These prophets had to be vigilant: they were WATCHMEN. God says to His people, "they are OVER you - you are to hearken to them." Their position was "on the wall" - a place of advantage where they could observe and be informed; keeping abreast of ALL MOVEMENTS which might be a source of danger.

In this duty and vigil the prophet must never tire: it is day and night, says Jeremiah. Even if the sun was shining and all appeared serene, the prophet was not to relax or hold his peace, for did not the Almighty know that the adversary would never let up on His people, and days of calm are so often the times of greatest treachery. So, the prophet was ever to be scanning the surrounding scene, and at the first sign of any suspicious movement he was to give warning and sound the trumpet.

These God ordained men also had a role to fulfil in bringing messages of comfort and consolation, Yes! Words too, of pardon and forgiveness. "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received double for all her sins" (Isa.40:1-2). "But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire, thou shall not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee" (Isa.43:1-2). "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" (Isa.55:7).

Thus the role and ministry of the old Testament prophets can be clearly seen.

In the commissioning of the New Testament disciples there was very little difference. "These twelve Jesus sent forth and commanded them ... as ye go, preach, saying, the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt.10:5-7). "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. -Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen." (Matt.28:18-20). "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

Just as the Old Testament prophets were to, "call," "announce," and "declare," so were the Apostles - "As ye go preach." If men receive you then speak peace, if not, then shake the dust off your feet and tell them that it will be more tolerable for Sodom in the day of judgment than for them. (Cf. Matt.10:13-15). But whatever be man's attitude or response, you must GO, ^even into all parts of the world and present the gospel to all. In every nation must my truth be taught: you disciples are MY WITNESSES: all things that I have declared unto you, you are to declare unto others. What is more, you are to teach that ALL my mandate is to be observed, and ALL my commandments obeyed, and they that believe not your witness shall be damned." (cf. Mark 16:15-16).

As was stated in the previous edition of The Link, in this age we have neither Prophets in the Old Testament sense, or Apostles in the New Testament sense. Nevertheless, in that which has been said concerning these two orders, the minister or teaching elder, differs little, if any, (apart from miracle working) for he also is to "announce," to "declare," and to "call." Paul, who was an apostle, but had now reached the end of his life, gives instruction to Timothy who was a minister and a pastor in the sense in which we are to understand it today, in the settled state of this New Testament age.

He states in his second letter to this minister: "Preach the Word; be instant in season, and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry." (2 Tim.4:2&5). Although Timothy had not the supernatural gifts such as the apostles, yet, his ministry differed in no way from theirs, as far as the content of doctrine was concerned; he was to preach the same Word. Like the Old Testament prophets, he was to be "instant in season, out of season." "Instant," it means to "act in a moment." Those old watchmen on the walls must never tire: never must they relax, even if things did appear quiet. This is equally applicable today.

An elder is to be "vigilant and sober" (1 Tim.3:2). "Vigilant" - it means WIDE AWAKE; this a minister must be. "Sober" - STEADY. BALANCED. SERIOUS. NOT FRIVOLOUS. Of what use is a man in the "look out" who keeps dozing, or that does not take his office seriously.

Alas! today it has to be said that there are many ministers and elders who are NOT vigilant. If they had been WIDE AWAKE the churches and assemblies would not be in the state they are in at the present time.

It cannot be denied that there are ministers, pastors, and elders who do not take their office seriously. It is because of this that worldly pursuits are in the courts of our God. It is probably not incorrect to say that if ministers and elders spent the time in study and prayerful concern for their local flock which they spend at fraternals, conferences, and weekend fellowship centres (which have a high social element about them), things might well be different. When one sees and hears, of the frivolous, unbecoming levity of many elders and ministers, it is no wonder that sin is winked at among companies of Christians in this age.

The minister and his ruling elders should be "INSTANT;" acting immediately at the approach of sin or any irregularities within the church.

If God required His Old Testament prophets to CRY ALOUD against His people who sinned, and SPARE THEM NOT, are we to suppose that He has undergone some change, or that He has relaxed His standards for this age? Away with such God dishonouring thoughts: our God is immutable. "Declare unto Jacob his transgression" writes Micah; "Shew the house of Israel their sins" cries Isaiah; "Let the house of Israel be ashamed" says Ezekiel. "Reprove and rebuke" is the instruction given US by Paul for OUR day. It means to "censure," to "charge with disapproval," to "reprimand." Those in charge of the flock of God are NEVER to turn a blind eye to sin or waywardness within their fold. "Exhort with all long- suffering and doctrine." Elders are to "admonish," to "urge," to "incite with words." The minister is to declare the doctrine of Holy Scripture* ALL TRUTH; THE FAITH once delivered to the saints; and to teach the people of God to observe ALL things. WATCH in all this, says Paul to the minister» be WIDE AWAKE, see trouble approaching before it takes root and nip it in the bud.

Just as the Old Testament prophets and the New Testament apostles were not popular, indeed, they suffered for their stand; so will you Timothy, and every other faithful minister; but ENDURE afflictions; don't soft pedal in order to be popular; do not water down truth to avoid stigma and reproach. Make FULL PROOF of your ministry; explain doctrine and make the truth understandable to the people. Your life and conduct must also give the evidence, so that by your living as well as your clear expositions, you prove the point every time.

"Do the work of an evangelist." This is part of the local minister's work, it is the charge of the LOCAL CHURCH. It must be emphasized that the Holy Spirit does not say: "When it comes to evangelism, a "SPECIALIST" is required." Neither is it implied that, if sinners are to be reached, then, something different will have to be done.

For some 150 years there has been a growing opinion that if the gospel is to be preached to unregenerate men and women, then, it has to be done in a big way, and an independent "EXPERT" in this field brought in. This has almost become standard practice.

Speaking generally, the reasoning of present day evangelicals is, if we are going to reach sinners, then, we must get the churches together. It must be seen to be a great united effort or else there will be no impact. Also, there will have to be plenty of "bait" and attraction such as choirs and professional singers.

With regard to young people (they are a special brand of sinner!), if there is any intention of reaching them with the gospel then there is a particular line of approach, which, if not recognized and adopted, will result in failure. This aspect of the work will need to be in the hands of those who understand youth; who have certain psychic skills, and know what makes young people "tick." "Discoes," and "Live Rock" of necessity must have a place somewhere in the program. Barbecues, with a short epilogue, will also help to create that variation which is so essential.

When all the plans have been carefully prepared, if the project is to really hit the headlines and get off the ground, then the aid of some popular youth personality such as Cliff Richard, of show business fame, should be sought to launch the show.

These guidelines being followed there may be the possibility of seeing some success in evangelism.

It must be stated emphatically, that NONE of these things find a place anywhere in the mandate of Holy Scripture. They are the innovations of men; the reasoning of carnal minds, and not of spiritual hearts. In a coming day the Judge of all the earth will say to these evangelistic strategists and planners: "who hath required this at your hand?" (Isa.1:12).

Let that which is theologically termed the "REGULATIVE PRINCIPLE" be seen to apply: namely, that everything which is outside of Scripture must be outside of our church.

It is through the foolishness of PREACHING that it pleases God to save, cf. 1 Cor.1:21, and preaching (which includes evangelism) is the work of the minister.

In the charge given to Timothy in 2 Tim. 4:5, EVERY minister is included. Neither is there reference made to any specialist youth section or worker. Peter (who was by no means a young man) was charged to feed both sheep and lambs in his ministry; cf. John 21:15-17. Here also, the same charge applies to ALL ministers.

The minister of the Word of God is to be a FAITHFUL STEWARD. He is also to be a WISE STEWARD, giving ALL, their portion of meat in due season; cf. Luke 12:42. Dr. John Gill (1697-1771) comments on this scripture thus:

"The Word of God is to be cut and rightly divided, and every one in the family, according to age, appetite, and digestion, to have his proper part and portion given him; it must be meat, proper food, such as is solid, substantial, and nourishing; even the wholesome words of Christ Jesus that must be given them, not husks and empty trash; and all in due season, in its proper time, as their cases and circumstances require and call for."

The man whom God calls to be minister (servant) over His household must function in this way if he is to have the commendation of his Lord at the last; cf. Matt.24:45-46. Free-lance evangelism, travelling "specialists," be they local or international, find no warrant in Holy Scripture for these "last days" - the settled age of the New Testament Church.

The charge of declaring Divine Truth in ALL ITS FULNESS, to believer and unbeliever of all age groups, is the local church, through the gift of the Great Head to that church, "the minister," (if such a church be Divinely constituted). In no way does this imply that others play no part in this work. It is not what is scathingly termed by some, "one man ministry," rather is it "every member ministry," the local church functioning as "a body" each member active, co-ordinating and co-operating, "according to the ability which God hath given;" but in a body there is but one mouth. In the SETTLED New Testament church, Christ gives the gift of the minister, the tongue of the local, body - not tongues.' That tongue is to "EXPOUND" the Holy Scriptures. It means to interpret and explain; then it must "be made relevant and applied to the hearers.

The exposition of God's Word of necessity demands consistent and consecutive ministry. Its truth becomes disjointed and can so easily be misconstrued by isolating sections and preaching from texts. It is when the Word is PLOUGHED through that its sacred truth is UNEARTHED. It is by this means under the all-controlling providence of God that "ALL receive their meat in due season."

The concept of so many over past generations has been - for the SAINTS on Sunday mornings, CHILDREN on Sunday afternoons, and SINNERS on Sunday evenings. This is but a scheme of man and finds no warrant whatsoever in Scripture. Such an arrangement immediately creates "specialist lines" and destroys systematic exposition of the Word.

In such a situation the minister must pass over any Scripture which has an evangelistic message, on Sunday morning, and on Sunday evenings he must always be searching around for a fresh text upon which to base a so-called gospel message. This is not the way to handle "the unity of the Faith."

The Word of God must be kept entire and faithfully expounded, as its truths come before him. It is in this way-that the Word of God will accomplish its purpose. It will:

1. Set forth the Eternal God in all the splendour of His glorious attributes and perfections.
2. Declare God's moral law and His holy requirements.
3. Throw light upon God's providence and His governmental dealings with men.
4. Cover every doctrine of Holy Scripture.
5. Reveal God's eternal purposes of grace.
6. Show the people of God their transgressions and waywardness.

7. Cause local churches to measure their order of worship by the pattern given.
8. Make the members of Christ sensitive to the voice of the watchman.
9. Issue solemn warnings, and calls for repentance to both saint and sinner';
10. Bring out the great messages of comfort Whereby the bereaved and lonely are consoled.
11. Give glorious outbursts of "Good Tidings" and gospel call.
12. With wooing words, call the backslider to return.
13. Provide guidance and instruction for every situation in life.
14. Present milk to the babes, meat to the strong, honey to the weak, and balm to the suffering.
15. Equip the Christian with weapons for both defence and attack in the warfare of life, and the battle for truth.
16. Bring joy and rejoicing to the heart in the years of our pilgrimage.
17. Give peace to the soul at the last.
18. Illuminate the future with light and immortality.

What a revelation God has given to us in His Word! And what a responsibility devolves upon His ministers. Therefore ye servants of God PREACH IT in all its fulness, and let none be tied to a system or tradition. Neither let any be seen to fool around with 'the innovations of men which are the inventions of carnal reasoning.

To be continued.

W.H.Molland.

Extracts from:

THE DIRECTORY FOR THE PUBLIC WORSHIP OF GOD.
(Laid down by the Westminster Assembly 1645)

Of the Assembling of the Congregation, and
their Behaviour in the Public Worship of God.

When the congregation is to meet for public worship, the people (having before prepared their hearts thereunto) ought all to come and join therein; not absenting themselves from the public ordinances through negligence, or upon pretence of private meetings.

Let all enter the assembly, not irreverently, but in a grave and seemly manner, taking their seats or places without adoration, or bowing themselves toward one place or other.

The congregation being assembled, the minister, after solemn calling on them to the worshipping of the great name of God, is to begin with prayer.

The public worship being begun, the people are wholly to attend upon it, forbearing to read any thing, except what the minister is then reading or citing; and abstaining much more from all private whisperings, conferences, salutations, or doing reverence to any person present, or coming in; as also from all gazing, sleeping, and other indecent behaviour, which may disturb the minister or people, or hinder themselves or others in the service of God.

If any, through necessity, be hindered from being present at the beginning, they ought not, when they come into the congregation, to betake themselves to their private devotions, but reverently to compose themselves to join with the assembly in that ordinance of God which is then in hand.

Reading of the Word in the congregation, being part of the public worship of God, (wherein we acknowledge our dependence upon Him, and subjection to Him,) and one mean

sanctified by Him for the edifying of His people, to be performed by the pastors and teachers.

Preaching of the Word, being the power of God unto salvation, and one of the greatest and most excellent works belonging to the ministry of the gospel, should be so performed, that the workman need not be ashamed, but may save himself, and those that hear him.

The doctrine is to be expressed in plain terms; or, if any thing in it. need explication, it is to be opened, and the consequence also from the text cleared. The parallel places of scripture, confirming the doctrine, are rather to be plain and pertinent, than many, and (if need be) somewhat insisted upon, and applied to the purpose in hand.

He is not to rest in general doctrine, although never so much cleared and confirmed, but to bring it home to special use by application to his hearers* which albeit it prove a work of great difficulty to himself, requiring much prudence, zeal, and meditation, and to the natural and corrupt man will be very unpleasant; yet he is to endeavour to perform it in such a. manner, that his auditors may feel the Word of God to be quick and powerful, and a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart; and that, if any unbeliever or ignorant person be present, he may have the secrets of his heart made manifest, and give glory to God.

The servant of Christ is to perform his whole ministry:

1. Painfully, not doing the work of the Lord negligently.
2. Plainly, that the meanest may understand; delivering the truth not in the enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect; abstaining also from an unprofitable use of unknown tongues, strange phrases, and cadences of sounds and words; sparingly citing sentences of

ecclesiastical or other human writers, ancient or modern, be they never so elegant.

3. Faithfully, looking at the honour of Christ, the conversion, edification, and salvation of the people, not at his own gain or glory; keeping nothing back which may promote those holy ends, giving to every one his own portion, and bearing indifferent respect unto all, without neglecting the meanest, or sparing the greatest, in their sins.
4. Wisely, framing all his doctrines, exhortations, and especially his reproofs, in such a manner as may be most likely to prevail; shewing all due respect to each man's person and place, and not mixing his own passion or bitterness.
5. Gravely, as becometh the Word of God; shunning all such gesture, voice, and expressions, as may occasion the corruptions of men to despise him and his ministry.
6. With loving affection, that the people may see all coming from his godly zeal, and hearty desire to do them good. And,
7. As taught of God, and persuaded in his own heart, that all that he teacheth is the truth of Christ; and walking before his flock, as an example to them in it; earnestly, both in private and public, recommending his labours to the blessing of God, and watchfully looking to himself, and the flock whereof the Lord hath made him overseer: So shall the doctrine of truth be preserved uncorrupt, many souls converted and built up, and himself receive manifold comforts of his labours even in this life, and afterward the crown of glory laid up for him in the world to come.

THE WORLDLINESS OF THE CHURCH

The other morning I sat reading a book by A.W.Tozer, an American minister and author who died in 1963. Whilst I could not go along with him on every point of doctrine yet I found his book both stimulating and deeply searching. Speaking of the world as a battleground for the believer he comments on the situation in his own country about thirty years ago,

"How different today: the fact remains the same but the interpretation has changed completely. Men think of the world, not as a battleground but as a playground. We are not here to fight, we are here to frolic. We are not in a foreign land, we are at home. We are not getting ready to live, we are already living, and the best we can do is to rid ourselves of our inhibitions and our frustrations and live this life to the full. This, we believe, is a fair summary of the religious philosophy of modern man, openly professed by millions and tacitly held by more multiplied millions who live out that philosophy without having given verbal expression to it.

This changed attitude toward the world has had and is having its effect upon Christians, even gospel Christians who profess the faith of the Bible. By a curious juggling of the figures they manage to add up the column wrong and yet claim to have the right answer. It sounds fantastic but it is true.

That this world is a playground instead of a battleground has now been accepted in practice by the vast majority of evangelical Christians. They might hedge around the question if they were asked bluntly to declare their position, but their conduct gives them away. They are facing both ways, enjoying Christ and the world too, and gleefully telling everyone that accepting Jesus does not require them to give up their fun, and that Christianity is just the jolliest thing imaginable.

This whole thing has grown to be so serious of late that it now becomes the bounden duty of every

Christian to re-examine his spiritual philosophy in the light of the Bible, and having discovered the scriptural way to follow it, even if to do so he must separate himself from much that he formerly accepted as real but which now in the light of truth he knows to be false."

Later the same day an invitation was pushed through the door which seemed to have a sad connection with all that I had been reading. I was being pressed to go to a Christian Musical called Daybreak. I was specially urged to bring my young people along to this performance, to be held in the local Anglican church. This musical production is to be performed by about 70 people from churches in the Leatherhead and Bookham area of Surrey. It includes singing, drama, and dancing. It is supposed to be a dramatic musical presentation of the record of the Resurrection of Christ.

I add but two more comments from the same book,

"Thousands of years of education disappear in a moment and we stand again where Adam and Eve stood after the Fall, where Cain stood, and Abel, outside the garden, frightened and undone and fugitive from the terror of the broken law.

There before the judgment seat which suddenly becomes as real to the trembling sinner as if it were the very last judgment itself, no modern religious techniques avail; none of the carefully thought out methods work. The civilized man surrounded by his lately invented and noisy gadgets passes back in his heart through centuries of "progress" and becomes again a terrified, whimpering human thing desperately in need of a Saviour.

Because this is true, any evangelism which by appeal to common interests and chatter about current events seeks to establish a common ground where the sinner can feel at home is as false as the altars of Baal ever were. Every effort to smooth out the road for men and to take away the guilt and the embarrassment

is worse than wasted; it is evil and dangerous to the souls of men.

One of the most popular current errors, and the one out of which springs most of the noisy, blustering religious activity being carried on in evangelical circles these days, is the notion that as times change the church must change with them. Christians must adapt their methods by the demands of the people. If they want ten minute sermons, give them ten minute sermons. If they want truth in capsule form, give it to them. If they want pictures, give them plenty of pictures. If they like stories, tell them stories.

If they prefer to absorb their religious instruction through the drama, go along with them - give them what they want. "The message is the same, only the method changes," say the advocates of compromise.

"Whom the gods would destroy they first make mad.," the old Greeks said, and they were wiser than they knew. That mentality which mistakes Sodom for Jerusalem and Hollywood for the Holy City is too gravely astray to be explained otherwise than as a judicial madness visited upon professed Christians for affronts committed against the Spirit of God. "Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed" (lsa.6:9-10).

Serious as this may be, there is something more serious still. It is the failure to take sides and to speak up when the enemy stalks into the very sanctuary and pollutes the holy place. Precious as human values may be, such values as freedom and decency and the dignity of the individual, divine values, are infinitely more precious. As high as is the heaven above the earth, so great are the spiritual treasures revealed to us by the inspiration of the Spirit and secured to us by the blood of the

everlasting covenant. The wisdom of God contained in the message and practice of the redemptive revelation is above a king's ransom. "For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. She is more precious than rubies and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her. Length of days is in her right hand; and in her left riches and honour. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace" (Prov.3:14-17).

At this hour in world history the state of religion is such that the church is in grave danger of losing this priceless treasure. Her gold is being turned to copper and her diamonds to glass. The religion of Gain is now in the ascendancy - and marching under the banner of the cross. Even among those who make a great noise about believing the Bible, that Bible has virtually no practical influence left. Fiction, films, fun, frolic, religious entertainment, Hollywood ideals, big business techniques and cheap, worldly philosophies now overrun the sanctuary. The grieved Holy Spirit broods over the chaos but no light breaks forth. "Revivals" come without rousing the hostility of organized sin and pass without raising the moral level of the community or purifying the lives of professing Christians. Why?

Could it be that too many of God's true children, and especially the preachers, are sinning against God by guilty silence? When those whose eyes are opened by the touch of Christ become vocal and active God may begin to fight again on the side of truth. I for one am waiting to hear the loud voices of the prophets and reformers sounding once more over a sluggish and drowsy church.

They'll pay a price for their boldness, but the results will be worth it."

P.M.Rowell (Crowborough)
quoting A. W. Tozer: "God Tells the Man Who Cares"

CALVINISM ---

ARMINIANISM

WHICH?

The above is the title of a pamphlet coming from Arminian sources, published in America, and obviously circulating in this country.

Having read this small publication, one feels a short critique is called for because what has been written is not Scripturally sound, neither is it theologically or historically authentic.

In typical Arminian fashion it commences with a couple of anecdotes (purporting to be factual!). The gist of the first tale is that when a farmer was asked by a minister if he was a Christian, replied, "No! God hasn't saved me yet, but He may save me some day, when He gets ready."

The second relates to a man and his wife; both faithful church members, the husband having held office in his church for many years. However, he became a drug addict and she turned to alcohol. When visited by a concerned friend they were found to be "praising the Lord," and spoke in glowing terms of their Christian experience. Being cautioned concerning their present mode of life, they immediately referred to a date when God saved them, saying that what God does, stands forever - once saved, always saved.

It is then stated that "the beliefs illustrated by these two examples are part of a system of Bible interpretation called Calvinism." Upon these two "tales" the content of the pamphlet is based. Let it be said immediately, that such writing is bizarre!

Then is set out fairly correctly, (except that their order is jumbled) that which is theologically known as "The Five Points of Calvinism." However, these are said to be the "IDEAS" set out in detail by John Calvin and his followers.

Let this American gentleman know that these are no "IDEAS OF MEN" rather are they fundamental articles of the faith, and that they lie at the very heart of the doctrine of

salvation. Further, these essential points of doctrine, although termed "The Five Points of Calvinism" were not the work of Calvin; they were laid down at the Synod of Dort (Holland) held from 13th November 1618 to 9th May 1619. John Calvin died 27th May 1564!

The next wild statement made is, that "most Calvinists today say nothing of Election or Particular Redemption; their main emphasis is upon The Perseverance of the Saints; other parts of their dogma is an embarrassment to them.

Never has the writer met a man or woman, believing in the doctrine of Sovereign Grace, who has been embarrassed by their convictions. However, what he has discovered is that these doctrines are of great embarrassment to Arminians who will run a mile rather than hear them preached.

Our "learned?" friend then tells us that this teaching is dangerous! Further, he infers that Calvinists teach that good works are not necessary for the Christian, for it is possible to continue in a life of sin and still get to heaven. This is blatant untruth.

In all this jargon constant reference is made to the two anecdotes, plus a few isolated verses of Scripture to substantiate and bolster the cunning fable.

"Calvinism is a false teaching," says this opposing stalwart, "We hold to the system called Arminianism.

Arminianism stands in opposition to the errors of Calvinism. Jacobus Arminius, a Dutch reformer outlined a Scriptural approach to the subject of salvation. He was concerned about the dangers of Calvinism, and made an effort to answer them from the Scriptures." Then is set out "The Five Points of Arminianism."

Here again, the writer of this pamphlet appears to have got himself into a muddle, for Arminius died in 1609. It was his followers who produced the "Remonstrance" under five headings in 1610. The Five Points of Calvinism did not come into being for another nine years (1619).

Far from the Arminian points being designed to correct the Calvinistic, it was the other way round. Engage in polemics by all means, but first let a man get his facts right!

Further, we are told in this paper that "Calvinists only have a few proof verses, whereas the major testimony of Scripture is against the teaching." This is utter rubbish, for here again the reverse is the case. It is Arminianism which is based upon isolated texts. Calvinism is a whole "Body of Truth." Indeed, it is "The Faith" once delivered, it is "Theology in Unity;" there are no "loose ends."

The Calvinist does not carve up the Word of God, neither does he rely upon a few so-called "proof verses." No! he holds to the whole of Divine revelation, and no Arminian can embarrass him in that which he teaches.

In conclusion, this Arminian Goliath informs us that "God has planned and provided for salvation; however, He must have man's will and co-operation to carry it out." What kind of view is this of Divine Omnipotence?

Then, we are glibly informed that "we are secure as long as we remain in Christ." Let the question be asked, "Does remaining in Christ depend upon man?"

If the writer of this pamphlet had based his article upon the first two chapters of Paul's letter to the Ephesians instead of two anecdotes, we might have expected sounder doctrine; and if he had studied just a little history and theology, the statements made would have been more correct. However, this is typical of Arminianism!

Let the truth be stated in this magazine again: Arminianism was no return to sound Biblical doctrine; it was a grave departure from it. It is, and always has been, the seed bed of many and grievous errors. Arminianism was but a revival of Semi-Pelagianism which issued from Rome, and it will yet return to the harlot which gave it birth.

That which is termed Calvinism existed long before Calvin or any other Reformer, for it is the truth of Holy Scripture as revealed by God Himself, and is without bias or undue emphasis. If a man is to be true to the God given

revelation, then, he must be a "so-called" Calvinist - THERE IS NO ALTERNATIVE.

Let Arminians quit their false tradition, and re-think their position in the light of the Word of God.

W.H.Molland.

EDITORIAL

The theme of the importance of the true ministerial office is continued in this issue of The Link.

The critique on a pamphlet circulating in this country in certain circles only goes to prove the case more convincingly that sound preaching and the thorough exposition of Holy Scripture is a rarity in these days. The shallow preaching of the past few generations has produced a very large army within the church of Jesus Christ who are ignorant of many of the vital tenets of the Faith, and who know little, if anything, of sound theology and historical Christianity.

The tragedy is, however, that this army wage their continual guerrilla warfare within the ranks of the Lord's' people, loading their muskets with nothing better than powder from the ancient arsenals of Pelagius, Cassian, and Arminius.

The irony of this is, that as they quote and misinterpret certain Scriptures, many in this battalion of "would-be" soldiers truly believe that they are great defenders of the Faith. They would claim to be clad in the "whole armour of God," wielding "the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God" and wearing the "helmet of salvation." Yet, the salvation which they are endeavouring to defend with their weapons is a very grave distortion of that salvation which is revealed in the Word of God.

This irregular warfare must be exposed for what it is, and the glorious gospel of salvation through GRACE ALONE explained and set forth in clarity as revealed by God Himself in the Holy Scriptures.

INFORMATION and ANNOUNCEMENTS

The ministry of Dr. Peter Trumper at our Bible Convention held on the 12th July, was greatly appreciated. Such occasions for coming together and fellowship are very precious in these days. We have also had a considerable number of visitors throughout the summer months. Their presence in our midst and the affinity of spirit and depth of fellowship which we enjoyed with many, was heart-warming.

It is a great encouragement to receive requests for THE LINK from so many parts of the U.K. and beyond. That there is a desire for truth in many places, is quite obvious. If any of our readers can make use of extra copies we will gladly send them on request.

The work involved in the publication of the book on the Biblical teaching of Salvation is now in its final stages, and we are hoping that it will be available by Christmas.

The expository ministry conducted here at North Road Chapel is available on cassette tapes: these are free on loan, or may be purchased at £1.25 each - postage extra in either case. Subjects available are:-

THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD	18	Sermons
SPIRITUAL UNION	31	"
THE HOLT SPIRIT	36	"
THE ATONEMENT	72	"
THE LIFE OF DAVID	182	"
THE CHURCH	50	"
THE COVENANTS	65	"
THE PRAYERS OF THE APOSTLE PAUL	64	"

Current Series:-

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT	80	Sermons to date
THE BOOK OF GENESIS	182	" " "
THE MINOR PROPHETS	23	" " "

SALVATION



**THE GIFT OF GOD
OR
THE CHOICE OF MAN**

W. H. Molland

Extract from the Foreword:

... in this volume, Herbert Molland shows that the "Doctrines of Grace," often designated the "Five Points of Calvinism," originated in the written and infallible Word of God. The testimony of Scripture is presented throughout with clarity, succinctness and accuracy. Not only is evidence in support of each doctrine satisfyingly full, but it is interestingly written and makes a lasting impression on the reader.

It is a convincing treatment...

Preparation for publication is well advanced with the Printers and we hope that the book will be available for distribution within the next two to three months.

Any further information can be obtained from:

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