

# EXCERPTS FROM

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# THE LINK

North Road Chapel (Evangelical)

BIDEFORD

## Internet Edition

## THE WORK OF THE MINISTRY

(Continued.)

### PART 1

In the two previous articles on this subject, constant reference has been made to Christ's Sermon on the Mount. Again will this be the case, because in that wonderful discourse so much teaching is given pertaining to the minister and his work. In the thirteenth verse of Matthew chapter five, we read» "Ye are the salt of the earth." Whilst this has application to every believer, the main thrust has reference to His disciples - those who He had called, and who later would be commissioned to go into all nations, teaching them to observe ALL THINGS whatsoever the Great Head had commanded. (cf. Matt.28:19-20).

The true and faithful minister of the Word of God is "salt." This is not to be taken literally, for a minister is no different in his person than any other Christian. He is salt by virtue of his labours, for he is to "labour in the word and in doctrine" (1 Tim. 5:17), and to dispense the Truth in its entirety in his generation.

Dr. John Gill (1697-1771), in his commentary on Matthew Chapter 5 verse 13 states: "The minister is compared to salt because of the savoury doctrines he is to preach." He then goes on to speak of teachings which are agreeable to the Scriptures, and are of an evangelical kind, which are full of Christ, and which serve to exalt Him, and to magnify the grace of God. Teachings, also, which are suitable to the experiences of the saints, and are according to godliness, and which tend to promote it. Ministers are savoury also by virtue of their lives and conversations, whereby they commend and give sanction to the doctrines they preach, and are by this, ensamples to the saints, and checks upon the wicked; in THIS sense, says Dr. Gill, "are they the salt of the earth." Such comments coming from the pen of this great theologian, are very meaningful.

How important it is that the life of the minister corresponds with his preaching. The world has a proverb which says: "ACTIONS SPEAK LOUDER THAN WORDS." This is true; and if the preacher's actions belie his words, then, he

may as well quit preaching, for his efforts are futile indeed they are dishonouring to God. The minister is to "adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things." (Titus 2:10). "ADORN" means to, "embellish" - "heighten" - "set forth to great advantage." A minister's words must be framed within a consistent life.

The uses of salt are varied, yet, in the final analysis amount to much the same thing. Salt is used on the land; it has a certain purifying effect upon the soil. It is used as a cleansing agent. It has vital properties as a preservative; it prevents putrefaction and arrests corruption. It makes meat savoury to our taste. It is a vital element of the body's chemistry.

Salt is an indispensable commodity in life, so common, yet so essential. It is resident in the rocks of the earth, and as the water we drink percolates through the veins of the rock strata, so it is purified.

What an apt figure of speech the Holy Spirit uses to illustrate that which is our subject! What volumes it suggests to our minds! Yet, it can all be summed up by saying that salt is a VITAL purifying and cleansing agent, and an antidote to corruption. In precisely the same manner as salt arrests corruption in the natural, so does the truth of God militate against MORAL corruption, and effect SPIRITUAL purity.

This analogy of salt, with its many facets, furnishes the minister with clear direction as to the MANNER of his preaching; for it is the Word which he preaches which is the VITAL ELEMENT. If souls are to be seasoned, then, the PURE SALT must be applied. If a local church is to be an antidote to corruption in this sinful world then salt must be applied from the pulpit. The minister of God's Word must dispense the Truth, in purity, in its entirety, and in sincerity.

One of the most interesting characteristics of Holy Scripture is the combination of simplicity and profundity. The wisdom of God is seen on almost every page, as the common and every-day things of life are brought in by the Holy Spirit's inspiration to illustrate and serve as analogies, thus aiding our understanding, and enabling us

to enter more fully into the depth of meaning of Divine truth.

The writer, speaking as an agriculturalist, and going back prior to the days of mass chemicalization, well remembers the time when salt was used extensively on the land. If a field was known to be carrying a certain plant disease, or perhaps animals had been grazing on a pasture and it was later discovered that one or more of those animals was suffering from a disorder which could be transmitted to others through the herbage, then, the field would be rested and given a liberal dressing of salt. But what farmer would be so foolish as to mix 50% sawdust with the vital agent?

On many farms, twice a year, a pig was slaughtered and the carcass dressed off, hung to cool, and later cut into joints and salted in order to preserve so as to provide meat for the farm household; but it would have been the height of folly to mix chalk with the salt. Yet, this is similar to what many preachers are doing today. The Word of God is being adulterated. Mixed in with Divine truth is humour, racy stories, exciting and sensational anecdotes» there is levity in the conduct of Holy worship. Special singing and music of a very questionable kind, plus many other extras, are mingled with the service. In other words, a large proportion of what goes on in a great many churches today is "sawdust" "chalk," or to use another Biblical analogy, "wood, hay, and stubble." Because of this, the power of the Word is nullified and soon it is the novelties which attract and become the predominant part.

This divinely inspired figure of speech is, by its very nature, a warning to the minister that he is to be fore-armed. He is not called upon to dispense candy but SALT, which is something men are more likely to turn against than relish. Therefore, he must not expect faithful preaching to be popular with the vast majority. A.W.Pink wrote: "It is contrary to nature for those whose consciences are pricked to be pleased with those who wound them."

Salt on raw meat will fret and eat into the flesh, drawing out all surplus moisture and juices which cause decay. On

an open wound it is very painful. So it is with the hearer of God's Word; it so often bites into us.

It instructs the sinner as to his depravity, describing him as being full of wounds, bruises, and putrifying sores, (cf. Isa.1:6). Corrupt, unsavoury flesh; yea, putrid carrion in the eyes of God. What need of salt such have! The minister who is engaged in dispensing such truth need not be discouraged if his hearers are indignant. Indeed, far from being dismayed he should be stimulated and incited to persevere, knowing that their displeasure is an indication that the salt is fretting and penetrating.

In the same discourse the Lord had already indicated what the re-action would be: "Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets." (Luke 6:26). Popular preaching is symptomatic of UNFAITHFUL MINISTRY.

With regard to the saint also, the re-action can be much the same. Nevertheless, the ministry must be of such an order that ALL the counsel of God is taught, and the minister is not to compromise in anything. He must exhort and rebuke the flock. Such preaching can make many a Christian writhe at times, and because of it, not a few ministers have been severely criticized. This of course is a very serious matter. One can understand the unregenerate squirming under the sharp sword of the Word of God, and rebelling against its truth, but for a Christian to dismiss ANY PART of Holy Scripture when the meaning of it is explained and the truth applied, is a sad attitude: indeed, it indicates a pitiful state of soul.

If the conscience of a believer is searched under the ministry of the Word of God, and by it something has been revealed in one's life or conduct which is not in alignment with God's requirements, then, however painful the process, that Christian should be willing to have the SALT of the TRUTH "rubbed in" and not rest until the running sore in the life which is displeasing to God, is cleansed and dried out.

This is the sanctification of the Word. (cf. John 17:1 The Word of God is TRUTH and by it - and it alone - under the power of the Holy Spirit, we are brought into a condition

of spiritual soundness and health. A Christian should ever sit under the ministry of God's Word SUBMISSIVELY, giving diligence to be seasoned with the HEAVENLY SAU. It is one of the marks of grace so to do.

What saith the Holy Spirit through the Psalmist? "Thy word is very pure: therefore thy servant loveth it." (Psalm 119:140). "VERY PURE!" When a person hears the Word of God expounded, there is a purifying action going on (that is if such are in the right attitude of heart). This is described by the apostle Paul as "The washing of water by the Word." (Eph.5:26). As we listen, the Scriptures pass into the mind and that "very pure" Word acts as salt. As it is stored in the memory and meditated upon, little by little it is digested and passes from the mind into the heart, the control room of our personalities, and from there it is acted upon and is evidenced in the life. The thoughts of the heart, the words of the mouth, and the manner of life are all seen to be seasoned with SALT. Thus it becomes obvious that the Word is doing its work, in washing, sanctifying, and purifying.

It must be clearly stated that there can be no purity of heart except through OBEDIENCE of the Truth. (cf. 1 Peter 1:22). Our Lord said: "My mother and my brethren are these which hear the Word of God and do it." (Luke 8:21). In other words, if we claim relationship to Christ, then we must be marked by obedience.

In all this we learn of the importance of honest and faithful ministry from the pulpit, and diligent, painstaking listening in th\$ pew. Such alone is acceptable to God and only this will be effectual to the outworking of God's purposes in the world through the church.

## PART 2

"Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost its savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men." (Matt.5:13)

The discourse continues - "BUT!" if the salt have lost its Saviour." Here is a supposition. Our subject is, THE

MINISTER, and the inference is that a minister of God's Word CAN lose his savour. In this we are not speaking of false prophets, or modernistic unregenerate pulpiteers: NO! the Lord is addressing His disciples, and with them, all His true ministers of future generations; and He says unto them, "Ye are the salt of the earth BUT!" Thus, by implication He gives warning - it is a possibility that they can lose their savour.

This, of course, does not mean to say that a true servant of Christ can so fall from grace that he loses his spiritual life, for a person truly regenerated is born of INCORRUPTIBLE seed; but what it does mean is that a man who was once a faithful preacher CAN lose his effectiveness. This is a very solemn word and it comes direct from the Great Head of the church to EVERY TRUE MINISTER. It is a call to diligence and fidelity in their ministry, and warning them that unfaithfulness in their high office is like unsavoury salt - ineffective and worthless.

Because of the seriousness of this, what steps should be taken to safeguard the situation? How can a minister of God's Word MAINTAIN his savour over a long-sustained ministry? - for it is a life-long calling. First and foremost, he is to be diligent and prayerful in study.

It is stated of the Old Testament prophets that they searched the Scriptures diligently, (cf. 1 Peter 1:10). Apollos, of the New Testament, was an eloquent man and mighty in the Scriptures ... instructed in the way of the Lord, fervent in the spirit, he spoke and taught diligently the things of the Lord. (cf. Acts 18.2^1-25). How often do we read in the Bible that the Christian is "to be diligent" - "to give diligence" - "to act diligently." Nowhere is it more important than in the ministerial office. To be diligent means: ASSIDUOUS, INDUSTRIOUS. PERSEVERING. PAINSTAKING. CONSTANT IN APPLICATION.

The minister of the Word of God is to LABOUR in study, and in prayer. He is to persevere in ALL the Scriptures, earnestly and prayerfully grappling even with the most difficult sections. The Holy Spirit speaks of inclining the ear unto wisdom, applying the heart to understanding, crying after knowledge, lifting up the voice for

understanding, seeking as for silver and searching as for hidden treasure, (cf. Prov.2:2-4-).

The minister is to be INDUSTRIOUS and PERSEVERING, not casual in his approach to study, but sticking at it hour after hour, day after day, year in year out, never tiring, never slacking, constant in his application to the task. PAINSTAKING: comparing scripture with scripture, analysing, checking all references, examining words, their meaning etc., studying the location of places and determining their significance, investigating families and Biblical genealogies, carefully noting dates, ever keeping doctrine entire, never segregating the Scriptures, reverently handling them, as the "oracles of God." (1 Peter 4:11). Always interpreting its truths within their context and setting; drawing out all facets, doctrinal, devotional, and practical. Quick to spot all the lessons and never to fail or shirk responsibility in APPLIGATION to both saint and sinner, be that application rebuke, reproof, warning, exhortation, instruction, comfort, consolation, or whatever; for ALL Scripture is profitable to ALL people at ALL times; therefore the minister must always bring truth to BEAR upon his hearers.

It is quite obvious that if a minister is to function in this, the appointed manner, he has to spend long hours in prayerful and painstaking preparation. It is summed up by the apostle Paul; "Give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Neglect not the gift that is in thee ... Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all. Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them; for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." (1 Tim.^;13-16). Paul is here giving Timothy instruction, warning him to "take heed" as a minister, for it is sadly possible for such an one to lose his effectiveness. If you are to save yourself in this, says the apostle, then you must continue in doctrine and give attendance to reading. God has given you the particular gift of teacher, and in your office as minister you are not to neglect that gift; it is to be exercised to the full. You must give yourself WHOLLY to it; throw your whole weight and personality into it; there are to be no reservations; your approach to the task is



never to be half-hearted; always must your ministry be before you. If you want to maintain your profitability as a dispenser of savoury salt then this is the ONLY WAY in which it can be done. By being diligent in your office you will both save yourself and them that hear you, BUT NOT OTHERWISE.

How true this is. It is soon apparent to the hearer whether or not the preacher is prepared, and really knows what he is talking about. There is little profit, if any, listening to a man who has not been called to the office, or having been called, has lost his savour through laziness or complacency in his charge. Wherewith shall the hearers be salted? said Christ. IT IS A WASTE OF TIME.

Oh the tragedy, when ministers of the Word of God, through lack of prayer and study, dry up, and shrivel in their ministry. Because they are not persevering in the Scriptures they fail to increase in spiritual knowledge. There is no ongoing process of development. They become static and their preaching stagnates, lacking in vibrant life and power, or it may be that the vital element of doctrine is missing. If this situation prevails, then, before long faulty practice will ensue, and eventually such ministers will turn a blind eye to sin; they will cease to denounce error and from this will develop a desire to become men pleasers, yielding to the demand for smooth speaking: to concentrate on a gracious ministry, and so to be POPULAR preachers, tickling the ears of the people. Gimmicks and novelties may well be introduced to appeal to the fleshly desires of the carnally minded, bringing the world into the church in order to attract outsiders and so to make a big show in the flesh.

When one sees a church develop in this way, it is ninety nine per cent certain that the man in the pulpit has lost his savour, and thus the people are deprived of "salt." The savoury teachings of the Word of God are not being dispensed and the ministry is not spiritually effective.

The pastoral epistles of Timothy and Titus give perfect instruction to the minister and pastor, and how clear-cut and decisive are the words written therein? "Thou, O man of God, flee these things." (1 Tim.6:11). Worldly pursuits

and carnal activity, is to be avoided by the minister like the plague - FLEE FROM THEM.

"Follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses." (1 Tim.6.11-12).

Follow after righteousness. Keep to the OLD PATHS. Fight the good fight of faith. The minister's arena is not the entertainment stage, it is the battle field. His calling is that of a SOLDIER not a CLOWN.

Timothy, you have professed a good profession before many witnesses; you have started well in the ministry and everyone knows it. Now says Paul, "I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and before Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession; that thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Tim.6:13-14).

Every minister of the Word of God, like Timothy, is one day to appear before the Great Head of the Church, and such are charged before God to KEEP this commandment, for as Christ himself taught when here upon earth, it is sadly possible for a minister to LOSE his savour.

The apostle Paul ever had this same thought before him. He said: "But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection; lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway. (1 Cor. 9:27) "But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God". (Acts 20:24).

Paul knew right well how tragically possible it was to fail and become ineffective in the work assigned to him. Yes! even he had a fear of it. Above everything, he wanted to FINISH his course with joy, and that having

preached effectively for many years he would not lose his savour and be a castaway. What, a CASTAWAY? Yes!

The great apostle knew what he was saying. This was no "way out" or extravagant language, it was but a reiteration of Matthew chapter 5 verse 13 - "If the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men." Good for nothing but to be CAST OUT.

In the most graphic language Christ speaks of the unprofitableness of unfaithful ministers - GOOD TOR NOTHING. As far as the Head of the Church is concerned they are USELESS in the office, and He dismisses them. True, they may still stand in the pulpit, but in so doing they do not act for God. The same applies to them as was said of the renegade priests of the Old Testament: "For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at His mouth: for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts. But ye are departed out of the way, ye have caused many to stumble at the law; ye have corrupted the covenant of Levi, saith the Lord of hosts. Therefore have I also made you contemptible and base before all the people, according as ye have not kept my ways, but have been partial in the law." (Mal.2:7-9).

What a pertinent word for many a minister and elder in this our day and age. They SHOULD HAVE kept to God's ways and not departed from His 'sacred mandate. How many there are today who are PARTIAL in their preaching, holding back teaching which is unpalatable to present day society, and which would cause offence to liberal church members? By so doing they are CAUSING MANY TO STUMBLE. Shame upon them I Let God himself through the holy Scriptures pronounce His own verdict: They are base and contemptible; "GOOD FOR NOTHING."

W. H. Molland

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I AM RESOLVED, IN THE STRENGTH OF GRACE TO  
PREACH ALL THE TRUTHS OF SCRIPTURE, AND LEAVE  
GOD TO TAKE CARE OF THE CONSEQUENCES.

A. M. Toplady

## THE HEAD COVERING

By

L.S.B.Hyde

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"Whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God"  
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When reading Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians, it is important to observe to whom the Epistle was written - to those at Corinth "with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours"; by whom it was written - the Apostle Paul and "Sosthenes our brother." The Epistle was a reply to one already received - "now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me" (7:1) - and finally, the purpose of the reply was "to set in order things that are wanting" (Titus 1:5) - remembering, "Let all things be done decently and in order" (14:40).

Bearing these points in mind we turn to 1 Corinthians 11 in which the apostle sets in order the principles of public worship and the administration of the Lord's Supper. The former refers to the head and its covering; the latter to the bread and wine and the manner of order in the Lord's (supper. Since both are ordinances of the Lord's house, the same attention is required to the one as to the other. The purpose of this treatise is confined to the first 16 verses of the chapter.

Paul has already emphasised in the previous chapter (v.31): "Whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." The chief glory of God centres in Christ and His church, His bride, so that all our thoughts must proceed in this channel. The two lessons concern (a) headship and (b) glory, both in the church of God.

### Headship

Verse 3: "But I would have you know that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God." In Ephesians 5 23,24: "For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church: and He is the Saviour of the body" (that is, the church). Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in

everything." The Lord Jesus Himself sets the example in that He, in His humanity, acknowledges His Father to be over Him - "My Father is greater than I" because "the head of Christ is God," that is, His Father. Jesus in His deity, as the Son of God, was equal with the Father in all things.

The marriage union is the closest bond on earth and is but a reflection of that indissoluble bond between Christ and His church. In Ephesians the headship of Christ is related corporally to the whole body of the Church; in Corinthians, it is related individually to the believer.

Clearly in headship there is a divine order and precedence and therefore this should be carefully observed. "Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoureth his head" (Christ) (v.4). For a man ought not to cover his head as "he is in the image and glory of God" (v.7). On the other hand, "but every woman that prayeth and prophesieth with her head uncovered, dishonoureth her head." Praying and prophesying mean simply public worship. In the original Greek the word used for prophesying has no connection with preaching at all but rather that being filled with the Spirit enabling the worshippers to "worship the Father in spirit and in truth."

### Glory

"For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God." If image is representation, then glory is manifestation. God's authority (in His headship) must be unchallenged and His glory must not be hid. This is the twofold reason for the uncovered head of the man.

The woman is not spoken of as the image of man, but as his glory (v.7). Here it is not representation but manifestation. The glory of man must not be manifest in spiritual exercises; therefore that glory must be covered. No glory but God's is to be seen in public and congregational worship. "For this cause ought the woman to have power (a sign of submission to authority) on her head because of the angels." Many views, some of them strange, have been expressed in an endeavour to interpret this verse. The most reasoned and biblical seems to be as

follows: "Note, it is not because of the husband or other men in the company but rather 'because of the angels.' Why is this? Ephesians 3:10 gives a clue to the importance of angelic observation. God uses the church to teach them something of His manifold wisdom. How can these spirit creatures learn the biblical significance of the Lordship of Christ, the place of the church and the individual believer? Such things are a mystery to them. God shows them object lessons or symbols. When a woman comes into a gathering for spiritual exercise with her head covered, she becomes to the angels an object lesson of submission to divine headship. What a rebuke she is to the wicked angels! Their sin is that of rebelling against divine authority. What a delight to the obedient angels, as they see also the man's head uncovered portraying the unshielded glory of God and His accepted authority! However, there is an assurance in the eleventh verse that positionally 'in the Lord' there is no thought of priority because of sex" (The Head Covering: J. Boyd Nicholson). Furthermore we have the words of Scripture (1 Peter 1:10-12). "Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently which things the angels desire to look into."

Sometimes an extreme illustration brings the evil of a matter into focus. Supposing six men walked into a congregation and insisted on wearing their hats during worship. Would not this cause consternation among the worshippers? But why? Is there any difference between this action and six women insisting on not wearing a covering? The motive and reason is the same - rebellion against God's order.

#### Hair for a covering

We have heard, of course, of the argument based on verse 15, "Her hair is given her for a covering," that therefore a woman does not need to wear a hat or other covering. Let us notice carefully verses 7 and 15: "The woman is the glory of man"; "Her hair is a glory to her." God has given her in her long hair a natural covering in respect to the former; regarding the latter, her hair, being her glory, must be covered also in the house of God where only one glory is allowed - the glory of God. In verse 6 we read; "For if the woman be not covered, let her also be shorn:

but if it be a shame for a women to be shorn or shaven, let her be covered." This teaches us that if the woman does not cover her glory, then her glory must be removed; but the natural order clearly indicates the latter is not acceptable and therefore she must have her hair covered on the occasions of public worship. "No flesh shall glory in His presence" - we see many fashion parades in churches and chapels here and there but, "the woman that feareth the Lord shall be praised" for the sobriety of her head covering.

#### How long is long?

This question is a debating point with many and particularly to those who are seeking an excuse for short or cut hair. We have one example in the Scriptures which may help with the length of awoman's hair - the woman who washed the feet of Jesus on the threshold of Simon's house and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Clearly her hair was of a good length. It is true that, as women grow older, their hair tends to get thinner and maybe shorter; and there are cases of illness and sickness which would have an effect on the length of the hair. The Lord is not a hard taskmaster and the fear of the Lord which is given to all godly women should surely be a sober regulator as to what is right and wrong unless the conscience is seared or the soul unhealthy. Where there is a real exercise of faith to do what is right in the Lord's sight, it will not be long before the tender conscience will know whether there is a grieving of the Holy Spirit or not.

#### Long hair for a man

Verse 14 clearly shows that for a man to have long hair is contrary to the natural order because it would bring confusion between the sexes, long hair being the glory of the woman only. Some may say they want to be like Christ and He had long hair. How do they know that? Where is the Scripture that speaks of the physical appearance of Christ? From Isaiah 50:6 it appears that He had a beard; "I gave My cheeks to them that plucked off the hair." There is a wonderful and beautiful description of Christ in Psalm 45 but this does not refer to His physical appearance. Paintings of Christ are very far removed from the description given in Isaiah 52:14.

We are living in the perilous times of the end of the world when wickedness in its most brazen garb appears without shame and we have strong evidences that Satan is let loose and is come down in great wrath because he knoweth that his time is short. In the Book of the Revelation, chapter 9» we have the hideous description of hordes coming up out of the bottomless pit, "their faces were as the faces of men, and they had hair as the hair of women." Just as the Lord is transforming His saints into a moral and spiritual likeness to Christ, so the arch-enemy seeks to conform a multitude into a likeness which portrays a confusion of God's natural order. Confusion of the sexes has always been a sign of depravity throughout the ages, calling forth God's judgments. What shall we say of today? Whatever longer hair for men meant in earlier generations, we cannot but say in our day, speaking generally, it is the badge of rebellion, worn by those of the basest type. It is true that some men with longer hair and some women with shorter hair have not had pointed out to them or realised both the importance and the significance of their hair style; so, unwittingly, they become object lessons for the adversary to use against the standards set in the Scriptures: "So-and-so does it so it is all right for you."

### Contention

A further quotation from J. Boyd Nicholson is illuminating: "It was the custom of the Jewish men of that day (and today) to cover their heads in the synagogue. It was also the custom of the Greek women to enter the temple with their heads uncovered. But Paul says, 'We have no such custom.' The New Testament church was distinct from the heathen temple; consequently, it stood in contrast to social and religious custom of the day. Christians were to behave differently in these matters."

### Conclusions

What is the conclusion of the whole matter? As few people today see that there is any significance (or reference to Christ) in the rearing of the tabernacle and the offering of the sacrifices in Old Testament times, so also many do not see the importance of our present subject in that it has a special reference to order and the glory of Christ in public worship. The following points seem to be clear



1. That a woman should have long hair because it is her glory given to her by God. To allow exceptions should be the result of rigorous investigation with particular attention to the spirit in which the request is made or the action taken.
  2. That since, in public worship, only the Lord's glory should be seen, this glory of the woman must be covered.
  3. That the man should have his head uncovered in worship and his hair should not be long.
  4. All the foregoing draws attention to Christ's authority in the church, not only as this is expressed in writing in the Holy Bible but as it is conveyed and confirmed by symbols in the worshippers.
  5. As the bread and wine of the Lord's supper, mentioned later in this chapter, set forth, not only the flesh and blood of Christ, but also the means of union to the subsistence of His body, the church - "He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood dwelleth in Me and I in him" (John 6:56) - so the woman's long hair and its covering has its importance, acknowledging Christ's headship and authority and establishing the point "that no flesh should glory in His presence."
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In social matters the tendency is to decide what is normal by an appeal to the public by polls, questionnaires, statistics - just a matter of averages. The same thing is coming to be true in spiritual matters. Issue a questionnaire, take a secret ballot to find out what the majority thinks or wants, or believes. Thus Scriptural standards tend to be lowered to a mere "observation" or "reading" of present conditions, whether in the world or in the church. Biblical principle passes out of the picture; it comes to be treated as if it were mere convention or human custom, having only the authority of usage. Meantime what is in reality custom, comes to have virtually the force and influence of Biblical principle.

J. G. Vos, Th.M., D.D.

## WORLDLINESS IN THE CHURCH

If asked to point out the specific and prevailing sin of the church in the present day, I cannot hesitate to reply, a prevailing worldliness of mind, heart, and conduct. She is fearfully secularised in the spirit and temper of her members. The love of the world is become the master-passion, before which other and holier affections have grown dim and weak. It is not only in the way of doing business that this secular spirit is seen, but in the general habits and tastes of professing Christians. Their style of living, their entertainments, their associations, their amusements, their conversation, evince a conformity to the world, a minding of earthly things, a disposition to adapt themselves to the world around, and an apparent desire to seek their happiness from objects of sense, rather than from those of faith, which prove the extent to which a secular spirit is bearing down the spirit of piety.

It appears quite clear that great numbers of Christian professors are but very imperfectly acquainted with the requirements of "pure and undefiled religion", and need to be led to restudy it in the pages of Holy Scripture. We have lost sight of the divine Original, and have confined our attention to the imperfect transcript which we find on every hand. We have by tacit consent reduced the standard, and fixed our eye and our aim upon a meaner object. We are a law to each other, instead of making the Word of God the law to us all. We tolerate a worldly minded, diluted and weakened piety in others, because we expect similar toleration for ourselves. We make excuses for them because we expect the like excuses for our own conduct in return. Instead of "seeking to cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, and perfecting holiness in the fear of God", we have abused, shamefully abused, the fact that there is no perfection on earth, and converted it into a licence for any measure and any number of imperfections. Our highest notion of religion requires only abstinence from immorality and the more polluting worldly amusements; an attendance upon an evangelical ministry; and an approval of orthodox doctrine; this, with the act of joining a Christian church, participation in the Lord's Supper, and a little occasional emotion under a sermon and a hasty prayer, night and morning} this, then,

is the religion of multitudes. There may be no habitual spirituality or heavenly mindedness; no life of faith and communion with God; no struggling against sin, Satan, and the world; no anxiety to grow in grace; no supreme regard to eternity; no studied and advancing meetness for the eternal world; no tenderness of conscience; no laborious discipline of our temper; no cultivation of love; no making religion our chief business and highest pleasure; no separation in spirit from the world, in short, no impress upon the whole mind, and heart, and conscience and life of the character of the Christian, as delineated upon the pages of Scripture. We all need to be taken out of the religious world, as it is called, and collected again round the Bible to study what it is to be a Christian as well as to be called one. Let us do this very thing. Let us endeavour to forget what the bulk of religious professors are, and begin afresh to learn what they ought to be.

John Angell James

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The requirement that the world be kept out of the church is obviously Biblical and necessary ... Only by insistently maintaining Biblical standards, can the world be kept out of the church. Needless to say, this must be done in the sight of God and utterly without respect of persons ... Only those are to be admitted who really make a credible profession of faith accompanied by a corresponding life ... The same standard of faith and life must also be insisted on in the case of those who are already members of the church. It should not be easier to remain a member than it is to become a member.

J. G. Vos, Th.M., D.D.

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I LOOKED FOR THE CHURCH AND POUND IT IN THE WORLD

I LOOKED FOR THE WORLD AND FOUND IT IN THE CHURCH

Andrew Bonar.

## EDITORIAL

As the subject of the "Work of the Ministry" is more fully developed it is increasingly evident that the "salt" has lost its "savour." Today, there are very few churches and chapels where a true Biblical order of worship is adhered to. Women attend with heads uncovered, music and special singing are given prominence, and other innovations of man have been introduced and are considered essential in the service of worship. As for the way of life of church members, separation from the world appears to be unknown to many. In consequence children get caught up in divers snares. Frivolous behaviour also tends to loose-living and this has led to such as marital breakdown and divorce, with its attendant evils. To a large extent this can be attributed to NO "SALT" IN THE PULPIT.

This note has often been sounded in The Link, for it is very necessary in the day in which we live. "These things I will that thou affirm constantly." (Titus 3:8). It has been stated by Dr. Gill: "sound doctrine," "healthful and salutary words," using no "ambiguous expressions," rather "great plainness," all that "Christ has commanded," and "every ordinance of His," all must be "ministered with certainty," never afraid of "being reckoned dogmatic," How many ministers are there who are being faithful in preaching "all the counsel of God" and maintaining "every ordinance of His?"

No apology is made for again focusing attention on the matter which concerns the demonstration of the Headship of Christ in all church assemblings, whether in a building or in the open air. In all such gatherings of the local church every man is to uncover his head, and every woman is to have her head covered. That this is a matter of no importance to some, is a sore evil, and many so-called Reformed churches are no better than nominal Christendom in their approach to it.

There are those who hold the view that such as head covering is irrelevant and say that it is the attitude of heart God looks at. This is precisely so, for the Lord said: "If any man love me, he will keep my words." (John 14:23), and it is largely due to the failure on the part

of church leaders that congregations have not been properly taught on this important matter of doctrine and practice, hence Divine ruling is disregarded.

The question of Headship is NOT an issue of no importance, it is an ordinance which pertains to a FUNDAMENTAL BIBLICAL DOCTRINE. It is the Headship of Christ and the glory of God, that is at stake.

It is heartening to note that others are being exercised on subjects such as Headship, Divorce, and Separation, and for articles which have been written, one from the pen of Mr. L. S. B. Hyde. this we have included in this issue of The Link, and will be followed by others.

In view of the prevailing evils which are besetting the Church, there is an urgent need for ministers and elders to re-assess their position lest they lose their "savour" in consequence of which they become "good for nothing," and useless in the cause of Truth.

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## A SERIOUS WARNING

Christian churches and Christian parents need to be very much on their guard at the present time because of a militant campaign to alter the whole approach of sex education in State Schools in Great Britain. It is the intention of influential political pressure-groups to make it mandatory that homosexual (so-called gay and lesbian) relationships to be presented as perfectly acceptable and valid alternatives to heterosexual relationships. It is also the intention to remove teaching which insists that exclusively heterosexual relationships be in the context of true marriage and family life. In the writer's home county of East Sussex this attempt has already been made by the efforts of Labour, Liberal, and non-elected members of the County Education Committee.

The most vile and depraved conduct is about to be presented to our children as a perfectly acceptable way of life. Reference to the following Scriptures may serve to encourage all believers to fight this hellish attempt to pervert the next generation and change the nation's concept of sexual normality. Genesis 1:27; 2:24; 19:1-28. Leviticus 18:22; 20:13. 1 Kings 14:24; 22:46. Romans 1:23-32. 1 Cor.6:9. 1 Tim. 1:9-10.

As the incurable scourge of AIDS disease has spread from those who are guilty of heterosexual and especially homosexual promiscuity, it is clear that the human race is facing a most awesome expression of Divine judgement. It is almost beyond belief that such sexual sin is to be either condoned or even encouraged amongst our children.

I believe that no Christian, in future, should ever vote in local or national elections until they have clearly determined the views of the candidates on this and other related moral issues. All parents should make it clear to their M.P.'s, their local Council members, headmasters, and school governors that they are totally opposed to such teaching and also insist that any sex education in our schools should be set in the context of affectionate relationships between a husband and his wife exclusively.

P. M. Rowell  
(Crowborough, E. Sussex)