

# EXCERPTS FROM

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# THE LINK

North Road Chapel (Evangelical)

BIDEFORD

## Internet Edition

AFTER THIS MANNER ... PRAY YE

(A Study of the Lord's Prayer)

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Part 2

This second article continues to deal with the first section of the Preface to the prayer - "OUR FATHER."

There is a high dignity in being able to address God as our Father. By virtue of natural birth an earthly prince has a king for his father, but by virtue of spiritual birth we have the KING OF KINGS - THE KING ETERNAL as our Father.

"Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee." (Isa 43:4). God views His children in Christ, and as such, He esteems them PRECIOUS, HONOURABLE. They are JEWELS (Mal.3:17). Not so the worldling; they are as DROSS (Ps.119:119) - CHAFF (Ps.1:4). The eternal God has the names of His children written in the Book of Life (Phil.4:3).

In previous generations it was customary for households to have a FAMILY BIBLE. Such would be a very large volume, and from it the head of the house would read: perhaps every day, but certainly on the Sabbath. In the front pages of the family Bible there would be a REGISTER for births, and the father would record the birth of each child in those pages. Other important family information would also be recorded. This was a very lovely tradition and families are much the poorer for abandoning it.

However, the point to be made is that our Father in heaven has a FAMILY REGISTER, and through Sovereign grace our names are written therein. All born of God's Holy Spirit are of "The household of God." (Eph.2:19). We are REGISTERED in God's family. "God is not ashamed to be called their God." (Heb.11:16). "I will write upon him the name of my God." (Rev.3:12). Just as an earthly son bears the name of his father, so it is in the spiritual. As His children, we are openly acknowledged before angels, principalities and powers: REGISTERED in the family of God. May the wonder of this grip the reader.

But more, the old family Bible had its pages for the registering of deaths, and there would be found the word DECEASED, with the ages of respective members who had departed this life. Such pages as this are not required in God's family register. It is stated: "I will not blot out his name out of the Book of Life." (Rev.3:5). "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life." (John 6:47). "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish." (John 10:28). "Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." (John 11:26). God's family register is THE BOOK OF LIFE: there are no pages for deaths in this volume, for there will never be a death to record in the "Household of God." All His children possess EVERLASTING LIFE.

Whilst it is true that our allotted span on earth will run its course, it is not the end. Life for the child of God will go on in a way much more full and glorious. Our Heavenly Father is IMMORTAL, and at the great resurrection of the last day OUR mortal is to put on IMMORTALITY (cf. 1 Cor. 15:53). These mortal bodies are destined for ultimate change: they are to be fashioned like unto the glorious body of Christ the Mediator - GLORIFIED HUMANITY: True humanity which has "put on" IMMORTALITY. He "shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body." (Phil.3:21). This is just a little of what it means to be a member of the household of God. "CHILDREN OF GOD OH GLORIOUS CALLING," wrote the poet.

What does our heavenly Father say concerning us? "To the saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent, in whom is all my delight." (Ps.16:3). How can such words be spoken of us? Only through grace. Nevertheless, through grace they are true. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we ARE the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ." (Rom.8:16-17). "Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ." (Gal.4:7).

When we come before our God, and pray, "after this manner," saying, "OUR FATHER" all these things should be before us. The expanse, the magnitude of truth contained in these two words.' As children we are HEIRS. The Puritans used to say; "Of the blood royal of heaven." This

of course is true; we are (as His children through grace) of ROYAL BLOOD. "He hath made us kings." (Rev.1:6). Every child of God is a king. This is not fanciful language or meaningless jargon. Whilst we have no status in earthly regimes, nevertheless, we are kings, for we carry a kingdom within us. "The kingdom of God is within you." Luke 17:21). Each believer is a king within that kingdom and has the insignia of ROYALTY - the GROWN of life. True, the worldling cannot see this, for it is spiritual: indeed we may be insignificant by the world's standards, even the subject of criticism and reproach. This does not alter the fact that the children of God are KINGS. Billy Bray, the Cornish miner, always called himself "THE KING'S SON," and such, through grace we all are, and we should never lose sight of this: Members of "a kingdom which can never be moved."

As children of God, and heirs, we are to be glorified together. We earnestly expect and wait for the manifestation of the sons of God. (cf. Rom.8:16-19). "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is." (1 John 3:2). Our high dignity is veiled as yet: "It doth not yet appear," writes John. "With earnest expectation we wait for the manifestation," says Paul.

When we engage in prayer, it behoves us to do so with holy reverence and godly fear, but when, through the merits of Christ, we address the Almighty as "OUR FATHER" let us never think that in Christ we are NONENTITIES, for indeed we are not. Such a thought is dishonouring to God and to Christ who has made us KINGS and PRIESTS unto Himself.

Some Christians seem to grovel before God, appearing before Him as "worms of earth," but has not grace elevated us above this? "NOW are we the sons of God."

In 1 Peter 1:2-5 the apostle goes into much detail concerning our salvation. He tells us that we are "elect of God the Father." He tells us of "the sanctification of the Spirit." He tells us of "the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." In consequence of the harmonious working of the Trinity upon us, we are, according to God's

abundant mercy begotten unto a lively hope. It is by virtue of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

Death is that which had dominion over us in our natural state. Spiritual death REIGNED. In a substitutionary capacity Christ went into death on our account, but death could not CONTAIN HIM. "Death could not keep its prey, He tore the bars away, and up from the grave He arose." Just as He took our sins INTO the grave by death, so He brings life to us by His resurrection from OUT OF the grave; for every soul elect of God was raised with Christ on that first Easter mom. When He rose from the dead He brought LIFE and IMMORTALITY to all His people. The sons of Adam, once dead in trespasses and sins, am now begotten unto a LIVING hope. Death no longer REIGNS over us. "Because I live, ye shall live also." (John 14:19). "Thanks be unto God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Cor.15:57).

"The victory is ours,  
For us in might came forth the Mighty One,  
For us He fought the fight, the triumph won -  
The victory is ours."

(Horatius Bonar).

In consequence of this there is RESERVED in heaven for every child of God, an INHERITANCE! Being in the family register as children, we are heirs, and heirs inherit, and that which we inherit is INCORRUPTIBLE: it is UNDEFILFD: and it will never FADE AWAY.

How many children of earthly fathers have inherited great wealth, but after a few years they have let it slip through their fingers. Large fortunes have just FADED AWAY. Not so the heavenly, this is an ETERNAL inheritance and it will NEVER fade away: it is continuous: it is ongoing. None are ever disinherited.

There are those who teach that it is possible for a child of God to fall from grace and LOSE their inheritance. Such do not believe in the decree of God in election: they make salvation to be of the choice and will of man. Those who hold these views may well have doubts concerning the certainty of the inheritance.

The Holy Scriptures teach that God is immutable, and having chosen and given to Christ a vast number of Adam's race, NOT ONE of those predestined will ever be lost. "Moreover whom He did predestinate, them He also called: and whom He called, them He also justified: and whom He justified, them He also glorified." (Rom.8:30). ALL the predestined are called, ALL the called are justified, ALL the justified will be glorified. This is the decree of Almighty God concerning His children. This is a clause in the Everlasting Covenant: it is a sealed Deed: it is a royal charter bearing the seal of the KING ETERNAL.

It is a sad fact, but nevertheless true, that many Christians look upon the decrees and promises of God as being little more than lottery tickets, which MAY bring fortune. What perversion! The promises of God are IRREVERSIBLE DECREES. "I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me." (Jer.32:40).

God's children will be "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." (1 Pet.1:5). Christian reader, we ARE the children of God and because of this, "God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." (Gal.4:6). We are to pray AFTER THIS MANNER, saying, OUR FATHER, and as we utter such a phrase so may the profundity which lies behind these two words be borne in upon our souls - THE HALLOWED INTIMATE FAMILY RELATIONSHIP.

Before going deeper into this study it may be as well to recall the setting of this prayer, which is the Sermon on the Mount. The dominant note throughout this great discourse of our Lord is HEART PURITY. This is seen first in the Beatitudes; then in the clear interpretation of the Law, pointing out its spirituality and warning against crass literalism and a mere outward conformity. Hypocrisy also was ruthlessly condemned as Christ set forth the fruits of righteousness, making it abundantly plain toward the end of the sermon that it is by their fruits that the TRUE children of God will be recognised, (cf. Matt.7:20). Then, right in the middle is this prayer commencing with the words, "OUR FATHER."

Having in mind the setting, and the overall theme which is "Heart Purity," and "Genuineness," this prayer also must be kept within the SAME FRAMEWORK.

There are many places of worship, and various types of services, where it is known, and quite obvious, that unregenerate and perhaps ungodly people are present, yet, the minister will call upon all assembled to recite those words of Matthew chapter 6 verses 9-13 commonly known as The Lord's Prayer. This is not right. No one can give the evidence from Scripture that when the Lord spoke these words that it was with the view that they should be taken upon the lips of all classes and conditions of men, and used as a STANDARD PRAYER in all kinds of religious assemblings. The very opening words denote the intimate relationship of child and Father, not by virtue of creation but a spiritual relationship by virtue of NEW BIRTH and HEART PURITY.

Christ is saying that to pray "AFTER THIS MANNER" there must be a total absence of HYPOCRISY or PRETENCE. Therefore, none but those genuinely regenerated by the Holy Spirit of God can truly utter these words.

Did not Christ make this abundantly clear when speaking on other occasions? The Jews boasted that God was their Father: "We have one Father, even God." (John 8:41). No! says Christ, you are deceived: "Ye are of your father the Devil." (John 8:44). No minister should call upon the unregenerate to address God as their Father. This is FALSEHOOD, the very thing which our Lord's sermon was designed to expose and overthrow.

As aforesaid, the Great Preacher made it clear that the genuine child of God will be known by his fruits. In a true and loyal child and father relationship, a son will be jealous of his father's honour. Thus it will be with the children of God who are true and void of all pretence; there will be a filial fear, a care and a guardedness lest they offend against their heavenly Father. Any dishonour to our God will be taken to heart. The company of the unregenerate will be shunned, not courted. When we see His day profaned by business or pleasure, His worship adulterated, His truth diluted or mingled with error, we shall be gravely concerned; for the name of our heavenly

Father is involved. "I beheld the transgressors, and was grieved; because they kept not thy word. (Ps.119:158).

This should be the IMMEDIATE reaction of the child of God. To claim God as our Father and yet have little concern for His honour is hypocrisy - that which this very sermon of Christ is condemning. "A son HONOURETH his father" (Mai.1:6). This is one of the chief marks of grace.

At regeneration, spiritual life is imparted - it is the resurrection life of Christ: we become heirs together WITH HIM. His life is in us, therefore, that image renewed in us is bound to be seen. There is a remarkable word in the book of Judges, chap. 8 verse 18: "Each one resembled the children of a king." In us there should be that resemblance to Christ in-as-much as we have become "partakers of the Divine nature." (2 Peter 1:4). Just as there are distinguishing features within natural relationships, so are there in the spiritual. If there be no marks of sonship, then, let not that person address the God of heaven as "OUR FATHER," for in taking just these two words upon our lips, tremendous responsibility is involved.

However, where there IS true relationship and heart purity, we can, yea, we must come often to our God in this way, for He desires such intimate communion. "Let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance comely." (S.of S.2:14).

A man who loves not his wife and children is said to be, "without natural affection." If then it is natural for an earthly father to love his children, how much more our heavenly Father? Would it not be blasphemous to suggest defect in HIS love? "I have loved thee with an everlasting love. (Jer.31:3). He is to us the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort, (cf.2 Cor.1:3). His love to His own passeth knowledge, (cf. Eph.3:19). God loves His children as He loved Christ the Mediator. (cf. John 17:23). He careth for them, (cf. 1 Peter 5:7). When the saints suffer, the heart of God is touched just as is an earthly father over a suffering child: "He that toucheth you toucheth the apple of His eye." (Zech.2:8). "My groaning is not hid from thee." (Ps.38:9). If we are in such distress that our hearts are bleeding and the tears



flow as we pray, our heavenly Father knows. "I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears." (Isa.38:5). let us never forget the TENDERNESS of our Father.

Earthly parents closely observe their children. When they are small every little step, gurgle, and word, is so meaningful and precious; all is noted. When they grow older, words, actions and attitudes are all so important to parents; every little kindness shewn by them counts so much. Thus it is with our Father in heaven, He is so observant, the smallest thing in our lives which is to His glory He registers; in thought, word and deed. He does not miss a thing, and says He, "Thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly." (Matt.6:4).

There are many who would like to do so much for their parents but have not the means, or are restricted for other reasons, yet their parents know of the warmth and love in their hearts; that, to them, is most precious. So it is with the spirituals "For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not." (2 Cor.8:2).

A young boy has just started boarding at Prep. school; he writes home to his parents; the grammar is not too good; there are numerous spelling mistakes, and there is a blot here and there. Nevertheless, there was a DESIRE TO COMMUNICATE - to get into touch with father and mother. In biblical language, "A WILLING MIND." What are the parents concerned about, the spelling, the odd blot? Indeed not, the letter is received with great joy and accepted according to what the little fellow HATH, and not according to what he HATH NOT. Thus it is with our heavenly Father; "He is but a babe, or a child," saith the Almighty; "he does not understand the deeper things as yet, but he loves to communicate." Let him be diligent in the school of God, and he will learn. Line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little there a little (cf. Isa.28:13).

Let none ever despair if they feel that their praying falls so short of the Divine pattern, for God ever looks upon us through Christ with a merciful eye, and if there be that "WILLING MIND" He will never turn away His ear; He

will always listen, not only with interest, but with a heart brimming over with love toward us.

Someone may dispute this by saying that they have a certain difficulty, or trial in life which they have prayed about for a long time, but it has not been removed. Let such an one be reminded again of the opening words of the PREFACE which leads into the prayer - OUR FATHER. Is it not one of the roles of a father to train and to correct?

What kind of father is it who does not so act? "I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished." (jer.30;11). All God's children will know this, but it will be "IN MEASURE." Paul states that God will not lay upon us more than we are able to bear (cf. 1 Cor.10:13). "He knoweth our frame; He remembereth that we are dust." (Ps.103:1.0 . There is a Divinely prescribed degree. The correction and discipline meted out by "OUR FATHER" is carefully calculated and the limits defined in wisdom and infinite love. In our affliction we are assured "there shall no evil befall thee." (Ps.91:10). "Nothing shall by any means hurt you." (Luke 10:19)- What hurt does the furnace do to gold? None whatsoever; it only purifies it.

There is yet more. If God be our Father and we His children, then, every promise in the Bible belongs to us, for God's children are the "HEIRS of promise." Heb.6:17). Through faith we inherit the promises, (cf. Heb.6:12).

The unregenerate man can claim nothing from the Word of God other than its curses, which is a terrible thought; whereas the person born of the Holy Spirit into the family of God comes into the good of all the promises and blessings, which are yea and amen in Christ Jesus (cf. 2 Cor.1:20). This means they are infallible, immutable, exempt from all failure, and cannot be withdrawn. Christian reader you are the heir to them ALL.

The concluding point. The children of God are often criticised and misrepresented. Elijah was called "the troubler of Israel." (1 Kings 18;17). The apostle Paul was reported as being "a pestilent fellow." (Acts 24:5). Wycliffe was dubbed, "a trumpet of rebellion." Martin

Luther was said to be, "the idol of heretics." Satan loves to pour scorn upon God's children and seek to disgrace them; but in due time OUR HEAVENLY FATHER will, if their heart be PURE, clear their name. "He shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday." (Ps.37:6).

Let no Christian be concerned at ostracism or reproach for the cause of Christ, for OUR FATHER shall bring forth our righteousness as the light. He will, in His time, bring us out into the open and prove that our judgment, our assessment, our interpretation, our manner of life and practice, was right after all. It may be done in this life, but, if not, it certainly will be in the life to come. Every stand for truth, every word spoken for the honour of Christ, every prayer uttered, every work of love, every act of Christian service, every tear shed for sin will be openly declared before men and angels. In that coming day OUR FATHER will see to it that every one of His children is vindicated. "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their FATHER." (Matt.13:^3). Through the merits of Christ the Mediator, there will not be a blemish upon us, and it is His good pleasure to give us the kingdom, (cf. Luke 12:32). "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve Him acceptably with reverence and godly fear." (Heb.12:28).

So when we come to God in prayer, let it be AFTER THIS MANNER, remembering ALL that is involved in the two words which lead us into prayer, and as we commence "OUR FATHER" may something of the magnitude of this come upon us. If only a little of that which has been drawn from the Scriptures, and written in this article, be borne in upon our souls, then surely our hearts will over-flow in worship, even as we commence, and for this our God is seeking, (cf. John 4:23).

W.H.Molland

(To be continued)

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FATHER! SOURCE OF ALL COMPASSION!  
PURE UNBOUNDED GRACE IS THINE;  
HAIL THE GOD OF OUR SALVATION!  
PRAISE HIM FDR HIS LOVE DIVINE.

(John Fawcett)

## THE GENERATION FOLLOWING

All of us would rightly acknowledge that all of the future lies in God's hands. He knows the end from the beginning, and will surely bring to pass and accomplish all His perfect will, regardless of the actions or activities of men. This is something the Word of God is most decided about. At the same time, however, it is equally clear that each and every one of us is responsible, not only with regards to the particular age in which we find ourselves, but also with regards to that future, and how our present behaviour may have a bearing on that future for others. In the light of that, there is a very vital question which each generation of Christians needs to ask, (with an eye to those who may follow us in the future), and the question is this.- are my views and practices today in danger of eroding some of the essential elements of the Christian faith for those who are to follow on from these days? In other words, as I endeavour to hand on something of the "faith once delivered to the saints", will there be a substantial enough degree of CONTENT in what I hand on to credit it as being that "faith" indeed? This is a vital question, for we are not only responsible in our own day and generation, but in relation to the next, as it may rise up in God's will and purpose.

There are three main areas especially that we should place under scrutiny in the light of such a consideration, viz - What concept of the WORSHIP OF GOD, the WALK OF GODLINESS, and the WORK OF THE GOSPEL are we liable to leave as an heritage to the next generation of God's people? Will they be such things as we have endeavoured to establish from God's Word, regardless of cost, and with the example of many who have gone before us? OR will they be such things as we have adopted in an attempt to accommodate the things of God to the spirit of the world, and the gratification of the fleshly part, rather than the edification of the spiritual? In the three areas mentioned, then, - the WORSHIP OF GOD, the WALK OF GODLINESS, the WORK OF THE GOSPEL, we are duty bound to ask ourselves if our behaviour falls into the latter category. If so, then it really is high time to realise that if this is what is going to be handed on to an oncoming generation, then that which will come to be proclaimed as Christianity will be nothing but an empty box with the name Christianity written on it. We must never

forget the general principle that a thing running downhill gathers momentum. And the degree to which one generation erodes "the faith" is multiplied a dozen times over in the next which inherits the erosion. It is a shameful thing, even in worldly terms, when one generation of a country lives only with sin eye to present gratification without diligent investment for what is to follow; it can be no less so for the churches of Christ.

Of all the three areas mentioned it is, perhaps, true to say that in none of them is the eroding process more evident than in the first - the WORSHIP OF GOD OUR SAVIOUR. It is correct to say also that this is the most far-reaching of all such influences, because out of a right worship of God, comes a right walk of godliness, and a right endeavour in the work of the gospel. We can now see that what began as a trickle of eroding influence in the worship of God with some in a former generation or so of Christians, has now reached enormous proportions among many today. In a good many places the worship of God is virtually indistinguishable in essence from a theatre, a disco, a rock concert, or a circus? or a combination of all four. It is impossible to justify any of this apart from standing the scriptures on their head. If ever one emphasis stands out clearly in God's word, it is that the worship of God's church is DIFFERENT from everything else. It never reflects, nor imitates the world. Greek theatre and Roman entertainment were at their heights in the days of the early church; they NEVER incorporated such things into the worship of God in the churches of Christ. They "continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine, and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." That speaks volumes.

There is little doubt that the erosion of worship has come about through two main channels; an attempt to attract the unconverted into the church, and an attempt to accommodate the children and young people of believers while they remain in the church. Both attempts have moved the focus from God to man, and that in itself has spelled the death-knell to any true interpretation of worship. We trust we have a desire to see souls saved; and what a desire we all must have for the salvation of our very own children. But as David said of Solomon his young son, in connection with the building of the "old" house - "the palace is not for man, but for the Lord God." Indeed, when Solomon "came of

age," and had received the wisdom and grace of God in his life, then he did put forth his hand in that marvellous building work of the Temple. While he was "still a child," however, he "thought as a child," and his father lovingly considered him as such. It is quite an amazing thing among Christians that many will allow the opinions and estimations of their children to dictate the course of their Christian lives in expressing their worship and service to God. I know of no children who would be called into their father's business premises to act as advisors on how the business should be run! Of course not, you say; they are too immature for such a high calling. Indeed.' Why then should their immaturity play such an important part in the direction of a church's worship and praise of God. And that is not all, of course; children, for as long as they are out of Christ, are not only immature in stature, but are also sinful by nature, Ps.51:5« It is not simply "boredom" that underlies children's behaviour in the spiritual worship of God by His people, it is the inbuilt animosity and hostility of the fallen heart. Children differ, of course, in the way that is expressed, but to fail to take it into consideration is to capitulate to unsanctified wishes and swing the door open to the erosion of unmixed worship to our God.

What holds good with children and young people, of course, also applies with the unconverted in general. Without entering into the question of what the true sphere of the church's evangelism is anyway, most of us realise that it is difficult to "get people into the church" where the only attraction is God! Hence, the multiplicity of Christian-ized versions of what the world DOES find attractive. The determining factor in this process should be, not whether or not the attraction works, but whether or not such things are among those things which the Lord requires of us. This is no plea for dull, uninspired, unmeaningful worship, in the praise and preaching and fellowship of God's church; indeed no: "Religion never was designed to make our pleasures less." What we need to aim at, however, is the satisfaction and fulfilment of our spiritual beings. It should be pondered - if a church service is greatly geared to attract the unconverted heart, What good (or harm) is it doing the converted one! Will an oncoming generation rise up and call us blessed, or not?

W.J.Seaton (Reformed Baptist Church, Inverness)

## THE GOVERNMENT'S RELATIONSHIP AND RESPONSIBILITY TO GOD

Almost 100 years ago Benjamin Wills Newton, wrote the following. One would think it was written today so clear is its focus upon present day events:

"It cannot be indifferent to God, whether or not governments encourage principles which subvert such truths as men by natural conscience are able to recognise. There are some truths, which can be recognised by the converted only; but there are other truths, which men, as men, can and do acknowledge. They belong to a sphere in which man, as man, is placed; and although the acknowledgment of such truths does not bring into a spiritual relation to God, yet the rejection of them involves in the guilt, either of infidelity, or idolatry. The consequences of the rejection of the Gospel of salvation, may be seen, perhaps, only in another world; but the rejection of truths, which even natural conscience recognises, and which it is one of the great offices of government to maintain, meets with visitation even here; if not in the way of outward chastisement, yet surely in a judicial hardening of the heart.

A government is not asked to act as if it belonged to the Church of God, when we seek of it, that it should not cherish, or give effect to principles that destroy the natural relations in which man stands to God - relations that man is able to recognise in the Word of God, and sometimes in the works of creation.

### The Godhead of God

The eternal power and Godhead of God, are borne witness to, both by the scriptures and by the works of creation. It is a fact which man's conscience is capable of recognising. Consequently, the denial of His existence, or the acknowledgment of other gods, or idolatry, i.e. the ascription to creatures of attributes that belong only to the Creator, is a breach of

a natural relation in which man stands to God. The shutting up the Book which God has written, and the refusal to allow Him thereby to speak immediately to His creatures, is an interference with His prerogatives as God, as well the breach of a natural duty.

Again, to deny that the Lord Jesus is God, and that He is now administering the government of the Universe, is to deny an actually subsisting fact. Men may, to use the language of Scripture, count themselves unworthy of everlasting life, and spurn the salvation of their souls through faith in the great Sacrifice. They may reject Him as their Saviour, and refuse to submit to the principles on which He guides His Church. But they need not, on that account, plunge deeper into sin, and unite with the Jew or the Infidel, in denying His present existence and government at the right hand of power.

The Lord Jesus has been made "both Lord and Christ," and in that character, is administering the government of the Universe on the Throne of His Father. To deny this, now that it has been revealed as a subsisting fact, has the same character of sin as a denial of the government of God.

### Government Responsibility

Whenever, therefore, a government fosters any system, or forwards the influence of any individual that assails such truths as these, it forsakes the duty which it naturally owes to God. It is not a Church question, or a spiritual question - it is a question of natural duty.

It is a question, whether, after that God has plainly declared certain things to be facts, men shall be encouraged to say, that they are not facts. Heathenism - Romanism - Judaism - Infidelity - are all systems which assail, not only the truths belonging to God's Church, but those also which concern His government of man,



as man. Heathenism denies the eternal power and Godhead of the One God, and fixes men in idolatry. Romanism hides the Book of God, says that the traditions of men are "equal" in authority with the Scriptures of God, and, in bearing on the idolatrous Gentile world, whilst making war on heathen idols, leads back by pretended Christianity to idolatry again. Judaism denies the existence (save as of a malefactor who has perished in his sins) of Him, who is now controlling the Universe and upholding all things 'by the word of His power.'

### Britain's Apostacy

There was a time, when this country governmentally maintained a testimony against idolatry, and refused to cherish institutions, or to pay the ministers of a system that practised idolatry and kept the Scriptures of God from His creatures. This testimony was given at a time when the fiction was maintained of the government being so one with the Church, that no one could hold a legislative or magisterial appointment who did not receive the symbol of Church communion. And yet, notwithstanding this fiction, we know that the testimony of England against idolatry, and her national acknowledgment of the Word of God, were so far owned of God, that the desolating wars, which for nearly half a century swept over Europe, were averted from these shores. The history of Protestant England supplies many an evidence of the providential interferences of God on her behalf. But she abandoned God more and more every day. His word is honoured no longer as the one repository of Truth. Lies are welcomed; and idolaters and blasphemers honoured. ENGLAND WILL BE NUMBERED AMONG THOSE NATIONS THAT SHALL DRINK, AND BE DRUNKEN, AND SPEW, AND FALL, AND RISE NO MORE' (Jer.25.27)."

ALCOHOL AND THE CHRISTIAN  
(Appendix)

Quite a number of people from different parts have made contact to express their appreciation of the article bearing the above title published in the last edition of this magazine. However, the writer is well aware that there would have been others who would not agree, and he is also not ignorant of their arguments in favour of intoxicating liquor. But it must be stated that the support for the use of strong drink which some Christians allege are to be found in the Scriptures, is unfounded.

In the original languages of the Old and New Testaments there are at least eleven different words used for various- kinds of drink, ranging from the pure juice of the grape - ENAB (Gen.40:11), to strong drink of the most intoxicating nature - YAYIN (Gen.9:21).

The word WINE is mentioned 229 times in the Bible, and it is used in a very general way as an OVERALL TERM for a beverage, intoxicating or otherwise. Let a few examples be cited: (1) From the Old Testament:-

GENESIS CHAPTER 27

The patriarch Isaac is before us. Verse 25 portrays him drinking wine - TIYROSH. Included in the blessing of his son is, "plenty of wine" - TIYROSH (Verse 28). The definition of this Hebrew Word is "SWEET" or "FRESH FRUIT JUICE."

PROVERBS 23 Verse 30

"They that go to seek mixed wine" - MAMCAK, defined as a blending of water, fruit juice and spices.

PROVERBS 23 Verse 31

"Look not thou upon the wine when it is red" - YAYIN. Fermented: intoxicating.

DANIEL 5 Verse 1

"Belshazzar the king made a great feast to a thousand of his lords and drank wine" - CEMER. Fermented red wine.

(2) The New Testament. Here, in most instances, WINE is an overall term derived from the word OINOS. There are a few exceptions such as:-

LUKE 1 Verse 15

"... and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink."  
SIKERA. Intensely fermented.

ACTS 2 Verse 13

"These men are full of new wine." GLEUKOS. Highly inebriating.

From these few examples -there are many more - it will be seen that the word "wine" in the Bible is certainly not to be taken in an absolute sense as meaning alcoholic drink, for this is NOT SO.

Having established this point we refer to the tippling Christian's classic proof scripture - the MARRIAGE at Cana of Galilee. On this occasion wine had been liberally consumed until supplies ran out. At this point Christ works His first miracle, and it was the turning into wine - OINOS (the general term) - of six waterpots filled to the brim with water. These were not the earthenware containers used to draw water by the water carriers, rather were they the large vessels kept by the door, together with a sizeable basin, and they held large quantities of water for the washing of feet. Each of these water pots held two to three firkins, (cf. John 2.6). A firkin was approximately nine gallons.

Assuming the average capacity of these vessels to be two and a half firkins, then the content of each one was twenty-two and a half gallons; and there were six of them. one hundred and thirty five gallons of wine. A supply then liberally served to the guests.

To suggest that the Holy Son of God brought into being a supply of intoxicating liquor of such proportions, to be freely available to all who were at that wedding, AFTER existing supplies had been exhausted, is beyond the bounds of sanctified common sense, for it would have turned the celebrations, which form part of the Divine institution of marriage, into a drunken orgy. To bring this incident forward in support of intoxicating liquor is to besmirch the name of the Mediator. It is impossible to think of Him deliberately creating anything which would harm, or would

in any way encourage drunkenness. Does not verse 11 of John chapter 2 state that this first miracle of Jesus was performed in order to "MANIFEST HIS GLORY." Let it be asked: What glory would have accrued to Christ in producing well over one hundred gallons of alcohol for men and women to partake of at will? The thought borders on blasphemy. That intoxicating liquor finds a place at Christian weddings is a tragedy, and support for it cannot truly be found in John chapter 2.

Kenneth MacRae of the Free Church of Scotland who ministered faithfully during the first half of this century, said: "We can sweep the accursed thing out of our homes. We can sweep drink clean out of our conventions and customs. New Year treating and wedding toasts are abominations... Toasts force those to drink who have no desire to do so but who lack the courage to defy custom. Toasts should not be tolerated in any decent company. But so long as those who profess to be followers of Christ countenance these things what wonder if the thoughtless abuse them? We can refuse strong drink entirely. This is the only realistic policy... My soul is filled with loathing at the evidences of the extent to which strong drink has demoralised this generation and affected both men and women. If ever there was a curse, strong drink is one, and yet few seem to view it so. I hate it with a perfect hatred in its every form."

Christians who are blind to the evils of drink, who provide it in their homes, who drink out socially, are playing with fire as well as setting a deplorable example to others.

W.H.Molland

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"Write it over every gate,  
On the Church, the Halls of State;  
In the heart of every band,  
On the laws of every land:  
Where there's drink there's danger.

Write it in the Christians' home;  
Tell them how the drunkards roam  
Year by year from God and right:  
Proving with resistless might:  
Where there's drink there's danger."

THE INFINITY OF GOD

"Too wonderful for me" Ps. 139:6

Holy and Infinite! Viewless, Eternal!  
Veiled in the glory none can sustain,  
None comprehendeth Thy Being supernal,  
Nor can the heaven of heavens contain.

Holy and Infinite! limitless, boundless  
All Thy perfections and power and praise!  
Ocean of Mystery! awful and soundless  
All Thine unsearchable judgments and ways!

King of Eternity! what revelation  
Could the created and finite sustain,  
But for thy marvellous manifestations,  
Godhead incarnate in weakness and pain!

Therefore archangels and angels adore Thee,  
Cherubim wonder and seraphs admire;  
Therefore we praise Thee, rejoicing before Thee,  
Joining in rapture the heavenly choir.

Glorious in holiness, fearful in praises,  
Who shall not fear Thee and who shall not laud?  
Anthems of glory Thy universe raises,  
Holy and Infinite! Father and God!

Frances Ridley Havergal

## EDITORIAL

The need for consecutive expository preaching becomes ever more apparent. By this method, not only is an overall knowledge of the Holy Scriptures built up, but all avenues of Truth with respective application covered; Doctrinal, Practical, Devotional, Moral and Evangelistic. As the Word of God is thus expounded, so is all His counsel declared, and all receive their meat in due season.

How many are heard to say "I have never heard that before," or "That is never preached in our church?" Can it be wondered at that Christians are so shallow, churches so worldly and carnal, the people of God so confused, morals in society so low, and the nation ever beset with increasing problems, as that which is profitable unto all is held back by those to whom it is entrusted. In the Word of God is instruction for ALL men in ALL places in ALL generations.

Articles in this current edition make it clear that there is truth in Holy Scripture for human Governments, as well as for the Church. ALL THINGS are to be declared to ALL NATIONS (cf. Matt.20:19-20). It is a Divine principle that Truth be told to the generation following, to children's children. ALL must be explained and set out to one's present generation, and passed on to the next. May Christian parents be alive to this, and ministers awakened, that they be faithful to their high calling.

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS and INFORMATION

THURSDAY 22nd October at 7 pm.

Illustrated Historical Lecture on "THE HUGENOTS" By Mr.A.G.Ashdown of the Protestant Alliance.

THURSDAY 5th November at 6 pm.

ANNUAL CHURCH MEETING.

THURSDAY 24th and 31st December

No Meetings.