

JULY – SEPT 1992

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**North Road Chapel (Evangelical)
BIDEFORD**

WORSHIP AND HOLINESS

It may appear strange to link worship and holiness as the title for an article. Are they not separate subjects and should they not be treated as such? The answer is they could well be dealt with independently, nevertheless there is a very real sense in which the two can never be separated.

Worship is the act of paying divine honour to God. Holiness is the manner prescribed by God as to how worship should be carried out. In Holy Scripture this is set forth in a two-fold manner, private and public.

PRIVATE

Private worship (or 'internal' as it is termed by some theologians) concerns our whole manner of life. The apostle Paul, when writing to the Christians at Rome said "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service (Romans 12:1). The Greek word here rendered 'service' denotes 'worship', or the 'homage rendered unto God'. In every area of life there should be a yielding and an unstinted devotion to Christ. No aspect of life is unaffected. "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God" (1 Corinthians 10:31). "Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as unto the Lord, and not unto men; knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ" (Colossians 3:23,24).

By this we are to learn that even the most menial of every day duties are to be carried out in such an attitude of

heart, and with such diligence, having always our minds set upon glorifying God, that the very mundane tasks become spiritual worship in as much that they are all done unto Him. In this way our bodies at all times become a living sacrifice - a perpetual offering, holy and acceptable unto God. Let none be so naive as to think that private worship pertains only to personal Bible reading and private prayer; whilst this does come into it, yet is it very much more, for private worship is indissolubly tied up with holiness of life, each being essential to the other, "as He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation" (1 Peter 1:15). Holiness is to be perfected in us in the fear of God (cf 2 Corinthians 7:1).

PUBLIC

Public worship is corporate (meaning many individuals uniting and acting as one). Immediately do we see the importance of the private aspect, that all be walking in holiness and subjection to the will of God. Members of a local Church are all to speak the same things, with no divisions, but perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment (cf 1 Corinthians 1:10). Standing fast in one spirit, with one mind (cf Philippians 1:27). This can only be attained by each individual member conforming to the will of Christ, which constitutes holiness. Where this obtains, there is in very truth THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS. In consequence when the believers assemble, their worship is in spirit and in truth, and it is this which the Father seeketh (cf John 4:23).

The Word of God designates the Church "an holy nation" (1 Peter 2:9). Again and again is the aspect of holiness emphasized in the New Testament "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are" (1 Corinthians 3:16,17). "God hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:

according as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love" (Ephesians 1:3,4). The Church is "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord" (Ephesians 2:20,21). Christ hath reconciled us, in order that He might present us "holy and unblameable and unreprouvable in His sight" (Colossians 1:22). Believers are "Elect of God, holy and beloved" (Colossians 3:12). "Holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling" (Hebrews 3:1). They are "built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 2:5).

The holiness of the Church could not be more forcefully set forth than it is in the Word of God, and her function is to offer up spiritual sacrifices (worship) which is acceptable to God. How is this to be done? "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord and bow myself before the high God?" (Micah 6:6).

In this article we are treating of the worship of the Most High - the true and living God, therefore it is of the utmost importance that we know what is acceptable to Him, and act accordingly, not according to our whims or ideas. Where then do we get direction for this? There is but one answer - the Scriptures of Truth. The mode and the elements of public worship must be authorized by God Himself or else it is not acceptable. He is not to be worshipped in ANY OTHER WAY than that prescribed in Holy Scripture. Anything which is not laid down is forbidden. This is in sharp contrast to those who teach that what is not forbidden is permitted. How many there are today who worship God in vain, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men, laying aside the commandments of God, they hold the tradition of men (cf Mark 7:7,8). True worship should always be characterized by simplicity, order, reverence and attendance upon the means of grace.

SIMPLICITY

There is a very definite contrast between the worship of the Old Testament and that of the New. The Old Covenant was marked by elaborate ritual, ornate buildings, special garments and numerous musical instruments. All this had significance, for in various ways it was symbolic of spiritual truth. But with the bringing in of the New Covenant in Christ, all was fulfilled, hence there is no mention of these things in the New Testament, for they had now been done away. To make use of, or to countenance in our worship that which resembles, or was a part of the Old Covenant is to return to the "beggarly elements" (Galatians 4:9). Alas that many of these elements do exist in Christendom today, and even worse, there is much of the paraphernalia of Babylon the great.

That which is prescribed by the Great Head of the Church for corporate worship is the preaching of the Word, prayer, the singing of hymns and psalms unto the Lord, reading the Word and the observing of believer's baptism and the Lord's Supper. These and these alone are the elements of public worship to be observed if we are to worship in SPIRIT and in TRUTH.

ORDER

Some one hundred and fifty years ago there came into being groups of believers who began to practice 'open worship'. That is, any male member was free to give out a hymn, pray, read a Scripture, or minister. This was claimed to be the Biblical pattern, basing it particularly on 1 Corinthians chapter 14. Over the years this practice has spread, till now we see not only men announcing hymns, praying and reading the Scriptures, but women and children also taking part, as family services and open meetings are common in almost all denominations. This development is a most serious matter, for it is not a Scriptural basis of worship at all, it is perpetuating the malfunction of the Church at Corinth.

Chapters eleven to fourteen of the first epistle to the Corinthians in the main are words of rebuke. Far from stating how a Church should be ordered, they state how it should not be ordered. There is no such report in any of the other Church epistles. Hence the apostle Paul's words to this assembly at Corinth "How is it then, brethren? when ^e come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation" (1 Corinthians 14:26). How is it that you are ordering your worship after this manner? These are words of reproof, not precedent. Then is added "Let all things be done unto edifying" (v 26). "Let all things be done decently and in order" (1 Corinthians 14:40). The Greek word translated 'order' means 'Regular arrangement', 'Fixed succession', 'Official dignity'. How far removed is the open 'free for all' set-up from the dignified arrangement of godly order and regular ministry.

In many places now, added to this so-called open worship is the latest craze of serving tea and biscuits. WHAT? Have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? This is a despising of the Church of God (cf 1 Corinthians 11:22), meaning to 'scorn' or to 'dis-esteem'. How can these practices ever be termed 'Holy Worship'?

REVERENCE

There is a place in life for mirth and jollity (of the right kind), but this has no place in the public worship of God. He is the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in light unapproachable, whom no man hath seen, nor can see (cf 1 Timothy 6:15,16). "Holiness becometh thine house, O Lord, for ever" (Psalm 93:5). Although the Scriptures speak so much of reverence and godly fear, yet this, above all else seems to be the element most lacking in worship. There is idle chatter in the pews right up to the commencement of the service. With very few exceptions, scarcely a woman today will be seen in a place of worship with her head covered; this is a total disregard of the fear of God and reverence for that

clearly set out principle for the demonstration of Headship in the gathering of His people (cf 1 Corinthians 11:1-16).

Added to this, in many places is the noise of musical instruments, often heavily amplified, which are frantically played to work up an arm-waving, foot-tapping congregation, who repetitiously sing chorus after chorus until well nigh breathless. This fleshly activity is one of Satan's master strokes to destroy the TRUE worship of God. The child of God is to worship in "THE BEAUTY OF HOLINESS" (Psalm 29:2); not in the din and atmosphere of the Devil's discotheque. Is not the Word of God to His people "Be still and know that I am God" (Psalm 46:10)? Our God is not the God of noise but of a still small voice (cf 1 Kings 19: 11,12). How many there are today who brazenly defile the courts of our God with the confusion and noise of Babel. How few there are who hear the Word of the Lord and tremble at His word (cf Isaiah 66:5).

ATTENDANCE

Attendance for public worship is ever on the decline; with vast numbers of Church goers it is just on a Sunday morning, and some not even that. It is a sad trait when those who profess the name of Christ are dilatory in their attendance at the means of grace. As in all aspects of worship, God has not failed to give instruction - "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching" (Hebrews 10:25). If humanly possible, a Christian should never be absent from the services arranged for public worship in his or her Church. This however is a statement which needs to be qualified, for there are numerous places of so-called worship in this age which have so departed from the prescribed order as to make it impossible for the faithful to worship "in spirit and in truth". If they do attend, they return grieved and in anguish of soul at the dishonour done unto their God. What are they to do,

should they continue and so give credence to such unholy practices? Again there is a word of instruction from the Divine Mandate "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues" (Revelation 18:4).

In conclusion, a word of encouragement for the dear impoverished believers who, rather than deny the faith and condone the unbiblical order so prevalent in this generation, have separated and are now reduced to just private worship and can only speak one to another. The Great Head of the Church has a message especially for you "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His name. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels" (Malachi 3:16,17).

In a day of apostasy, Christ's jewels are among the isolated ones, not in the masses of decadent Christendom.

W.H.MOLLAND

"How lofty a conception of corporate worship Scripture presents! When God's people assemble for worship they find themselves face to face with none other than God Himself. Their worship is an intimate transaction between them and their God. If the Church was fully conscious of that truth, what dignity and reverence would characterize its worship! Of levity and frivolity there would not be a trace. The worshippers would exclaim, as did Jacob at Bethel: "How dreadful is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven" (Genesis 28:17). Realizing that they are standing on holy ground, they would, as it were, remove their shoes from their feet, as did Moses when God spoke to him from the burning bush (cf Exodus 3:5)."

R.B.KUIPER

THE COST OF BEING A CHRISTIAN

True salvation is the gift of God, for the gospel motto has always been, "without money and without price" (Isaiah 55:1). All the people of God are "justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Romans 3:24). Our Saviour laid down His life for His people, and His precious blood alone is the price paid for our redemption. "For ye are bought with a price" (1 Corinthians 6:20). "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God" (1 Peter 3:18). The Lord Jesus Christ "is the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 2:2), He is the one who reconciled us to God (cf 2 Corinthians 5:18-21, Colossians 1:20-22), He alone is our Righteousness and Surety (cf Jeremiah 23:5,6, Hebrews 7:22). God has chosen us in Christ, has predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, and all of this according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the beloved (cf Ephesians 1:4-6). The gospel is the gospel of the grace of God, and this we must affirm with all our being.

While our salvation is free, it is not cheap. It cost God His Son; and if we truly follow Christ, it will cost us in this life. While we cannot purchase true salvation, if we receive it from the hand of God certain consequences will inevitably flow from it. When Bunyan's Christian was set on his journey from the City of Destruction to the Celestial City, entering the wicket gate cost him nothing, for free grace alone admitted him, but on his pilgrimage he had to climb Hill Difficulty, he had to pass through the Valley of Humiliation, and he engaged in a bloody conflict with Apollyon. Faithful, Christian's companion, was called upon to give his life in Vanity Fair. "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (2 Timothy 3:12).

We have come to a time when hordes of people "follow" Christ with their lips, their mouths, their professions. Nominal "Christians" fill our land, and half-hearted members fill our churches. But, where are those who will live godly in Christ? Where are those who practice self-denial or self-sacrifice? Talk is cheap, but to walk with Christ is costly! "It does cost something to be a real Christian, according to the standard of the Bible. There are enemies to be overcome, battles to be fought, sacrifices to be made, an Egypt to be forsaken, a wilderness to be passed through, a cross to be carried, a race to be run. Conversion is not putting a man in an armchair and taking him easily to heaven. It is the beginning of a mighty conflict, in which it costs much to win the victory. Hence arises the unspeakable importance of counting the cost" (J C Ryle).

Great multitudes once followed our Lord. But unlike our modern preachers, who seem to pride themselves in the numbers who follow them, Christ was not elated over these multitudes, for He cared more for quality than quantity. Our Master longed after real disciples, and He loathed the counterfeit ones. His fan was in His hand, with which He thoroughly purged His floor; His axe was laid to the root of the trees. Listen to Him boldly say: "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple" (Luke 14:26,27). You may become a preacher's disciple rather easily, and you may join a church without any commitment, but no one is going to follow the Lord Jesus Christ without some cost. He goes on to tell His followers to "count the cost" (verse 28) of being His disciple.

The "Christianity" of our day is superficial and sickening. Professing Christians sit on church pews week after week with no desire whatever to please God. The preachers are just as uncommitted and unconcerned in many

places. No one wants to offend anybody with radical beliefs and practices. The spirit of lethargy and slothfulness abounds. Few take a stand against worldly pleasures (for fear of appearing singular or legalistic), few wish to be thought peculiar by their relatives, and few willingly forsake worldly idols to serve the living and true God (cf 1 Thessalonians 1:9). In other words, we don't like the strict commands of the Great Head! We like a little religion, but we don't like dedication, at least not dedication to Christ the Lord.

Many pious people are actually wearying the Lord with their words, saying, Every one that doeth evil is good in the sight of the Lord, and He delighteth in them (cf Malachi 2:17). The infinite God delighting in evil? How sadly deceived are the religious hypocrites of our time. What a sin is the sin of insincere religious profession! How worthless is the sham profession of these days! Christ calls on men to abase themselves, break from their own self-righteousness, turn their backs on the world, and give themselves in total surrender to Him as the Captain of their salvation. Nothing less qualifies a person as being a real Christian, one truly following the Son of God. "And He said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Luke 9:23).

What are the things it will cost us to serve Christ? Love of ease, and the favour of the world are undoubtedly two of them. A man must be willing to discipline himself, daily watch and stand his guard, and take heed to his ways, his company, his time, his thoughts, his tongue, his temper and his motives. "Give diligence to make your calling and election sure" (2 Peter 1:10). "The soul of the sluggard desireth, and hath nothing: but the soul of the diligent shall be made fat" (Proverbs 13:4). What leanness of soul we have today!

All of us dislike trouble in our lives. We wish for easy work and easy lives. We don't like suffering and pain.

But to be a Christ-like person is going to cost us love of ease. It will cost us the smiles and favour of the world. Our families and friends will forsake us, if we yield ourselves totally to the service of our Lord. We must not think it strange to be mocked, ridiculed, slandered and persecuted. "Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you" (1 John 3:13). And Jesus said, "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you" (John 15:18). "Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also" (John 15:20).

Many God-fearing men and women have given their lives as martyrs for Christ throughout the centuries. Should we in this day of softness and ease do any less? Should we fear man, who can only destroy our bodies? "For He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man can do unto me" (Hebrews 13:5,6). May God in mercy give us such Christians who boldly say that they fear no man, only the Almighty!

If we profess to be Christians, let us resolve to be thorough and decided about it. The world looks upon a half-hearted Christian with utter disdain. Let us not say we have begun to follow Christ, then deny Him by the way we live and talk, or by the way we act and walk. Let us silence this ungodly world by adorning the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things (cf Titus 2:10). Let us be willing to forsake anything for our matchless King. It is not what we give up that matters, but it is what we gain. The Lord will have us give up nothing but that which injures us. The pleasures of this world are poisonous sugars, not true sweets. Christ Jesus gives us greater enjoyments by far.

Let us hear again J.C Ryle: "I grant it costs much to be a true Christian. But who in his sound senses can doubt that it is worth any cost to have the soul saved? When

the ship is in danger of sinking, the crew think nothing of casting overboard the precious cargo. When a limb is mortified, a man will submit to any severe operation, and even to amputation, to save life. Surely a Christian should be willing to give up anything which stands between him and heaven. A religion which costs nothing is worth nothing! A cheap Christianity, without a cross, will prove in the end a useless Christianity, without a crown".

The sobering question is this: What has it cost you to be a Christian? If your profession of Christ has cost you nothing, then you can be sure your profession is worthless. You may be "religious" from head to foot, you may loudly "say" that you know Christ, but if in works you deny Him you are a counterfeit and a hypocrite (cf Titus 1:16, 1 John 2:4). You must never think that being saved is merely a measure of emotion experienced during a few days, or the belief and repentance of a single hour. No, our saving experiences with Christ are lifelong, and repentance and faith are the graces of a lifetime. Do not be content with false and fleeting religion! Hear again the call to discipleship by our Lord Jesus Christ: "So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple" (Luke 14:33).

W.F.BELL

"Unfurl the Christian Standard,
And follow through the strife
The noble army who have won
The martyrs' crown of life,
Our ancestors could die for Truth,
Could brave the deadly glow,
And shall we let the standard fall,
And yield it to the foe?"

FRANCES RIDLEY HAVERGAL

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

It is generally recognized that spirituality is at a low ebb in Christendom and not a few perceive that sound doctrine is rapidly on the wane, yet many of the Lord's people take comfort from supposing that the Gospel is still being widely preached and that large numbers are being saved thereby. Alas, their optimistic supposition is ill-founded and sandily grounded. If the 'message' now being delivered in Mission Halls be examined, if the 'tracts' which are scattered among the unchurched masses be scrutinized, if the 'open-air' speakers be carefully listened to, if the 'sermons' or 'addresses' of a 'Soul-winning campaign' be analysed; in short, if modern 'Evangelism' be weighed in the balances of Holy Writ, it will be found wanting - lacking that which is vital to a genuine conversion, lacking what is essential if sinners are to be shown their need of a Saviour, lacking that which will produce the transfigured lives of new creatures in Christ Jesus.

It is in no captious spirit that we write, seeking to make men offenders for a word. It is not that we are looking for perfection, and complain because we cannot find it; nor that we criticise others because they are not doing things as we think they should be done. No; no, it is a matter far more serious than that. The 'Evangelism' of the day is not only superficial to the last degree, but it is radically defective. It is utterly lacking a foundation on which to base an appeal for sinners to come to Christ. There is not only a lamentable lack of proportion (the mercy of God being made far more prominent than His holiness, His love than His wrath), but there is a fatal omission of that which God has given for the purpose of imparting a knowledge of sin. There is not only a reprehensible introducing of 'bright singing', humorous witticisms and entertaining anecdotes, but there is a

studied omission of the dark background upon which alone the Gospel can effectually shine forth.

But serious indeed as is the above indictment, it is only half of it - the negative side, that which is lacking. Worse still is that which is being retailed by the cheap-jack evangelists of the day. The positive content of their message is nothing but a throwing of dust in the eyes of the sinner. His soul is put to sleep by the Devil's opiate, ministered in a most unsuspecting form. Those who really receive the 'message' which is now being given out from most of the 'orthodox' pulpits and platforms today, are being fatally deceived. It is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but unless God sovereignly intervenes by a miracle of grace, all who follow it will surely find that the ends thereof are the ways of death. Tens of thousands who confidently imagine they are bound for Heaven, will get a terrible disillusionment when they awake in Hell.

What is the Gospel? Is it a message of glad tidings from Heaven to make God-defying rebels at ease in their wickedness? Is it given for the purpose of assuring the pleasure-crazy young people that, providing they only 'believe' there is nothing for them to fear in the future? One would certainly think so from the way in which the Gospel is presented - or rather perverted - by most of the 'evangelists', and the more so when we look at the lives of their 'converts'. Surely those with any degree of spiritual discernment must perceive that to assure such that God loves them and His Son died for them, and that a full pardon for all their sins (past, present, and future) can be obtained by simply 'accepting Christ as their personal Saviour', is but a casting of pearls before swine. The Gospel is not a thing apart. It is not something independent of the prior revelation of God's law. It is not an announcement that God has relaxed His justice or lowered the standard of His holiness. So far from that, when Scripturally expounded the Gospel presents the clearest demonstration and the climacteric proof of the

inexorableness of God's justice and of His infinite abhorrence of sin. But for Scripturally expounding the Gospel, immature youths and would-be preachers who devote their spare time to 'evangelistic effort' are quite unqualified. Alas that the pride of the flesh suffers so many incompetent ones to rush in where those much wiser fear to tread. It is this multiplying of novices that is largely responsible for the woeful situation now confronting us, and because the 'churches' and 'assemblies' are so largely filled with their "converts", explains why they are so unspiritual and worldly.

No, my reader, the Gospel is very, very far from making light of sin. The Gospel shows us how unsparingly God deals with sin. It reveals to us the terrible sword of His justice smiting His beloved Son in order that atonement might be made for the transgressions of His people. So far from the Gospel setting aside the law, it exhibits the Saviour enduring the curse of it. Calvary supplied the most solemn and awe-inspiring display of God's hatred of sin that time or eternity will ever furnish. And do you imagine that the Gospel is magnified or God glorified by going to worldlings and telling them that they 'may be saved at this moment by simply accepting Christ as their personal Saviour' while they are wedded to their idols and their hearts still in love with sin? If I do so, I tell them a lie, pervert the Gospel, insult Christ and turn the grace of God into lasciviousness.

The nature of Christ's salvation is woefully misrepresented by the present-day 'evangelist'. He announces a Saviour from Hell, rather than a Saviour from sin. And that is why so many are fatally deceived, for there are multitudes who wish to escape the lake of fire who have no desire to be delivered from their carnality and worldliness. The very first thing said of Him in the New Testament is, "thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people (not "from the wrath to come", but) from their sins" (Matthew 1:21). Christ is a Saviour for those realizing something of the exceeding sinfulness of

sin, who feel the awful burden of it on their conscience, who loathe themselves for it, who long to be freed from its terrible dominion; and a Saviour for no others. Were He to 'save from Hell' those who were still in love with sin, He would be the Minister of sin, condoning their wickedness and siding with them against God. What an unspeakably horrible and blasphemous thing with which to charge the Holy One!

Should the reader exclaim, "I was not conscious of the heinousness of sin nor bowed down with a sense of my guilt when Christ saved me", then we unhesitatingly reply, "Either you have never been saved at all, or you were not saved as early as you supposed". True, as the Christian grows in grace he has a clearer realization of what sin is - rebellion against God - and a deeper hatred of and sorrow for it; but to think that one may be saved by Christ whose conscience has never been smitten by the Spirit and whose heart has not been made contrite before God, is to imagine something which has no existence whatsoever in the realm of fact. "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick" (Matthew 9:12): the only ones who really seek relief from the great Physician are they that are sick of sin - who long to be delivered from its God-dishonouring works and its soul-defiling pollutions.

Inasmuch, then, as Christ's salvation is a salvation from sin - from the love of it, from its dominion, from its guilt and penalty - then it necessarily follows that the first great task and the chief work of the evangelist is to preach upon SIN: to define what sin (as distinct from crime) really is, to show wherein its infinite enormity consists; to trace out its manifold workings in the heart; to indicate that nothing less than eternal punishment is its desert. Ah, and preaching upon sin - not merely uttering a few platitudes concerning it, but devoting sermon after sermon to explaining what sin is in the sight of God - will not make him popular nor draw the crowds, will it? No, it will not, and knowing this, those

who love the praise of men more than the approbation of God, and who value their salary above immortal souls, trim their sails accordingly. "But such preaching will drive people away!" We answer, "Far better drive the people away by faithful preaching than drive the Holy Spirit away by unfaithfully pandering to the flesh".

The terms of Christ's salvation are erroneously stated by the present-day evangelist. With very rare exceptions he tells the hearers that salvation is by grace and is received as a free gift; that Christ has done every thing for the sinner, and nothing remains but for him to 'believe' - to trust in the infinite merits of His blood. And so widely does this conception now prevail in 'orthodox' circles, so frequently has it been dinned in their ears, so deeply has it taken root in their minds, that for one to now challenge it and denounce it is being so inadequate and one-sided as to be deceptive and erroneous, is for him to instantly court the stigma of being a heretic, and to be charged with dishonouring the finished work of Christ by inculcating salvation by works. Yet, notwithstanding, the writer is quite prepared to run that risk.

The way of salvation is falsely defined. In most instances the modem 'evangelist' assures his congregation that all any sinner has to do in order to escape Hell and make sure of Heaven is to 'receive Christ as his personal Saviour'. But such teaching is utterly misleading. No one can receive Christ as his Saviour while he rejects Him as Lord. It is true the preacher adds that, the one who accepts Christ should also surrender to Him as Lord, but he at once spoils it by asserting that though the convert fails to do so nevertheless Heaven is sure to him. That is one of the Devil's lies. Only those who are spiritually blind would declare that Christ will save any who despise His authority and refuse His yoke: why, my reader, that would not be grace but a disgrace - charging Christ with placing a premium on lawlessness.

It is in His office as Lord that Christ maintains God's honour, subserves His government, enforces His law; and if the reader will turn to those passages - Luke 1:46,47; Acts 5:31; 2 Peter 1:11; 2:20; 3:18 - where the two titles occur, he will find that it is always "Lord and Saviour", and not "Saviour and Lord". Therefore, those who have not bowed to Christ's sceptre and enthroned Him in their hearts and lives, and yet imagine that they are trusting in Him as their Saviour, are deceived, and unless God disillusion them they will go down to the everlasting burnings with a lie in their right hand (cf Isaiah 44:20). Christ is "the Author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him" (Hebrews 5:9), but the attitude of those who submit not to His Lordship is "we will not have this man to reign over us" (Luke 19:14). Pause then, my reader, and honestly face the question: are you subject to His will, are you sincerely endeavouring to keep His commandments?

Alas, alas, God's "way of salvation" is almost entirely unknown today, the nature of Christ's salvation is almost universally misunderstood, and the terms of His salvation misrepresented on every hand. The 'Gospel' which is now being proclaimed is, in nine cases out of every ten, but a perversion of the Truth, and tens of thousands, assured they are bound for Heaven, are now hastening to Hell, as fast as time can take them. Things are far, far worse in Christendom than even the 'pessimist' and the 'alarmist' suppose. We are not a prophet, nor shall we indulge in any speculation of what Biblical prophecy forecasts - wiser men than the writer have often made fools of themselves by so doing. But this we greatly fear: unless God is pleased to grant a real revival, it will not be long ere "the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people" (Isaiah 60:2), for the light of the true Gospel is rapidly disappearing. Modern 'Evangelism' constitutes, in our judgment, the most solemn of all the "signs of the times".

A. W. PINK

EDITORIAL

Man made titles are common place, we are daily confronted with them. How is the Christian to view such and what place have they in his vocabulary? This is a subject which falls into two categories.

IN THE WORLD. There are certain titles which are quite legitimate. The Sovereign is addressed as 'Your Majesty', a judge in a court of law as 'Your Honour', in the military realm we find terms such as 'General', 'Colonel', 'Major'; then there is the academic, 'Doctor', 'Professor'; Peerages, Knighthoods and the like are also conferred upon people for great exploits or notable achievements. These are valid titles and such are to be recognised at an earthly level and due honour given. "Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour" (Romans 13:7). This all Christians should be careful to observe.

IN THE CHURCH. Here, other than that which marks courtesy and respect, no appellation is authorized; yet ecclesiastical titles are prevalent in almost every section of Christendom. How and why is this? It would be a very long treatise to trace the history of such designations from the early centuries to the present. So many characters and dates are involved that it would be burdensome to the reader; neither is it necessary. It should be enough for any Bible loving, God honouring Christian to know that these things have no warrant in Holy Scripture, therefore should not be continued by us. Having written on this subject before, some may think it an obsessional view; on the contrary, any man who has but an elementary knowledge of the Truth, and of Church order knows that these titles are wrong. Then why do men who claim to adhere to the Regulative Principle (if a matter

is not found in Scripture, then it is not to be practiced) not only countenance these ecclesiastical terms but use them, even to having them attached to their own names? This is no light matter.

Some months ago one was amazed to read in a reformed publication, the following concerning the title 'Reverend*' - "For nearly four hundred years now this title has been employed by countless Gospel ministers (including the most militantly anti-Roman) to indicate nothing more than that they are properly appointed, full time teachers of the Word. In such a context, it can hardly be regarded as a breach of the rule of Christ".

For such a statement to be seen in a magazine which in the past has written extensively upon the Regulative Principle, is singularly strange. Apart from the fact that ecclesiastical titles carry no New Testament warrant, this title of 'Reverend' pertains only to Deity. "Holy and reverend is His name" (Psalm 111:9). Is it not of the utmost gravity for a mortal of earth to attach such an insignia to himself? The irony is that the man who coined the title of the magazine referred to, and brought it into existence well over one hundred years ago, himself preached and wrote on this very Psalm, and concerning verse 9 stated, "The whole name or character of God is worthy of profoundest awe, for it is perfect and complete, whole or holy. It ought not to be spoken without solemn thought, and never heard without profound homage. His name is to be trembled at, it is something terrible; even those who know Him best tremble before Him. How good men can endure to be called 'REVEREND', we know not".

To suggest as was inferred in that recent publication, that a man has to take on an un-Biblical title, and one pertaining exclusively to the Godhead at that, in order to indicate that he is properly appointed to the full time preaching of the Word, is spiritually irresponsible and grossly misleading to many people. This is to say nothing of the serious dishonour to the Great Head of the Church

who gives the gifts and distributes them. Is one to believe that such a gift from Christ to the Church cannot really be identified unless he takes on such a title, the use of which finds its origin in Romanism? That a minister be recognised in the Church is utterly Scriptural. He is to be esteemed highly for his work's sake (cf 1 Thessalonians 5:13). The teaching elder especially, is worthy of double honour (cf 1 Timothy 5:17). But his work as a minister is an office, it does not denote, neither does it warrant a title. The same applies to the term 'pastor'. This however, unlike 'reverend' is a perfectly Biblical term, nevertheless if a man is a pastor in a Church, he is there to pastor the flock, it is a work to carry out, not a title to assume. The New Testament sets out an eldership and a deaconate; this is the governing body of a local Church. Within that body would be one who labours in the Word and in doctrine (cf 1 Timothy 5:17). He is recognized and set apart by the Church for that work. He may be styled 'minister', 'pastor' or 'teaching elder'; either is Biblical, but that is his work, not a title.

These are matters which all evangelical and reformed people need to think through and re-assess. Why be critical of the term of the Romanist and Anglican 'priest' or the 'holy father of Rome', when evangelicals refer to theologians of the past as 'The Divines', and un-Biblical titles are unhesitatingly accepted and acknowledged by the vast majority within their own ranks! Surely 2 Timothy 1:13 is as applicable on this matter as on any other -

"HOLD FAST THE FORM OF SOUND WORDS".

VISITING PREACHERS

Lord's Day	4 October 1992	MR G.THRUSSELL (Truro)
Lord's Day	18 October 1992	DR J.R.HULETT (Wool)