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**North Road Chapel (Evangelical)  
BIDEFORD**

## *Lessons from John's Gospel* *chapter seventeen*

*"And now, O Father, glorify Thou me with Thine own self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was" (John 17:5).*

It needs to be understood that in this prayer, Christ is praying as Mediator, the God-Man; He possessed both a Divine and human nature. Neither of these natures are to be viewed in isolation in this petition; rather is the whole personality of the Mediator in view; the eternal Word made flesh. Before His incarnation, Christ was eternal Spirit, the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of His person (cf Hebrews 1:3). At His incarnation, He never ceased to be that same glorious, eternal Spirit, but the splendour of His eternal Being was veiled. In no way was it diminished, let alone relinquished, but it was unseen by mortal eyes, for He was made *"in the likeness of sinful flesh"* (Romans 8:3). To all appearances He was exactly like any other member of the human race, except that He was sinless. The words of Charles Wesley express incarnate Deity in most beautiful language:-

"Our God contracted to a span,  
Incomprehensibly made man.

He laid His glory by,  
He wrapped Him in our clay;  
Unmarked by human eye,  
The latent Godhead lay".

Eternal Spirit was wrapped in human clay, Deity contracted to a span in the Man, Christ Jesus. *"He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not"* (John 1:10). His eternal

power and Godhead was not recognizable by men. The reason why the Son of God came to earth after this manner, is fully revealed in the Holy Scriptures; it was to become a Surety and Substitute for His people. By taking human flesh, He lived man's life and was tempted in all points as we are, yet without sin (cf Hebrews 4:15).

By living an absolute sinless and perfect life **as Man**, He fulfilled the Law of God. Having done this in the office of Surety for His people, His perfect righteousness is imputed to the believer. As a Man, the Mediator was capacitated for death, which also was an essential element of His work of suretyship. Having come into bond for the sinner, He must take to Himself their sins and become legally responsible for them at the bar of Divine justice, which incurred the wrath of God. Incorporated in the wrath of a holy God due to the sinner was death, this now was Christ's involvement; consequently that wrath must come upon Him, the Substitute. This is what took place at Calvary; God *"made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him"* (2 Corinthians 5:21). In His life and His death, Christ acted on behalf of His people, fulfilling His obligation as Surety according to the agreement into which He entered with His Father before the foundation of the world, that He would save His people from their sins (cf Matthew 1:21).

From eternity He had been appointed *"to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness"* (Daniel 9:24). Now at the end of His life on earth, He approaches His Father in prayer saying, *"I have glorified Thee on the earth: I have finished the work which Thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify Thou me with Thine own self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was"* (John 17:4,5).

The Lord had clearly stated to His disciples in the upper room that He was soon to go back to the Father (cf John 16:16). Now in this section of His prayer, He is obviously anticipating His ascension and re-entry into heaven, but He is not returning in the same form in which He left. Thirty three years previously, He had left heaven as eternal Spirit, coming to earth by means of a virgin womb, being brought forth in due time as Immanuel, God with men.

This taking of a human nature into perfect unity with the Divine, which took place at the incarnation, was never to be dissolved; forever He is to remain the **Man** Christ Jesus. It is in this capacity that He prays. Always the eternal Son of the eternal God, a fact which could never alter, yet now He is to return to the Father as man. The true meaning of this petition is, that our Lord desires to be glorified in such a manner that the Divine majesty which had ever been His, might shine forth in the celestial realm in the new dimension now His, as the Mediator and Saviour of His people.

The question may well be asked, Why did Christ come to the Father with such a request? Could He not glorify Himself and exalt His own Person, for He was very God of very God? The answer is, Yes, but He would not do this and the reason why is of fundamental importance.

In the whole engagement of the work of atonement and the sinner's redemption, Christ must be viewed as a **Surety**. The entire matter is judicial, it pertains to criminality. Man is the debtor, God the Father is the Judge, at whose bar absolute satisfaction must be made. Christ the Surety, made Himself legally responsible for man's sins. By so doing He became liable to the judgment of God, the wages of sin being death (cf Romans 6:23), God having decreed that "*the soul that sinneth, it shall die*" (Ezekiel 18:20). Death was to be executed upon

Christ the Substitute; in this way He became death's **lawful** prisoner. God the Father delivered Him to death for **our** offences.

Other Scriptures make it clear that He finished the work which He came to do, putting away sin by the sacrifice of Himself (cf Hebrews 9:26). As the victorious, still **Divine** Saviour, He could have raised Himself from the dead, glorifying His own Mediatorial office upon His return to heaven. But from the angle in which the work of Christ is being viewed in this petition, it is fundamental that God the Father should raise Him from the dead and glorify Him in heaven. This must be more fully explained.

It was God the Father, who having imputed our sins to the Surety, inflicted His fierce anger upon Him. Jehovah "*laid on Him the iniquity of us all*" (Isaiah 53:6); "*Thou hast brought me into the dust of death*" (Psalm 22:15). Having been assigned to the prison of death (quite legally) by God, according to His Divine and righteous justice, because He the Mediator had become the official Surety, it was not for Christ to break from prison. Rather was it that He, now having paid the full sentence, be honourably released by the Judge; this is the aspect in view. When a prisoner has fully satisfied the demands of the law by having served his sentence, an official officer is sent to open the prison doors for that prisoner's release. So Christ was "*delivered* (by God) *for our offences, and was raised again for our justification*" (Romans 4:25). Fully and completely had He suffered the sentence. All the claims of the Law, preceptive and penal, had been met and vindicated by the Substitute, enabling God to justify the sinner; therefore must God **Himself** release the Surety and this He did by raising Him from the dead.

Could the re-instatement of the Lord's **former** glory be possible, for the incarnate Son of God had, in reality, been made sin (cf 2 Corinthians 5:21), "*made a curse*" (Galatians 3:13), actually

*"numbered with the transgressors"* (Isaiah 53:12)? Any vestige of glory which may have been seen in the Saviour's life on earth was dissipated at His death, when by smiting, spitting, scourging and nailing His body to a tree, His visage became *"marred more than any man, and His form more than the sons of men"* (Isaiah 52:14).

When appearing to His disciples after being raised from the dead, it was in perfect bodily form, not spirit; what is more, that body still bore all the wounds of the curse of a transgressors death (cf Luke 24:39,40; John 20:19-27). Could the glory of God's *"own self"* which the Son had shared prior to His incarnation, be His again in His bodily form in which He is now to forever remain? The Holy Scriptures alone can answer this question.

There is no doubt whatsoever that the resurrected body of our Lord which the disciples saw and handled was the same body they had always known, yet now there **was** a difference; a measure of exaltation had already taken place. For almost six weeks Christ remained on earth after His resurrection, but no one saw Him other than His own to whom He appeared; the world did not see Him again after His burial. He appeared to His disciples as they were gathered together in a house in Jerusalem, but no one saw Him come or go. What is more, He never opened the door in order to enter the room, yet He appeared unto them bodily; He was **not** a spirit. He stood in their midst, flesh and bone and partook of a portion of fish and some honey and ate it with them (cf Luke 24:36-43).

Although He could meet with His followers in a normal manner and commune with and instruct them, yet He could also move among other men and not be seen. In this state, He continued on earth for forty days (cf Acts 1:3), then *"He led them (His disciples) out as far as to Bethany, and He lifted up His hands, and blessed them. And it came to pass, while He blessed them, He was parted from them, and*

*carried up into heaven"* (Luke 24:50,51). This was no fantasy. Eleven men **walked** out to the slopes of Bethany **together** with the resurrected Christ and He lifted up His **hands**, and as He blessed them, His **feet** left the earth. **This was no spirit being**. So did the **Man**, Christ Jesus return to heaven.

The Lord, having said that He would leave the world and go to the Father (cf John 16:28), had now gone, but what of this glory for which He prayed; would it be just in the manner in which it had been manifested to those favoured few following His resurrection? Or could it be that the very glory of God would now actually radiate in and through the victorious Saviour, upon His return to heaven in His mediatorial form as Man, as it had shone in His eternal being prior to His incarnation?

Much is said about the death and resurrection of Christ, but the triumphant ascension of the Mediator does not appear to be given the prominence which it should, either in preaching or in that which is written. Thomas Manton said, "Christ laid aside **mortality** at His resurrection but knew not His **full glory** till His ascension". The portions of Holy Scripture which give us glimpses of the welcome which Christ received when He entered heaven as **Man**, will thrill our very souls, if studied and meditated upon as they should be.

As the ascending Lord passed through the clouds, approaching the celestial realm of the heaven of heavens, a sovereign voice is heard giving authoritative command; *"Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in"* (Psalm 24:7). It would appear as if there was a degree of hesitancy to obey this command, for the question is asked, *"Who is this King of glory?"*, to which comes the immediate reply, *"The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle"* (Psalm 24:8). Had there ever been such a battle fought as that in which this One had been engaged? He

had assailed the hosts of hell, spoiled principalities and powers (cf Colossians 2:15), destroyed *"him that had the power of death, that is, the Devil"* (Hebrews 2:14). The command is then repeated, *"Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in"* (Psalm 24:9).

This glorious, victorious warrior is the very **King of glory**; nothing must, or shall debar Him from *"heaven itself"* (Hebrews 9:24) and the glory of everlasting kingship. It was to tumultuous applause, such as caused heaven to vibrate with ten thousand hallelujahs and shook hell to its foundations, that the Mediator entered heaven. Thomas Kelly caught something of the spirit of this when he wrote:-

"Look, ye saints! the sight is glorious;  
See the Man of Sorrows now,  
From the fight returned victorious,  
Every knee to him shall bow:  
Crown Him! Crown Him!  
Crowns become the Victor's brow.

Hark, those bursts of acclamation!  
Hark, those loud triumphant chords!  
Jesus takes the highest station:  
O what joy the sight affords!  
Crown Him! Crown Him!  
King of kings, and Lord of lords!

Daniel the prophet had spoken concerning this stupendous happening of the enthronement of the Mediator, some five to six hundred years previously. He said, *"I saw in the night visions, and, behold, One like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought Him near before Him. And there*



*was given Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve Him: His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." (Daniel 7: 13-14)*

Paul wrote *"Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." (Philippians 2: 9-11)*

May these wondrous truths pertaining to this petition of our Lord in John chapter seventeen verse five and its glorious sequel, captivate the hearts of us all.

W.H. Molland

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## **Eternal Punishment**

F.J.Harris (Cheltenham)

*"And these shall go away into everlasting punishment" (Matthew 25:46).*

The doctrine of eternal punishment, referred to in the above verse and in many other parts of Scripture, is a solemn and awesome truth. It should never be thought of, or spoken about lightly, or discussed in a theoretical or academic manner. It is dreadful to contemplate and can only begin to be understood in the light of God's great love, revealed in the sending of His Son to save all who trust in Him from the awful penalty of sin. It is a truth which tells us of something of God's holy

hatred of sin and determination to punish it; it is a truth which reveals the glory of that saving work which our Lord Jesus Christ freely undertook; it is a truth which demands that the gospel, the only remedy for sin, be preached in all the world; and it is a truth which should surely cause every true Christian to pray earnestly for the salvation of the lost.

Few worldly people today give any thought to what lies beyond the grave, other than some vague hope that, if there is life after death, it will be in a better world. Most unbelievers follow the humanistic philosophy that death is the end, that there is nothing more. Of those who do have a more definite belief in life after death, only a few believe in a day of judgment or a hell which consists of eternal punishment. Yet this has not always been the case. There was a time when people were very much influenced by the Church's consistent preaching of the Bible's teaching about hell, and there was general awareness of that truth and some kind of fear of God.

But as the Church began to deviate from the truth, this message was denied, diluted or simply not preached and so it gradually dropped out of most people's thinking. Today we have arrived at an almost unbelievable situation - not only is the doctrine of eternal punishment denied by liberal theologians (from whom we expect no less, for they deny almost every Biblical truth), but tragically by an increasing number of those who describe themselves as evangelical, Bible-believing Christians. What are we to make of this? As always it is a case of, *"To the Law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no light in them"* (Isaiah 8:20).

The Lord Jesus Christ clearly taught that the great purpose of His coming into the world was *"to seek and to save that which was lost"* (Luke 19:10). The Greek word translated 'lost' is the same as that translated 'perish' in John 3:16. Its root meaning is not the end of

existence but 'waste' or 'ruin'. For example, in John 3:16, "*perish*" is contrasted with "*everlasting life*". Everlasting life is not simply endless existence, but life forever enjoyed under the blessing and favour of God. Not to have everlasting life is to perish, which means to live forever under God's displeasure. Thus we read of "*Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come*" (1 Thessalonians 1:10).

It is hardly necessary to say that this is a truth which has been denied, hated, despised and opposed, but we need to remember that it is the Son of God Himself with whom all opponents of this doctrine are in conflict, for He spoke of the eternal punishment of the lost more than anyone else. On a number of occasions He spoke of "gehenna" (translated 'hell') which was the valley outside Jerusalem where rubbish was continually burning. He spoke of "*the worm that dieth not and the fire that is not quenched*". He spoke of "*outer darkness*" and of "*weeping, wailing and gnashing of teeth*". He spoke of "*everlasting fire prepared for the Devil and his angels*". He spoke of "*everlasting punishment*". Clearly then, to deny this doctrine flatly contradicts the Son of God Himself.

Preachers would not mention it but for the fact that they serve that God who has said, "*Whatsoever I command thee, thou shalt speak*". It is far easier to speak about the blessedness of the saved than the suffering of the lost, but both must be proclaimed if we are to preach all God's truth as He has made it known. Otherwise many vital Biblical truths are undermined.

### ***1. The character of God is undermined***

He has revealed Himself as a God of holiness, justice and truth and declared that He will "*by no means clear the guilty*". God is not a man that He should lie; He must keep His Word. If unbelieving men and

women simply pass out of existence at the end of their earthly lives, then where is the truth and justice of God?

## ***2. The saving love of God cannot be properly understood***

....if it is not seen against the background of the dreadful state from which Christ came to save sinners. If the Biblical teaching about hell is denied, we can have no adequate appreciation of the glory of the gospel. It is only in the light of "*the wrath to come*" that we understand the significance of the question, "*What must I do to be saved?*" Only thus do we realize our indebtedness to our dear Redeemer, who came to seek and to save the lost.

## ***3. It denies the authority of the Word of God***

However much men may try to explain away the doctrine of eternal punishment, it is impossible to evade the clear teaching of numerous Scriptures concerning the final judgment, following which there will be a division between the saved and the lost, the former being received into God's eternal kingdom and the latter going into everlasting punishment. Between these two states, as Jesus Himself taught, there is a great gulf fixed.

## ***4. It robs Christ's command to preach the gospel to every creature, of one of its highest motives***

Hudson Taylor said, "I would never have thought of going to China had I not believed that the Chinese were perishing and needed Christ". The same convictions were shared by William Carey, Adoniram Judson, David Livingstone, David Brainerd, John Paton and many others. They were utterly convinced of the awful danger of the heathen and felt a compulsion laid upon them to take the gospel to lost and dying men and women.

### ***5. It utterly fails to understand the cross***

Did our Lord come into the world to save sinners? From what did He save them? Did He offer Himself upon the cross as a sacrifice for sin? For what purpose? It was not only to fit men for heaven, but also to save them from hell that our blessed Saviour suffered the painful and shameful death of the cross.

### ***6. It undermines the Law of God and encourages wanton living***

If there is no judgment day, no thought of retribution, then, as in Isaiah's day, the ungodly will say, "*Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die*".

### ***7. To deny the doctrine of eternal punishment is to vindicate false teachers***

God warned the people of Jeremiah's day saying, "*Hearken not unto the words of the prophets that prophesy unto you: they make you vain: they speak a vision of their own heart, and not out of the mouth of the Lord. They say still unto them that despise me, The Lord hath said, Ye shall have peace .... no evil shall come upon you*" (Jeremiah 23:16,17). Today, with one voice, the cults deny the doctrine of eternal punishment. Never let it be said that they were right.

It is no kindness to unbelievers never to mention this doctrine. It is a false love which fails to warn. Solemn though the truth is, it must be declared out of faithfulness to the God of truth, who has clearly revealed it in His infallible Word.

If we believe it and hold this truth aright, it will - it must - have some impact upon our praying and concern for those without Christ. May God help us all to respond aright to His Word.

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## ***WANTED - MORE CALEBS***

"Who is Caleb? I never heard of him". That is quite possible; for in the Bible gallery of characters, there are some modest people whose presence we only discover as blind men find out rose bushes - by their fragrance. Dorcas probably made no sensation in Joppa; but when Dorcas' fingers grew quiet under the graveclothes, Joppa found out what they had lost and the poor women came in and preached her funeral sermon in warm teardrops on her silent face. To this same class belong Ezra the scribe, and Hannah the praying mother, and Andrew who believed in personal effort, and Onesiphorus who was not ashamed of Paul's chain. Caleb stands in this catalogue - a type of thorough-going servants of God, who do a great deal with but little noise, who stand meekly and steadily at their posts of duty, who never shirk their share of toil or danger, who do not attract much attention until they are gone! Then how we miss them in the church and in society! How the family or the neighbourhood suffer for the want of them! How hard it is to get along without them!

Caleb's whole biography is condensed into a few bright sentences. He was the chieftain of a clan in Israel, was selected as one of the deputation to go down and spy out the land of Canaan; he came back, helping to carry the luscious load of Eschol grapes, and made a strong report in favour of the immediate occupation of the land; and when the panic-stricken people clamoured for retreat on account of "*the giants there*", Caleb came to the front and made a ringing speech, in the face of poltroons who stood with stones in their hands to batter him to the ground. God's verdict on the man's steadfast heroism was in these brief words, "*My servant Caleb will I bring into the land, who hath followed me **faithfully***". In another passage it reads, "*He hath followed me **wholly***". In still another it is written, "*He hath followed me **fully***". God was as good as His Word. While the cowards and the rebels all perished in the wilderness, stout, steady old Caleb lived to

own the beautiful acres on the hills of Hebron, and in full view of the verdant vale of Eschol. When the long march and the bloody war were over, he tasted of the grapes of victory.

Caleb is the man most needed in our churches in these latter days. He is the type-man for thorough-going fidelity. He followed the Lord fully. What we want, to make churches vigorous and spiritually healthy is not bustle, not parade and puffery, but patience, prayer and persevering work. We want the full following of Christ with the whole heart, for the whole time, and for the whole life campaign. Christ started His Church on the principle of entire consecration. Over the doorway He wrote, "*Whosoever would follow me, **let him leave all!***" Again He said, "*Ye cannot serve God and mammon*". And again He said, "*He that is not for me is against me*". It was thorough-going discipleship or nothing. "*Sell all that thou hast and **follow me***", frightened the poor, selfish, young ruler back to his business and to his fate. Christ would have no half-hearted disciples. He sifted His followers, and out of the whole number there remained eleven men and a few faithful women to lay the foundations of His Church on the eve of Pentecost.

To follow the Lord fully requires a whole-hearted conversion at the start. Half-way converts make half-way Christians. Some men's boughs hang over on the Church side of the wall, but their roots are on the world's side. Such bear nothing but leaves. "Many lay false and bastard foundations", said quaint, old Rutherford, "and they get Christ for as good as half nothing, and never had a sick night of sorrow for sin. This maketh loose work". True enough; and unless the conversion is radical and thorough, unless the submission of the soul to Christ is without compromise and conditions, there will be half-heartedness and halting to the last. Caleb, we are told "*had another spirit within him*".

But there is prodigious power in singleness of love for the Lord, in the doing 'just one thing', and that is to live solely for the Master. A man of very moderate talents and endowments, becomes a leading mind as soon as Christ gets complete hold of him. I can point to more than one plain, modest, moderately-educated Christian who has attained to a great, propelling power in the church simply from the momentum of his Godliness. He follows Christ so heartily, so projectively, that he carries others along with him by his sheer momentum. And that is not brain-power or purse-power, but heart-power.

So it comes about that thorough Godliness outstrips genius in the pulpit. Thorough-going piety is the first requisite for church officers and its members. Thorough-going piety never commutes with the Master for half fare; never whimpers, "*I pray Thee, have me excused*"; never interprets the Bible in the lax and latitudinarian sense; and when there is a doubt on any point, gives God and not himself the benefit of it. Such a Christian "loves duty, even in all the wholesome severities of it". If his Christianity has ever a necessary pain or a pinch in it, he bears it without flinching. He never imitates Peter Pindar's pilgrim who, having been commanded to make a long journey with peas in his shoes, took the sly precaution to boil his peas before he started. Thousands are quite willing to go heavenward with us, provided they have a choice seat in the cushioned car; but commend me to the Calebs who, discerning the land afar off by faith, are ready for a lifetime march to reach it, over rough roads and with stony pillows for a bivouac.

I have to consider those the best members in my church, who are quite as good in ordinary times as they are amid the fervours of a revival. When the church is all aglow, and its meetings are magnetic with enthusiasm, how easy it is to catch fire, to sing, to shout Hosanna, and to go into raptures on the mount. It is a luxury to be a Christian then. But when the fervour is gone, and the crowd is gone, and the flesh is



weak or weary, and the very air of the room numbs the spirit, then to keep aglow and to kindle others also, requires the living fire of Christ Jesus in the soul. It was easy for Caleb to exercise faith while he was picking Eschol's grapes, and feasting on the fresh figs, but to keep up his faith amid an army of cowards, and to hold out for nigh forty years in the desert, demanded and developed the most resolute pluck and principle. A revival brings great glory to the Lord, but it also brings great disgrace upon the Church, for it reveals so painfully the indolence and worldliness of those who never lift a finger for Christ at any other time. Revivals fill the church; seasons of dullness and declension winnow the Church. We pastors never love our Calebs so well as we do in those dry, dreary spells of comparative drought; for they work right along, without any need of external excitements. They are the salt that never loses its savour.

When silly furores and fashions rage, the chaff in our churches always goes with the gale; but steadfast, solid Caleb never has but one fashion, and that is to follow Christ. His first rule always is to please God, who trieth the heart, rather than man. We have said enough to indicate who the Calebs are. They are the sinew of the Church. To those who inquire, "How can a church be developed?", we answer, "Ask God for more Calebs. Remember that a hundred half-Christians do not make a single whole one".

Taken from a very old, defaced book; author unknown.

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The strongest argument for the truth of Christianity is the true Christian; the man filled with the Spirit of Christ. Before such an argument, the most hostile cannot stand.

Anon

## ***Recollections of Spiritual Work in the County of Devon in Generations Past***

*"We have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told us, what work Thou didst in their days, in the times of old" (Psalm 44:1).*

Extracts taken from "**A Book of Remembrance**", a brief history of early Baptists in the towns and villages of North Devon.

The occasional visits of a few Baptist ministers to the district of Brayford, in the parish of Charles, on the western edges of Exmoor, resulted in the opening of the hearts of two individuals who, by the grace of God, were brought to faith and baptised by Mr D.Sprague in 1792. As no others in the area embraced a baptistic position these two attended the Methodist chapel, where for a number of years, it is stated "They enjoyed brotherly communion." These two persons were Joseph and Mary Gould of Mockham Barton. Their conversion and baptism were the first fruits and earnest of coming spiritual good.

Of Mr Gould it is stated he was a sturdy nonconformist to the backbone and a staunch contender for believers baptism. He was regarded by his fellow farmers as extremely upright but very strange; he was a man they could not comprehend. He did not think as they thought, or do as they did; but was so perfect a contrast, that he was the subject of conversation in every household. His honesty and his word none could question; but the cause of his unusual life and daily joy was a mystery none could fathom.

Mr and Mrs Gould had in their house a young man whose name was John Winzer, who, although a servant, was treated as an adopted son. Mr Gould and John were strong in their mutual attachments and became one in spiritual persuasion. For some time John was greatly concerned about the salvation of his soul and gave himself to much closet prayer. At last, by the grace of God, he became converted.

Almost immediately, eager to do the will of God, he desired baptism by immersion.

Help in this matter was sought from a Mr R.Humphrey, a baptist minister at Cullompton (who obviously must have been know to Mr Gould). This good servant of the Lord came over to Brayford, which meant negotiating some 35-40 miles of Devon lanes, and on a Sabbath morn in autumn, John was baptised. It took place in a lovely stream which ran through part of Mockham Barton. Many gathered to see the strange sight.

Some time after, upon profession of faith, five others were immersed in the same stream. This time there was much opposition. Some of the rougher sort began to crowd around the persons to be baptised, others threw stones and dogs into the stream. Mr Gould was Divinely strengthened for the occasion; stepping upon a hillock and raising his bent form, he lifted up his right hand and looking towards heaven said, "O Lord, in our helplessness defend us, in our weakness strengthen us, in our fear encourage us." The crowd were overawed and the uproar died away. After an address by Mr Gould and then the minister, the candidates were baptised; amongst them was Richord Quick who later became the wife of John Winzer. Three weeks after this, another baptism was arranged when seven others, who had come to know the Lord, were obedient in this manner. It was now thought right to form a church, this was done. It dates from 1815, Mr Gould being its founder. Blessing attended the preaching of the Word of God and the witness extended to the surrounding villages; a Mr Harris, Mr Cocks and Mr Glanville helping in ministry at various times.

Mr Gould, now old and feeble, must soon be gathered to his fathers. It is said, "He had bright light in his last days, and his sick room was as the gate of heaven." He died August 21st 1817 at the age of seventy two years. Devout men carried him to his burial, and laid his body in

the graveyard in the parish of Charles, without one prayer or word being uttered at his grave.

In 1819 the company of the baptised believers forming the local church had so increased that it was thought proper to erect a building for worship and a dwelling house for a minister, Mr and Mrs Gould earlier having given land for this purpose. This was carried out and the chapel opened at Brayford on the first Wednesday in May 1820.

It is a very strange thing to relate, nevertheless it is true, Mr Gould had two births and three burials. He had the natural and the spiritual births, (that which was such a mystery to Nicodemus and alas to myriads of others). He had burial with Christ in baptism, burial in the parish churchyard at Charles, and burial in the Baptist Chapel.

A few years after his death a stone was placed at the head of this devout farmers grave at Charles to mark his resting place. That stone, with rude hands, was taken up, thrown into the lane and broken into several pieces. Christian indignation was aroused. An approach was made to John Winzer by a few, who said, "Master, we have made up our minds what to do. We are determined that as they will not have old masters stone they shall not have his body.

On a dark winters night that body was removed by loving hands, from the parish churchyard and placed in the little chapel at Brayford. There also, is the very stone that was thrown out of the churchyard of Charles, now put together, bearing the following inscription:-  
"In memory of Joseph Gould, a respectable farmer of this parish, who died August 21st 1817, aged seventy two years. He was a man of piety, given to hospitality, a lover of the poor; but above all, a promoter of vital Christianity and a humble follower of the Lord Jesus, through whose grace he triumphed over death."

A lovely little hard-back book has been written by Mr S.Newman entitled 'John Winzer the North Devon Puritan' which gives much

more information of the work of the Lord in that particular locality in by-gone days. Fascinating reading, suitable for the young as well as older ones. Available from our bookroom at North Road Chapel. Price £3.00. Post Paid.

### **New Publications**

*The Praises of God in Psalms, Hymns and Spiritual Songs* by Dr.Kenneth Dix. A defence of the singing of hymns as opposed to exclusive Psalmody. A very thorough work, highly recommended. Price £1.50 postage paid.

*In Search of what?* A small booklet written specifically for use among non-believers, published by the church at North Road. Free of charge.

From The Bookroom Secretary, North Road Chapel (Evangelical), Bideford. Devon, EX39 2NW.

### **Visiting Preachers D.V.**

Lord's Day 11 July 1999  
Lord's Day 12 September 1999

Mr F.J.Harris (Cheltenham)  
Mr G.Thrussell (Truro)

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Lord's Day, 2 May 1999, was an occasion of great joy and encouragement as Samuel Wort made his public confession of faith, in the waters of baptism; he has now been received into the membership of the church. Our prayers are much toward Samuel that he will, in his generation, be a bright and shining light, ever contending for the truth. It is our concern that other young people be brought to the same spiritual position of repentance and faith, followed by obedience in the Divinely appointed manner of believer's baptism.

## *Editorial*

It is not unusual for some Christians late in life, to have their peace disturbed by the work of the great Adversary. For the one oppressed, this can be very distressing. Financial worries brought about through inflation, increasing disabilities, fading memory, illness and lack of energy can cause real disquiet, particularly to those living alone. Will the end be sudden or will there be a long painful illness? The Word of God allays such fears. *"This God shall be our God for ever and ever: He will be our guide even unto **death**"* (Psalm 45:14). **Right to the very end**, God will direct all things; He will provide. In life we commit our way unto Him in faith; so also must it be in death. This will probably be the most eminent act of faith in our whole lives, as we launch forth from time into eternity, the words which the Lord left us are our pattern, *"Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit"*. Those hands of God which have provided for us in life, most certainly will not be withdrawn in death. By those omnipotent hands, every redeemed one will be carried into their eternal home. The first act of faith by those regenerated by the Holy Spirit is to cast themselves into God's hands for mercy and salvation. The last act of faith will be when we cast ourselves into those same hands to carry us into His immediate presence. There we shall be presented faultless and without spot or wrinkle, all anxieties gone for ever. Concerning God's elect, everything is taken care of from conception to glorification. Exceedingly precious are those words, *"The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms"* (Deuteronomy 33:27).

"God will take care of you long as you live,  
Granting you blessings no others can give;  
He will take care of you when time is past,  
Safe to His kingdom He'll bring you at last".