

Christian  
Life in  
Practice  
*The Challenge of*  
TODAY

FREDK. A. TATFORD

# *Life's Problems*

A BOOK such as this one cannot fail to appeal to every one who would seek to "Profess a good profession before many witnesses." We surely want to know all we can about the Christian Life, not in *theory*, but just what it means in actual practice in this ordinary everyday world of ours. Well, here we have twelve short reviews of twelve definite problems most likely to be met with and not likely to be easily dealt with. Not that these reviews necessarily provide *the* solution, but in arousing thought and discussion the way becomes sensibly clearer whereby we may "do those things that are pleasing in His sight ; " that is those things which are but the Christian Life in practice.

# CHRISTIAN LIFE IN PRACTICE

The Challenge of To-Day

EDITED BY

FREDK. A. TATFORD

Editor of *Service*, and Joint Editor of *The Harvester*.

*Twelve Important Papers Dealing with*

MODERN THOUGHT

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

CLASS DISTINCTION

SEX MORALITY

POLITICS

CLERICALISM

TRADE UNIONISM

THE BODY

RECREATIONS

FRIENDSHIPS

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## Foreword

THE following chapters originally appeared in *The Harvester* under the title "The Challenge of To-day," and are now issued in book form at the request of a large number of readers of that magazine.

The articles were intended merely to provoke thought, and not necessarily to provide the solutions to the problems they raised. If, in their new form, they still arouse thought and discussion, they will not have been penned in vain.

FREDK. A. TATFORD.



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# CHRISTIAN LIFE IN PRACTICE

## CHAPTER I

### Modern Thought

By FREDK. A. FILBY, M.Sc., Ph.D.

CAN a simple Bible Christianity survive in the face of the modern outlook on life? Will it not be necessary to adjust some of its main themes to suit the newer points of view? Surely, even if it entirely satisfied our Victorian grandparents, it must require much alteration to conform to our more advanced standards of thought?

It is an old rule, **in a certain branch of science**, that to every action there is an equal and opposite reaction. In the realm of things mental a very similar rule seems to hold good. The views, the theories, and the very habits of thought of one generation are succeeded by a new outlook, generally reactionary to that of

its predecessor. The over-ornate architecture of one generation is followed by the stark simplicity of another; the intense propagation of views on individual liberty give place to schemes of state-worship and dictatorships. Immorality and reform succeed each other throughout history. The outlook of to-day is indeed a complex of reactions against past views, but it is not necessarily superior. The relatively colossal strides in science and engineering, and the wealth of good literature of the Victorian times would compare well with those of our own days; and who knows but the folk of—let us say the end of the reign of Elizabeth II or her successor—may not look back on the views of our Georgian era as inferior to those of its predecessor?

But the Christian faith has survived a long historical sequence of such “modern ideas,” and has, up till now, **shown no sign of requiring repair or adjustment.** Or, to look at the question from another point of view, if it is true in our own day, that a simple Bible faith is sufficient for

some of our university professors, for many of our humble city workers, many of our poorest neighbours in the slums, many from different races and cultures; for the gifted Maori, the mystic Sadhu, the rejected outcaste, the wandering nomad of Gobi, or the frost-bound children of the north—if it is sufficient to meet at one and the same time the vastly differing mental outlooks of these, then surely it can suffice for equally differing outlooks that chance to follow each other in historical sequence.

But **does the faith not need to be restated in more modern forms?** Why should it? What is there in modern discovery that necessitates this? In modern literature we see a tendency for simplicity of language. Our preachers might do well to make a note of this, but surely the Gospels cannot be brought up to date in this respect. *A certain school for training modern writers still recommends the study of the New Testament as the outstanding example of simplicity in English.* Modern architecture would put utility before

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beauty, but our faith excels in both. Modern art is so mixed and doubtful a quantity that it can teach us little. Modern science has swung a good way from the blind materialism of earlier days. Its greater—and therefore humbler—followers still admit that there is much beyond their realm and ken, much that belongs to the sphere of a divine activity, a region where the profoundest thoughts of science and of pure philosophy blend with the deeper things of theology in a reverent silence before the mysteries of the infinite. No! **modern science**, “whose foundations,” to quote the words of one of its leading exponents, “are still closed for repairs and rebuilding,” would much prefer not to interfere in matters of faith. The discoveries of recent archaeological research, and the conclusions of many serious students of ancient history, have but hastened the departure of those now thoroughly antiquated views of higher criticism held by some who, strangely enough, call themselves Modernists. It is well that our faithful brethren of the

last generation did not modify their views to agree with the then prevailing theories of higher criticism. We should have had a lot to undo. Modern psychology will indeed help the preacher and the Sunday School teacher; but he would be a bold psychologist—or a very ignorant one—who would suggest that we have to-day a more accurate insight into the nature of man than that presented in its thousands of shades and aspects by the Bible. Modern morality in the opinion of many besides an archbishop, is definitely at a low ebb. Does anyone suggest that we adjust the Scriptural teaching to such a level? Thus we might continue, but the same conclusion is inevitable. *The Bible will do its work best if left unhelped, or unhindered, by the adjustments of well-meaning disciples.*

Finally, to look at the question from a different aspect altogether, it must be conceded that problems of economics, schemes and divisions in politics, schools of art and music, tastes in recreation and amusement, **all fluctuate with times and seasons.** The Bible deals with the funda-

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mental and unchanging realities, the same to-day as in the days of Queen Victoria, or of Alfred the Great, or of Solomon; the problems of life and death, of God and His universe and our place in it, of sin and suffering, and of repentance, salvation and joy. These, the realities of all human history, are dealt with by our Bible in a language that remains simple and comprehensible, though whole races and dialects decay. It remains for us, one and all, to adjust our own modern outlook to conformity with such a Book!

## CHAPTER II

## Social Responsibilities

BY RICHARD S. LONG, B.Sc.

**I**T was an East End district and the open-air meeting was just breaking up, when a typical "down-and-out" arrested one of the party with the remark: "**Preaching's no good here. What we want is bread.**"

In that remark lies one of the most difficult problems of Christian work. It is maintained by some worthy brethren that our responsibility is simply to "preach the Word," and that Christian activity should not be directed towards social reform or the improvement of social conditions. In the abstract, such a doctrine may appear consistent and logical, but when faced by distress and poverty in their most acute forms, the inconsistencies

and illogicalities of the doctrine are at once made palpable.

The destitute are far more interested in the material problems of feeding hungry mouths and in disinfecting vermin-infested dwellings than in the question of spiritual need. The child of the slum, with wan, pinched face and threadbare clothing, whose only home is a back-street tenement room shared by six, seven or eight others, longs far more for the blue sky and the expanse of green field or of sea than for the "home eternal above the bright blue sky." The dishevelled, ill-treated East End mother prays more for peace from a drunken, brawling wife-beater than for the peace of which the open-air workers sing. The disillusioned street-walker, pitiful in her bedraggled, meretricious finery, craves far more for comfort and honest friendship than for the spiritual fellowship of which the preacher shouts at the street corner.

**Let us face the realities of life.** The Gospel is sufficient to meet the needs of all, but of what appeal is a Gospel which has



only a spiritual message? "Give ye them TO EAT" (Matt. 14. 16) said the greatest of all Preachers.

**In the foreign field the need is recognised**, and an attempt is made to meet it. Medical missionaries set up hospitals and dispensaries to provide for the needs of the body; teachers erect schools to meet the needs of the mind; but, whether in hospital or school, that which is the real object, ever inspiring doctor, nurse, teacher and missionary, is the conversion of the soul. Yet, with glaring inconsistency, the worker at home ignores the temporal need and confines himself to "preaching the Word."

**All honour is due to the medical missions** of the East End, to the lodging-house workers of the cities, who seek to feed body as well as soul, and to the institutions which cater for the "down and out." But, at present, the efforts put forth only touch the fringe of the problem.

If the Gospel is to be effectively preached it must be accompanied in some measure by the alleviation of distress. This is not the advocating of a social Gospel, but

rather the practical application of the Gospel of Christ. Those engaged in evangelistic work in poor districts must be prepared to *give* as well as to *preach*, or their preaching will fall upon deaf ears.

The prejudiced may describe such a doctrine as bribery and may sneer at the attractive power of the "loaves and fishes," but the characteristic of the Master was that He went about doing good, healing the sick, raising the fallen, feeding the hungry. "*Go and do thou likewise*" (Luke 10. 37).

## CHAPTER III

## Class Distinction

BY ERNEST BARKER.

IN Gal. 3. 28, we learn that believers are all the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ. This at once places us on one level. In this sphere there is "neither Jew nor Greek; bond nor free; male or female; for we are ALL ONE in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3. 28). Religious, social, and all other distinctions are completely absent. We have one Father, one Saviour, one Holy Spirit, one life, one faith, one hope, one Eternal Home.

This oneness is indicated most significantly in the observance of the Lord's Supper. The Christian says: "The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? . . . For we being many are *one body*" (1 Cor. 10. 17). The "body of Christ" reminds us not only of

that sinless body in which our Saviour lived and suffered when on earth, but also of that mystical body, the Church, of which every genuine believer forms a part.

In many cosmopolitan centres of the earth, people of various nationalities remember the Lord together, and, as they thus gather for the highest of all spiritual services, they meet as members of the *One Body*. There can be no thought of class distinctions when Christians are thus engaged with their Lord around His table.

**The Apostle Paul fully realised this oneness between himself and his fellow-believers.** This is seen in his closing exhortation in the Philippian Epistle: "Salute EVERY saint in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4. 21). If those Christians had set up any bridge of distinction, that bridge was entirely demolished by the Apostle's *inclusive* salutation.

*So far as our standing in Christ is concerned, all class distinctions have been removed.* We are ONE in Him Who is the Head of all principality and power.

But there is another aspect of this subject which is pre-eminently practical. The Word of God recognises social distinctions in the relation of Christians one toward another in everyday life.

GEORGE FOX, the founder of the Quakers, held extraordinary notions on the matter of class distinctions. He affirmed that a Christian should face death itself rather than touch his hat to the greatest of mankind. When he was challenged to produce any Scriptural authority for this strange dogma, he cited the instance of the three godly Jews who were cast into the fiery furnace *with their hats on*. He also strictly prohibited bowing to anybody, because the woman mentioned in the Gospel, whilst she had a spirit of infirmity, was bowed together, but she ceased to bow as soon as she was liberated from the tyranny of Satan! *This is the abolition of class distinction with a vengeance.*

**The relationship between servants and masters** is clearly defined in Eph. 6, Col. 3, etc. The servant must remember that he is a servant, and that his master

has a right to expect from him obedience and devotion. If his master be a Christian he should not presume upon that fact, but seek to please him in all things; not answering again; not purloining; but showing all good fidelity, for this is well-pleasing to God (Tit. 2. 9 and 10).

On the other hand, the Christian master must not expect too much from his servant, but give him what is just and equal, remembering that after all he himself is a servant and that his Master is in Heaven. The same remarks, of course, apply to Christian maids and mistresses.

In the church of God the **younger members are exhorted to submit themselves to the elder**, whilst the elder brethren are exhorted to feed, encourage, and shepherd the lambs of the flock. These distinctions necessarily exist among Christians and should be recognised.

The Bible mentions "the brother of low degree" (Jas. 1. 9). This brother is advised to rejoice in that he is exalted. As a child of God he is privileged to be an heir of God, and a joint heir with

Christ. But it is quite clear that such a brother should recognise and respect those who happen to be in a higher station of life.

**If a brother in Christ possess a title,** or has one conferred upon him, such a title should be recognised by his fellow-Christians. By acting in this way we shall obey the distinct command to give "honour to whom honour is due" (Rom. 13. 7).

In any event let us all seek to exhibit *the Spirit of Christ* in word and in deed. Let our behaviour toward one another correspond with our dignified position as Christians.

## CHAPTER IV

# Sex Morality

By Dr. A RENDLE SHORT.

A FEW words may perhaps not be out of place, addressed to those who still believe that it is un-Christian and improper to write or say anything on such a subject. They take up this attitude on the grounds that Paul wrote: "But fornication, and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints" (Eph. 5. 3). But we must not interpret Scripture in such fashion **as to make one passage condemn another**. Sins against sex morality are frequently spoken of in the New Testament, both by our Lord Himself and by the apostles; in fact, there are more warnings against this class of sin than any other, namely, eighty-two\*.

\*I take these figures without verification from the late Dr. A. T. Scofield's "The Life that pleases God."



Against heresies and faction there are sixty warnings; against pride, forty-two; against anger, thirty-nine; against fault-finding, self-seeking, evil speaking, lying, a few of each; against unbelief, very many.

The policy of silence has led in the past to **most disastrous ignorance**. In any case, it is not easy to see why covetousness, also, should never be mentioned amongst saints; is not this sufficient to make it clear that the real meaning is that unbelievers shall never have cause to observe and talk about the existence of such sins amongst church members? What conversation *is* plainly warned against is: "Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks" (Eph. 5. 4).

A type of literature and of conversation is becoming all too common, which declares that **all moral laws are priest-made, and an unwarrantable interference with personal happiness and liberty**; that in primitive human society there was no such thing as sex morality. All this, of course, is the exact opposite

of the truth. The Christian law is God-made, not priest-made; Genesis and the New Testament here speak with one voice; "they twain shall be one flesh." God made the law, not to interfere with man's happiness, but to promote it; He knew that there is no greater source of happiness on earth than that of a marriage in the Lord, dissoluble only by death. It is not without significance that the modern poetry which speaks of the misery of false, perjured, fickle love, refers to unlawful love, and that the miserable stories of matrimonial tangles which fill our newspapers generally refer to those who have set at naught the law of God. A large number of leading anthropologists of to-day have testified that most of the evidence derived from our oldest sources of information, or from the customs of the most primitive tribes living on earth to-day goes to show that **earliest man worshipped one supreme God**, and practised monogamy. Even amongst wild animals and birds, it is very common for a mated pair to keep faithfully together for years;

that we do not observe this amongst domesticated animals and poultry is due to man's interference with their natural lives. Anthropology, like Scripture, acknowledges that man soon fell from primitive monotheism and primitive monogamy; "As they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, He gave them over to reprobate minds, to those things that are not convenient." True, Old Testament worthies often practised polygamy, but the Bible plainly states its evil results, as in the case of Abraham, Jacob, David, and Solomon.

**What is the Christian law of sex morality?** During the second, third, and fourth centuries, many Christians believed that the New Testament glorified the unmarried state, and vast numbers fled from society and became hermits, monks or nuns. In some churches this spirit still survives. It is true that Christ once spoke of those who remained celibate *for the Kingdom of Heaven's sake*, that Paul gave it to the Corinthians as his opinion that it was better, for those who

felt able to do so, not to marry, and that there is a mysterious passage, probably allegorical, about virgins in the Revelation. But Paul was writing on account of "the present distress"; there have always been some who rightly and for special reasons have given up the prospect of marriage for the sake of Christian service.

Christian law not only forbids union between man and woman outside the sanctity of the marriage bond, but makes this law equally binding on men and women. Christ pushes the prohibition right down into the thought-life; the lustful desire that is restrained by the convention of public opinion, or the law of the land, is sinful too. *Christian law forbids any unfaithfulness on the part of married persons*; speaks of it with horror, and enjoins that such should be put out of the Church.

Amongst the Palestinian Jews in the first century there were two schools of opinion with regard to divorce; one allowed a bill of divorcement to be given to the wife for the most trivial reasons, even

that she was displeasing to her husband. *Christ allows only one justification for divorce, namely, the unfaithfulness of the other partner.* In Mark's Gospel, even this exception is not mentioned, and some have supposed that the relevant words in Matthew's Gospel are a later interpolation, but *there are no sound grounds for rejecting the passage.*

People who, for their own purposes, **object to the Christian law of sex morality**, and say that it makes for unhappiness, do not sufficiently consider the unhappiness that results when the law is broken. Here is a brief catalogue of consequences I personally have seen—not read about, but seen. Attempted murder, suicide, abandonment or killing of babies, children, often well-to-do and well educated, tossed to and fro between estranged parents, perhaps wanted and loved by neither; life-long disease not only for the sinner, but also for his future wife and children; broken-up homes and lost situations; public disgrace in the divorce courts; breaking off of all friendships;

sudden disappearance from all Christian service. *The sum total of misery not only to the offender but to his or her family is simply incalculable.* The law of God faithfully observed means happiness, but "the way of the transgressors is hard."

But, it will be said, ought not the State to sanction divorce when a marriage has led to great hardship on account of drunkenness, cruelty, disease, a long term of imprisonment, hopeless insanity and the like? A case could be made out, no doubt, for legal relief in some of these circumstances, always bearing in mind the very important consideration that it is bad policy to unsettle ninety-nine marriages that might be happy, in order to dissolve a hundredth when there is no prospect of happiness. But we are not discussing British law, but *Christian law*, which surely expects a higher standard of moral conduct than that of the assize court. If people do not intend to keep their marriage vows, they should not ask the Church of God to witness them; let them go to a registry office.

Difficult problems arise as to **the Church's relation to divorced persons** who have re-married during the life-time of their former partner, and whether they should be admitted to the Lord's table. In the case of the *guilty* party, it seems clear from the New Testament that re-admission should be conditioned on repentance, and repentance needs to be proved by actions as well as words. With regard to the *innocent* party, it does not appear that there is any plain word from the Lord, and the discussion must be arrived at on grounds of inference, and weighing of the arguments on one side and the other.

One other point remains to be considered. In describing the qualifications of a bishop, Paul says that **he must be the husband of one wife**. This difficult expression may be understood in many ways. It seems to imply that in the early church there were brethren who might be candidates for office who were not the husband of one wife. If this is true (I am not certain that it is), whom does he mean

to exclude? Unmarried men? In that case he would have excluded himself! Men who after the death of a first wife have married again? There is nothing elsewhere in the Bible to signify that this is displeasing to God, and for certain younger widows, Paul recommends re-marriage. Polygamists? It is difficult to believe that such were church members at all. Men who had divorced an unfaithful wife and during her lifetime married again? This is perhaps the most probable suggestion, and if so, would convey that such might be admitted to ordinary church membership, but not to office.



## CHAPTER V

## Politics

By HAROLD P. BARKER, *Author of "Royal Service," etc.*

TO the godly in Israel healing of disease, wealth and riches, and a numerous family were promised (Psa. 103. 3; 112. 3; 128. 3). To the Christian none of these are guaranteed. Our blessings are not earthly but heavenly. And our citizenship is a heavenly one. "*Our citizenship is in Heaven*" (Phil. 3. 20, R. V.).

Again, Christians *are* Heavenly (1 Cor. 15. 48). That is, we belong to the company that is distinctively heavenly. Would to God we were more heavenly in character. But our shortcomings should not be allowed to weaken the truth that as to relationships, blessings, calling, position and prospects. Christians, unlike Israel, *are a heavenly people.*

Another fact that bears upon **the Christian's relation to politics** is that of the rejection of Christ. Religion has its place in the complex structure erected by the builders of the world system, but Christ is a Stone which will not fit into it. The builders will have none of Him (Matt. 21. 42).

For the loyal heart, this tremendous fact will colour everything. We are sojourning where our Lord has been refused and put to shame. How can we share in the world's hopes and ambitions when He Whom we love has been thrust out? Is it loyalty or treachery to be anything but a *stranger* where He has been refused a place?

The facts we have considered go a long way towards answering the question: Should Christians be politicians? But **still further facts claim notice.**

The time when Christ was in Palestine was an era of great political unrest. Nationalism was in the air. The Pharisee party was watching its opportunity to put itself at the head of an endeavour to

throw off the hated yoke of Rome. Was it not to be expected that the Lord Jesus would express His views as to the political situation, and lend the weight of His influence either to the national party, whose aims were patriotic and religious, or to the Herodian party, which supported the imperialistic policy of the government?

Members of the opposing parties attempted to obtain from Christ an expression of political opinion by a cleverly framed question: "Is it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar or not?" (Mark 12. 14). Would He advise them patiently to endure the Italian yoke, or strenuously to oppose it?

**What an opportunity for a politician!** Representative men of both the leading parties in the State waiting for His answer! What would the Teacher advise? Would He side with the government, or suggest a movement on the lines of passive resistance, or what?

It was soon seen that He had nothing to say to the politics on the day. His

mission was to urge the claims of God upon conscience and soul. So, pointing to the coin used for the payment of the imperial tax, He asked: "Whose is this image and superscription?"

"Cæsar's," was the reply.

Then said He: "Render therefore unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and *unto God the things that are God's.*"

Probably this answer was received with murmurings by the Pharisee party. But it is impossible to recall the incident without perceiving that the Lord Jesus deliberately refused to take any part in politics. Rather than do so, He would let people esteem Him unpatriotic. Was He not in this, as in everything else, "leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps."

On another occasion **the question of arbitration was brought up.** A quarrel had arisen, and the Lord Jesus was asked to act as arbitrator. What should we have done? Should we have consented, arguing that it was an opportunity for promoting peace and righteousness, and

for doing good among men? *Our Master refused.* Other, and higher, business than that was His.

Is arbitration wrong? Certainly not. To arbitrate is better than to fight. Let the world settle its quarrels by arbitration, rather than by war, by all means. The point is that Christ, "leaving us an example," left that sort of thing to others. He did not condemn arbitration, but *He took no part in it.* It belonged to a sphere of things which is outside the "Father's business."

I am aware that many estimable Christians will dissent from my thesis. They hold that it is not inconsistent for them to take part in politics. They consider that Christians should exert themselves to give a moral complexion to public life, and to introduce wholesome influences into the political arena.

They might learn a lesson from the case of Lot. A righteous man, even though resident in Sodom, he accepted a position of authority there. He "sat in the gate of Sodom." His desire may have been to see

justice take the place of injustice, and to sweeten the putrid atmosphere of Sodom's municipal life. He may have argued: "I enjoy the amenities of this city; have I not responsibilities to fulfil?" The endeavour ended in most awful failure.

**But is it not right to try to get the best men sent to Parliament?** Will not better laws be passed, and the country be better governed, by good men than by bad? It may be thought so, but the contrary is often the case. When the time came for God to choose a governor for the nation He chose a violent, tyrannical man, Nebuchadnezzar. God is behind the scenes and can carry out His will through the wickedest of men, as well as through the best. Let Christians, then, occupy themselves with the business of *their* Master, and leave the world to attend to the business of *its* master.

Of course, as residents of this or of that place, we have our responsibilities, and the Christian should be the first to pay rates and taxes, and to give due obedience to the governing authorities. *Legally he*

*has both nationality and race.* In a hotel register he must sign himself "British" or otherwise. For passport purposes he must also state his race: "English," "Scottish," or whatever it may be. He may also avail himself of the incidence of his birth in any city or country when it would further the interests of the Kingdom of God (see Acts 21. 39; 22. 25). But that is another matter entirely.

The Christian has his portion in a different sphere altogether. The world to come will have its heavenly, as well as its earthly side; and in the heavenly part, the Kingdom of our Father, we shall be as sons at home. All the glories of Christ in connection with the blessing of men on earth will be for us adoringly to contemplate, but we ourselves shall be with Him, dwelling in the Father's love, and knowing as we are known.

Wonderful indeed it is that that world of love and life is ours to enjoy even now. We are not actually there, but the Spirit of God enables us to enter and taste the joys of that realm of bliss. It is a sphere

where earth's interests and pursuits have no place. One who has breathed the atmosphere of that home of eternal love could never again, unless greatly fallen, enter the lists of earthly strife and contest. He would seek to spend the time of his sojourning here, not in joining in that which pertains to the world-system, but in doing the will of God, and serving the interests of the One who is rejected here, but exalted *there!*



## CHAPTER VI

## Clericalism

By W. E. VINE, M.A., Joint Editor of *Echoes of Service*.

**T**HE Scriptures provide safeguards against every form of evil. Only by constant meditation in the Word of truth can we be preserved both from acts of transgression against the will of God and from a gradual drift into methods or courses inconsistent with what His Word has set forth.

Certain forms of the latter evils may be comprehended under the term "Clericalism." In the early times of the present era **there was a gradual drift to ministerialism**, and we need to watch against the same tendency.

It is possible for a man of outstanding personality and strong force of character, to acquire a dominating position over his fellow-elders, they themselves choosing the easier path of leaving things to his

control. That a man of sound spiritual judgment and ability should be looked up to for counsel and help, would be consistent with the mind of the Lord, but even such a one needs to be on his guard lest, in the natural course of things, matters be left to him which should be taken in hand by others or by the joint co-operation of all the elder brethren. He will show his spirituality of judgment by avoiding taking prominence unnecessarily, and by seeing to it, as far as possible, that one and another of his fellow-overseers should undertake responsibility. It is incumbent, indeed, upon them all to watch for evidences of the work of the Spirit of God in younger men, to whom in due time will be committed the joint spiritual care of the Assembly. The existing overseeing brethren should commit the things which they have received "to faithful men who shall be able to teach others also."

There is need of constant prayer that God would be pleased to raise up in Assemblies **duly qualified and compe-**

**tent spiritual guides**, men who have known from early days, what it is to walk in the fear of God, men well taught in the Word, who manifest a readiness, in the spirit of self-denial, humbly to undertake the solemn responsibilities of service as overseers.

While seeking to be free from humanly devised religious systems, let us beware of clerisy in practice, if not in name.

Where in the course of some years of assembly life one man virtually takes, or becomes **possessed of, the control of an Assembly**, there is bound to follow a condition of spiritual blight and barrenness. The command, "Quench not the Spirit" directly applies to such cases. The one-man-minister arrangement inevitably involves a quenching of the Spirit, who would otherwise exercise His prerogatives of raising up and using faithful men in the company to deliver the gifts of joint spiritual ministry to, and care for, the flock, according to the New Testament pattern.

**Another form of clericalism presents**

a **danger** against which those who visit places by invitation to preach the Gospel, or minister the Scriptures, need to be on their guard. It is according to Scripture that those who are called of God to give themselves to such service, should be supported financially by the churches, where the need exists. "The labourer is worthy of his hire" (Luke 10. 7). But let not the servant of God demand that he shall receive a certain sum as payment for his service. What may be expected as a right, should not become a matter of demand. Rather let him who trusts in God bear all things, that he may cause no hindrance to the Gospel of Christ (1 Cor. 9. 12, R.V.), and that he may in no way make merchandise of spiritual gift.

**There is need of watchfulness**, too, against the tendency to clericalism in the attitude which regards *full-time service for the Lord as a profession*. That God calls certain of His servants to devote their whole time to the work of the Gospel, or to the spiritual care of His people, does not constitute them a special class upon

which Assemblies are to depend for such ministry in their midst. The way in which He has used and does use those who, while following some avocation to earn their daily bread, devote much of their leisure time to ministry of the Word of Life, calls for recognition of the work of the Holy Spirit in fitting such men for this ministry. A spiritually endowed brother who engages in earning his living may be as truly qualified and approved of, by, God as a minister of His Word, as one who is called to whole-time service. To refuse to recognise this and abstain from using the service of the former is to quench the Spirit and foster professionalism.

Again, **a servant of God is not a missionary because he gives his whole time to the work of the Gospel.** A missionary is not so constituted because he goes abroad. If he has not been a missionary in his own locality, as "a sent one" in the immediate sphere of the Assembly to which he belongs, he cannot be qualified to fulfil such service elsewhere. To regard service in the Gospel as

a kind of profession upon which one enters when he gives his full time to it or goes abroad to engage in it, is to disregard the essential conditions relating to such service, and to adopt a form of clericalism, every kind of which is foreign to the teaching of Scripture.

Moreover, a **Scriptural Assembly is so constituted** that it pleases God to develop spiritual gifts from among its own members, and where there is unity and true fellowship of the Spirit, there will be a readiness to recognise and make use of those whom the Spirit thus raises up. Why should it be considered necessary to invite some brother from elsewhere to come and baptise converts, when there are those in the Assembly itself whom the Lord has gifted to fulfil such service?

Whatever the cause may be, whether local rivalry or partiality for any special brother, or any unscriptural differentiation such as that to which reference has been made, **let no such hindrance be placed in the path of blessing which the Lord has marked out for His saints.**

## CHAPTER VII

## Trade Unionism

By DUGALD CAMERON.

THE industrial revolution of the 18th century produced new factory conditions which inevitably resulted in the formation of trade clubs among the workers in each factory. Restrictive legislation failed to prevent combinations of workers, and the founding of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers some 80 years ago to a great extent laid the basis of modern trade unionism. The growth of employers' associations and the reference of disputes to joint boards of employers and workers were also part of the natural development.

In Great Britain, **trade unions have a membership of five million** individuals, banded together for the betterment of conditions and remuneration. These unions are officially recognised by the

Government, and are frequently consulted on general questions and investigations. They are a natural concomitant of the capitalist system, and it is difficult to see how they could be dispensed with nowadays.

The question of **the Christian's relationship to these organisations** presents a very difficult problem. In some trades it is now impossible to secure employment unless one is a member of the appropriate union. Non-unionists are simply not employed.

When it is possible to find employment whilst remaining a non-union member, other problems arise. All negotiations regarding wages, hours, conditions of working, etc., are carried on by the union, and *many improvements effected are the result of union agitation*. In such improvements the non-member benefits equally with the member, yet it is the latter who really pays the cost of obtaining the improvements. It is his subscription which finances the trade union organisation, without which negotiations



would be impracticable. *On grounds of equity it hardly seems fair to accept all benefits gained by the union, and yet refuse to be associated with it.* Indeed, if the sole purpose of a union is that of collective bargaining with the employers, it is difficult to discover a legitimate reason for holding aloof.

Many unions, moreover, have **attractive benefit and insurance schemes for their members.** To many a working man these schemes have proved a salvation on more than one occasion. To withhold such help from one's fellowmen (by refusing to pay subscriptions) is surely not very Christian-like.

It is often argued that the fact of becoming a member automatically involves one in political activities, but this is definitely not the case. The Trade Unions Act of 1927 forbade the collection of union funds for political purposes except with the express consent of the subscriber. No Christian who desires to abstain from politics, therefore, need be involved in political interests by membership of his union.

**The Christian who has scruples about striking would obviously be unwise to become a member of a union** which employed this instrument in their negotiations with employers.

The character of the trade union, its rules, limitations and activities, and the precise position of the individual concerned, must all be considered before a definite reply could be given to the question whether a Christian should become a member of a trade union. It is essentially a matter for the individual.

There are, however, **broad guiding lines given in the Scriptures.** The definite prohibition against the unequal yoke, supported as it is by the general teaching of the New Testament, might well make one chary of associating closely with an organisation of unconverted men.

The principles enunciated regarding the relationships of servants and masters would, in the majority of cases, definitely rule out participation in strikes. The Christian has a duty which is greater, and

a standard which is higher than that of other men.

In a future day, **all workers will be compelled to become members** of their appropriate unions or associations; and all organisations, whether of employers or employed, will be under the control of the great emperor whom the Revelation calls the Beast. In view of the ultimate end of trade unionism, one might reasonably feel doubtful of any contact between Christian and union now. While we would not condemn the Christian who feels free to become a member, if it is possible to keep clear of such entanglements, it is our obvious duty to do so.

## CHAPTER VIII

## The Body

By CHAVE COX, M.B., B.Sc., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.

YOU as a Christian have a wonderful physical body. But it is no more wonderful than that of your fellow-man. Both your bodies function in the same way and obey the same laws. If you disregard the ordinary simple running rules, your bodily mechanism will break down. Some Christians seem to doubt this and use the body (which incidentally includes the brain) in a way which can only proceed to one end, that is, failure of function. If you, as a part-time speaker go all out all day at your exacting job, continue all out every night of the week and more so on Sunday, sleep badly, have not time for proper food, or to allow your organs to digest what you do swallow, it is not surprising that after a period,

health suffers. In my experience God does not set aside His laws of the working of the body to enable *you* to do this. This in no way limits the power of God to provide *special* accessions of strength for special circumstances. It is the intention of this chapter to create in the Christian some intelligent forethought, thus enabling him by taking legitimate care *now*, to ensure that his body, in the mercy of God, may be used long and successfully in useful service.

Let us consider for a moment a Christian family—father, mother, and three or four young people of varying ages. Have you as parents thought that a great deal of the happiness in your home depends on the healthful atmosphere prevailing? Of course, it is impossible that days of real sickness and anxiety will not occur. But apart from these crises, what is the physical background of your home? Oh! you say glibly, ours is a Christian home. Christ the unseen Guest and all that. Yes, granted, and what *does* Christ see? A background of nervous tension or irrita-

bility; of restless worry or anxious care; of frayed nerves and even open bickering and quarrelling between the two whose job it is to care for and control those whom God has given them? And the children in such a home? Well, they will have a very poor example of what home should be, and a very bad soil from which to obtain nourishment at the critical, character-forming period of life. Or is there really order and control in your home? Do you, as parents, love to do things decently and in order yourselves and teach and expect reproduced in your children that same love of order which in itself tends to control, smooth working and harmony amongst all? Not a rigid "do this" and "don't do that," but a sensible instruction in the whys and wherefores of life. Most normal children are essentially reasonable creatures, and they adore *consistency* in every department of life! If *you* don't like plenty of soap and water and all that stands for in personal hygiene, you may be sure your children won't bother a bit about it. If *you* neglect that

daily habit of life which is so essential for the proper functioning of the digestion and for the removal of poisonous waste products from the body, why should your children think anything of its importance? Children require much sleep and this should be insisted upon. So much of their happiness of temper depends upon it. And if you are one of those late readers, much of yours, your wife's and your children's happiness depends on your getting your seven hours!

And more happiness depends on food! But how much unhappiness can be treated by it and by its abuse. Diets are the rage to-day. Everything can be cured by dieting; so the credulous believe, and so the incredulous go on supplying diets! To my mind, the normal individual should bear two points in mind. First, don't eat too much or too often; and second, let your daily dietary be as varied as possible and as fresh as possible. Avoid living out of the "can" if you possibly can! A special word to you poor preachers! It is very bad indeed for your duodenum to have

to engulf a large, hot, but indigestible supper when you are tired and often after 10 o'clock at night. Don't do it! Have some hot milk and chocolate and go to bed. Perhaps dutiful wives and kind hostesses will read these words and not be too insistent!

You must *not* neglect exercise, either for yourself or your children. Bodily exercise *certainly* profiteth a little. There are some Christians who think it wrong to run, while to run after a ball would be an act of gross impiety! Whereas in reality a vigorous game of tennis, hockey, golf, or the like diverts the mind, invigorates the circulation, tones the muscles and aids the digestion, and what more comprehensive prescription could you want? But you must not become *obsessed* by bodily exercise.

You must also have exercise of mind. Your daily work exercises your mind and also tires it. Your spiritual work should also exercise your mind and *will* also tire it. Every Christian, therefore, ought to have as a hobby one of the "whatsoever



things that are of good report" to think upon and to work at apart from his everyday work and in addition to his spiritual activities. Some of the worst mental breakdowns I have ever met have occurred amongst Christians, who, working hard all day at an exacting secular occupation, devote *all* their spare time to devotional activities at conferences or in much reading. A brain worked on one line and on one only will in the end refuse to go on working normally at all.

And so to conclude—How should a Christian seek to address himself to the great experiment of living? What principles should guide him? Mainly, I think, two.

First to develop and maintain *control* of himself, his mind, his desires, his appetites, his bodily activities as a whole. Second, to seek to choose an *ordered*, balanced life; balanced in thought, in nutrition, in exercise, in rest, in play.

But, you say, this, as advice so often is, can only be the counsel of perfection. It depends for the carrying out upon myself,

my will. And *I* can't do this. I have such strong desires, such deep emotions, such a restless mind, such an appallingly vigorous body, such weakness and fear. Yes, but that is just where the Christian has the pull over the other man. If you are truly Christ's, you have Christ's Spirit and all His power working within and throwing His weight on the side of your will. With such a dynamic, the Christian, physically burdened with the plus or minus of vitality *can* experience a controlled and balanced life and thus live physically to the glory of the God Who made him.

## CHAPTER IX

## Recreations

BY KENNETH W. LUCKHURST, M.A.

THE problem of the attitude which the Christian should adopt towards recreations is unquestionably a most important part of "The Challenge of To-day." Our age is characterised by an increasing wealth of fascinating pleasures and recreations, and an increasing love of them, and they therefore present to the Christian a correspondingly stronger challenge and more complex problem. To take an obvious example: Many who—perhaps quite rightly—would refuse to attend certain forms of entertainment in a public place, can and do—rightly or wrongly—"listen-in" to the same performances in their own home.

Such a paradoxical attitude, even if it can be justified, proves the need for clear principles, and it will be the object of

this short chapter to suggest a few of those which the Scriptures present for our guidance.

In the first place **the Christian's attitude** to this as to all other matters **should be one of self-denial**. Even the highest things in life he is to hold lightly, for did not the Lord say of human relationships: "He that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me, and he that loveth son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me?" (Matt. 10. 37). Now, although the Lord does not call upon us all actually to leave our parents or give up our children for His sake, He does call upon us to be ready to do so. And so with the lesser matter of recreations. We should be ready to give up some attractive recreation not only if there is any "harm" in it, but also if it comes in the way of some service to which we are called, or absorbs our thoughts and energies to such an extent as to draw them away from the Lord (some recreations are notoriously absorbing and correspondingly dangerous for the Christian), or if some weaker

brother may find our example a stumbling-block.

This leads us to the **question of doubtful” recreations** which present a problem both to our wills and to our judgment; to our wills, because which of us does not experience the power of the trinity of evil? To our judgment, because there is much difference of opinion as to the recreations in which a Christian may legitimately indulge.

Paul says a good deal about “doubtful things,” but his attitude is always the same—for himself an almost startling broadmindedness and refusal to be bound by other people’s narrower prejudices (*e.g.*, “every creature of God is good and nothing to be refused if it be received with thanksgiving, for it is sanctified by the Word of God and prayer” (1 Tim. 4. 4), for others a constant fear lest he should be a stumbling-block (*e.g.*, “Destroy not him with thy meat for whom Christ died” (Rom. 14. 15). He was no doubt very conscious of the Lord’s terrible words against those who “offend” His “little ones.”

Two other points may be mentioned in this connection. **The fascination of a recreation**—and especially a “doubtful” one—**is strong**, and though we may begin innocently enough, “let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall” (1 Cor. 10. 12). Unfortunately, also, it is almost impossible to take part in some recreations (especially some forms of sport) except by association with unconverted and probably worldly people. How far this constitutes a reason for abstaining is clearly a matter for individual judgment and depending on circumstances, but it must be decided largely by the spiritual strength of the Christian concerned and the extent to which the necessary association is purely social.

If, then, there are **such dangers in indulgence in recreations**, should they be entirely avoided—unless in a very austere form? That is the view of some Christians, and in every case of doubt it is surely the *right* view; but it is hardly the *ideal*.

The advisability for purely physical

reasons of having some form of recreation is put very cogently by Dr. Chave Cox in another chapter. The Christian's aim should be to be in all things the very best he can for his Master, and no man is his very best—however spiritually developed—if his body is flabby and his mind has gone to seed through lack of exercise of a healthy recreative kind. Nor, if God has given him a special sense of beauty, whether musical or artistic, is he the very best if that gift is neglected. (Of course, in particular circumstances and for particular reasons the Christian may, as we have seen, be called upon to sacrifice one of these things.)

“All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy.” Too many of us are “dull boys,” and that is neither being our very best nor does it help to make us attractive soul-winners. In these days of religious indifference it becomes **increasingly important that we should adorn the doctrine.** “Walk in wisdom toward them that are without,” said Paul, “redeeming the time. Let your speech be

always with grace (*i.e.*, let your conversation be pleasant and attractive), seasoned with salt (*i.e.*, pure, but interesting), that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man." If I play no games, read only religious books, and do not indulge in any other recreation, my points of contact with my neighbour are very limited and my difficulty in winning his friendship and confidence increased. Is there any need for Christians to be narrow-minded and of narrow interests when they are told to think on "all that is true, all that is dignified, all that is righteous, all that is pure, all that is lovely, all that is pleasant, whatever is virtuous and whatever is praiseworthy?" (Phil. 4. 8).

Apart also from their essential place in **the building up of sound balanced Christian character**, to the glory of God, recreations may sometimes be a definite and direct means in soul-winning, and so serve two objects at the same time. Their value in work among children is nowadays increasingly realised; and what great things have been done through a conse-



crated talent for music! To seek to win older people, however, by associating with them by means of recreations is to use a weapon which is more often turned back upon the one who seeks to wield it. The Lord, it is true, associated freely with publicans and sinners, with those who were sick and in need of His healing power. But that He was able to do so without defilement was due to His unique person, and, from a purely human point of view, to His long seasons of communion with God. Christians who go into worldly company hoping to influence it for Christ usually find that the reverse happens.

One last quotation from the Epistles will summarise the whole matter—"whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God" (1 Cor. 10. 31). Let our **choice of recreations, and the manner in which we engage in them**, be to the glory of God, and if we abstain, let us do this also for His glory, not to please ourselves nor yet sanctimoniously, but in a manner worthy of Him who "did all things well."

## CHAPTER X

## Friendships

BY A. J. CORNISH.

ONE of the most wonderful ideas of God unfolded to us in the New Testament is that of God as Friend. In some homes it is all too true that a friend from without may mean far more to a member of the home than a brother or sister or parent. But God is so perfect a Father that His parenthood ripens into friendship. His friendship is unique, incomparable, sublime.

The main object of this chapter, however, is **earthly friendships**. Friends have a great deal to do with the formation of character. They leave an impress on our personalities. They can injure our lives and impoverish our character or, alternatively, they can have the opposite effect. Influence, good or bad, never dies. If, therefore, we are to be men and women

whose influence for good upon our generation is to be felt, we must be certain that the development of our character is largely assisted by friends chosen in accordance with God's Word.

The friends we chose to accept into intimacy, the companions we prefer and in whose presence we delight, and, above all, the partners we choose or accept for life, have, in the first instance, no claims upon us beyond what we give of our own free will. In the formation of these friendships we need, therefore, to govern ourselves by Christian principles.

**As to these principles we may be perfectly clear,** since the Bible describes the characteristics of those whose friendship should be cultivated and avoided. The broad distinction, prominent everywhere in Scripture, between the Church and the world, pervades all these descriptions as their central principle. There are more minute distinctions, but the broad principle is a sufficient guide, for by this distinct classification we may most assuredly be guided.

Why should such a distinction be made?

1. **Because of the weakness of human nature.** There is in each of us an inherent predisposition to evil and liability to fall under temptation, and never is temptation so dangerous and fatal as when it comes in the subtle garb of affection. Remember Samson and Delilah. When a contact with an ungodly person is made for us we must look to God for help to bear such testimony that His purpose might be fulfilled, and the person concerned won for the Saviour. But when we rashly put ourselves into touch with those who love not the Saviour, we must not be surprised if we find ourselves yielding to temptation, and perhaps experiencing the chastening hand of God for our arrogance.

2. **Because friendship with the world is dishonouring to God.** It is inconsistent with an active, fervent love and with the supreme reverence we owe to Him.

3. **Friendship with the world is enmity with God.** One finds it impossible to understand how those who love the Lord

Jesus Christ can consistently choose as their friends those who hate Him or who, at least, are indifferent to Him. One certainly cannot conceive of such an attitude in earthly relationships. Who, for instance, would make as a companion one who was in the habit of slandering the father or mother he loved? How, then, can there be pleasure in the company of one who has not the same lofty ideals of the Christian life?

**4. Such friendship serves to confuse and obliterate the line of demarcation between the Church and the world, and to destroy the witness the Church should bear.** For what can men think when they see Christians cultivating the friendship of non-Christians, but that it is immaterial whether a man is a Christian or not and that sin is not the base thing the Bible declares it to be? By such practice are we not, in effect, giving the lie to God who has declared the world to be under judgment?

Does that mean that I can claim friendship with any other Christian? Not

necessarily. We can and should be on friendly terms with all, but it does not follow that we may be friends with anyone we choose. We should select as friends decided Christians, those who are out and out for the Lord. We should give a wide berth to those who are walking loosely and disorderly.

We should, moreover, select as friends those Christians who are in our own station in life. But are we not all one in Christ? True; in that sense there are no distinctions. Yet the fact remains that, in life as we find it, there is such a thing as social status, which cannot altogether be ignored. This is not advocating snobbery. It is best to recognise social standing and to seek to make friends with fellow-Christians who obviously are at our own level and move in our own particular circle of life.

We should then **cultivate the society of Christians** in that circle who are morally and spiritually superior to ourselves, so as to raise ourselves to a higher level of spiritual experience.

On the other hand, when the love of Christ comes into a human life, it seeks out the lonely and friendless and gives itself unsparingly to their service. We may feel, therefore, that, in order to demonstrate the qualities of a friend, we would like to cultivate the friendship of other Christians not so firmly established in the faith in order to try and help them.

The points so far considered relate to friendship generally. We must now face up to the question of friendships between the opposite sexes. Friendship is not love; although one may lead to the other, and where they merge it is difficult to say.

There is no reason why friendships as such should not be formed between members of the opposite sex, just as they are formed within the sexes. We should avail ourselves of any such conditions made for us by God. If we do not, we shall be the losers, for it is evident that each sex has something to give to the other.

This is perhaps a little dangerous, particularly if we have only one friend of the opposite sex. If, however, we keep

such friendships on a high, spiritual and intellectual level, avoiding everything which savours of the frivolous and which tends to excite the emotions and passions, no harm can arise. In fact, profit will accrue.

But what of the **more intimate friendships between the sexes**? For after all, what starts as an ordinary friendship, often develops into a very real *love*. Make sure that you do really love one another, and that it is not a case of fascination or infatuation aroused by good looks or personality. Love to the Christian particularly is not merely physical, but spiritual. While undoubtedly the physical has its place, yet if you are involved in such a relationship and your reactions are only physical, think again before going on with it. **Don't try to awaken love.** If you are in doubt, probably you are not in love at all.

Don't start seriously considering such a connection too early in life unless you are really convinced that it is God's will for you. Young men particularly should wait until their career is settled.



Young men, remember that **a woman is different from you**, physically, mentally, and emotionally, and therefore reacts differently. Be warned against the sin of trifling with the feelings and affections of the gentler sex. Be straightforward and manly. Be careful in the choice of the companion whom you mean to make your wife, and be true and constant to her.

Young women, refuse all mere human attachments. Do not, for your own sake, consider the thought of *a life-long companionship with one who is not the Lord's*.

Let all be prepared to remain single if that be God's revealed will.

But let us revert to generalisations. **A real friendship is, of course, the work of time.** It grows and ripens as the days go by. The necessary sympathy, love, and understanding cannot possibly be established all at once. Some friendships naturally develop more quickly than others. Similarity in character, ideas, and interests help considerably to develop what is ordinarily a slow process. A cordial and permanent friendship must

be based on mutual love and esteem, finding its origin in the heart of God. We learn to love one another sincerely as and because we love our Saviour.

It was St. Augustine who said "true friendship cannot be unless God cement it in those who cleave to Him by that love which is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." Our affection must spring from a mutual relation in Christ as brothers and sisters of one family. Intercourse conducted on these principles must grow into friendship.

With such a foundation there should be no question of mere lip profession and the hollow insincerity of worldly acquaintanceship. **There should be nothing shallow about our friendship,** since our affection has such a deep source as the loving heart of God.

The obligations of friendship are mutual. Friendship is not merely courtesy and goodwill. While sympathy, kindness, unselfishness and affectionate discharge of every mutual duty may justly be claimed by all, this by no means involves the

offer of friendship. For by friendship we mean not friendliness but a bond of intimate confidence and actual affection. A friend is one to whom we open our hearts, whose companionship we seek, by whose advice we are influenced, a kind of second self; a relation not by blood, but by love.

A friend is one who **calls to the best that is in us**, who ever helps us to realise our higher nature. He is one whom we can trust utterly, who loves us in spite of our faults, who will be frank with us, who will counsel, reprove, strengthen, encourage or comfort us as occasion demands, who by deeds as well as words gives evidence of the tie that binds. A friend must give and forgive, and be prepared to sink his or her own feelings.

A friend always influences. None can wholly escape the influence of habitual intercourse. There is the unconscious influence we all wield and the conscious influence which, on occasion, one may and ought to exercise upon the other. How careful we should always be in

exerting our influence that it might always be for good.

There are times when the advice or reproof of a friend becomes a duty. Our words will then only have just so much influence as our example has given. Take heed, therefore, lest the critical time when a friend can prove himself a friend indeed finds us unprepared.

**It is the privilege of true friendship to speak plainly**, and on the other hand to hear willingly. Honest advice must be generously received and impartially considered. Remember, however, that harsh speech renders advice unsavoury and causes it to lose its efficacy. Avoid reproachful words. Season your candour with discretion and moderation, so as to make it easier to accept your advice. Kind words, watchfulness against wounding sensitiveness, cost very little, but they are priceless in value.

This aspect of friendship is perhaps the most delicate and most likely to be the cause of misunderstanding. For this reason it is sometimes avoided. If, however,

this difficult and delicate office of true intercourse is not discharged, the highest benefit to be derived from friendship will be lost. Although this means a perfect understanding, it does not allow of presumption or license or inconsideration or lack of feeling. The self-respect of a friend must be maintained intact. *Familiarity must not be allowed to breed contempt.*

But friendship is not merely a question of words. **It may cost a little** to help our friends by word of mouth but the test comes when action is required. There are plenty of friends so-called, but it is only when one reaches a crisis that one realises who can really be placed in that category. A friend is one who can be relied upon absolutely, whatever the emergency. Someone has said that a friend does not stand at the top of a hill and beckon the other to follow. Together they climb the hill, hand in hand, each helping the other, until the summit is reached.

A friend must be a willing life-long helper in Christ, not a hindrance, one that needs no pressing and who makes no

reserve as to what he will do and how or when. Each must live for the other and devote himself to the service of the other. Beware, however, lest we become absorbed in each other to the exclusion of all else. A self-centred friendship almost invariably leads to jealousy and discontent.

**Friendship demands devotion of the first order**, devotion which finds its inspiration in the heart of God. Most of us play for safety these days. We place a reserve upon our devotion. A little of the "do or die" spirit would be like a breath from heaven. Someone has said "Perfect friendship is that undefinable something born of two hearts when they meet in the heart of Christ." That very few friendships reach this perfection is clear, but that is the standard at which we should aim. We should be prepared to do anything rather than that our friendship should be broken. There is no reason why a friend once won need ever be lost. In this connection take notice of the warning of Prov. 16. 28. "A whisperer separateth chief friends."

## CHAPTER XI

## Business

By FREDK. A. TATFORD, Editor of *Service*.

OF all the departments of life, there is probably none in which it is more difficult to practise Christianity than in the business realm. When men lived by tilling the soil or by tending flocks and herds, life was simple and issues were clear-cut. Then right was right and wrong was wrong, and the line of demarcation between them was distinct and well-defined. But nowadays life is complex and artificial, and it is not always so easy to distinguish between good and evil. The shadow of wrong gradually fades into the light of right, and it is often difficult to say where one ends and the other begins. This is especially the case in business life.

In addition, **commercial practice is**

**frequently in complete disagreement with the moral standards of Christianity.** Deceit and bluff, chicanery and trickery, are part of the stock-in-trade of the successful business man. In fact, an excellent man recently said quite seriously: "You can't mix religion and business. It won't work."

If Christianity cannot be applied in business, however, it is valueless to the man in the street. It is in business that we find most of our contacts with life and with our fellowmen. If it is impossible to live for Christ there, it is useless to attempt to do so elsewhere.

But even a superficial reading of the New Testament reveals that the writers **plainly contemplated the application of their teachings to the daily avocation.** Repeatedly in his epistles the Apostle Paul stresses the vital necessity, in all earthly relationships, of viewing everything in relation to Christ. Masters are reminded that their attitude is to be governed by the fact that they also have a Master in Heaven. Servants are ex-



horted to serve as unto the Lord and not as unto men, since they serve the Lord Christ.

After portraying the incomparable glories and excellencies of Christ in the Colossian epistle, Paul suddenly descends to **the mundane relationship of masters and servants**, etc., but only that he might virtually plead that with the light of that glory flooding the soul, even the relationships of everyday life may be viewed in the light of the glorious One.

**The Employer.** In a provincial town some years ago, two Christians went into partnership together. The business they commenced gradually grew until they employed some 200 men. The wages they paid were always in excess of the normal; every employee was allowed holidays with pay; in cases of illness, little delicacies were mysteriously forthcoming for the invalid; when families increased, wages were always augmented. Those men were known as model employers, and when they died, strong men wept unashamedly.

In the same town a very prosperous

business is owned by a Christian man, who is very highly respected by friends and neighbours. By his staff, however, that man is detested as a mean, unsympathetic skinflint.

In both instances, the individuals concerned professed to belong to Christ. *Which was practising the teachings of Christ?*

In Col. 4. 1, Paul enjoins **employers to pay their employees what is just and equal**. In other words, sweating, underpayment and "grinding" is definitely forbidden. Even from a practical point of view, the hard-hearted, close-fisted employer rarely gets the best out of his workmen. Fair wages and equitable treatment are but due, and the Christian employer is responsible to mete out to his staff the same treatment which he receives from his Master in Heaven.

Again, because he has a Master in Heaven, the **Christian master is commanded to forbear threatening** (Eph. 6. 9). An overbearing bully and "nigger-driver," who is always abusing his staff, could hardly claim to be ordering his

conduct in the light of his Master's attitude to him.

Nor is it conceivable that a Christian employer would instruct his employees to practise deception upon customer or client, or definitely to swindle those dealing with him. Every action should be viewed in the light of the Throne above.

**The Employee.** (1) IN RELATION TO HIS EMPLOYER. If a recognition of the lordship of Christ is to be the determining factor in the employer's relations with his staff, similar motives should also direct the employee. In the Pauline epistles the exhortation is reiterated constantly that all service is to be "in singleness of heart and fearing God" (Col. 3. 22) not with eye-service as men-pleasers. Everything is to be done, not as unto men, but as unto the Lord.

Whether it be the addition of a column of figures, the serving of a customer, or the driving of a piece of machinery, the sole object before the Christian servant is to be the glory of the Lord. With the desire to please Him as an impelling

motive, life is robbed of its mediocrity and monotony, and is irradiated by a divine glory.

Employees are also enjoined to pay **due respect to those set in authority over them**, counting "their own masters worthy of all honour, that the name of God and His doctrine be not blasphemed" (1 Tim. 6. 1). In the revolt against the absurd and unnatural cringing and fawning of an earlier day, it has become exceptional nowadays to find even a modicum of respect paid to employer or superior. The Christian, however, is under a definite obligation to **pay honour where it is due**. If his employer is a Christian, the fact is not to be presumed upon, but due service is to be rendered "because they are faithful and beloved, partakers of the benefit" (1 Tim. 6. 2). The relationship of master and servant claims recognition, and the Christian bond does not release an individual from natural responsibilities.

Obedience to masters in all things is commanded in Col. 3. 22 and Eph. 6. 5, and Peter adds that such subjection should

be “not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward” (1 Peter 2. 18). Moreover, no matter what the provocation, **“answering again” is forbidden** (Tit. 2. 9). From a human point of view, resentment of an order or instruction might perhaps be fully justified, but the child of God must render implicit obedience and show no sign of resentment. Grumbling and complaining are not for the believer.

It is scarcely necessary to add that obedience *is* limited where infringement of moral or Scriptural standards is concerned, and an instruction to lie or to deceive could only meet with a definite refusal.

However drab and uninteresting the work entrusted to the Christian may be, the true servant of Christ will do it to the best of his ability. Shirking or “scamping” is not for him, since he serves the Lord Christ.

It is somewhat curious to find Titus counselled to **exhort servants not to purloin** (Tit. 2. 10). Surely no Christian would steal? But what of the theft of

postage stamps, stationery, pens, etc.? What of the time stolen for private telephonic conversations, for "morning coffee," for idle chats, etc.? *Is not this purloining?* Even preaching to a colleague in business hours—is not this a theft of the employer's time? Every detail of life must be viewed in the light of Christ's glory.

(2) IN RELATION TO COLLEAGUES. The practice of Christianity among one's colleagues is not a question of preaching but of *living*. So far as fellow-workers are concerned, a Christian is not one who is always mouthing pious phrases, but rather a man who does his job without shirking, who never leaves the unpleasant or difficult task to others, but takes his full share of work with his colleagues. The man who is always willing to lend a helping hand to others, who always has a smile and a cheery word, who is not always grumbling and complaining about his task or his circumstances—this is the type of man who is regarded as a real Christian.

An acquaintance, who is a professing

Christian, makes it a constant habit to take his holidays at the busiest time of the year, and always to leave considerable arrears of work behind him. His colleagues' opinion of that man's Christianity is not flattering. *The one who bears the Name of Christ should seek to glorify Him in every detail of life.*

Whilst the Christian should never be afraid to acknowledge his Lord, the wise man will not be constantly preaching to his colleagues. **It is the life that tells.** The man who refuses to lie or to engage in "shady" business, who will not lend an ear to filthy story or obscene jest, who does not touch sweepstake or raffle, is the one whose life counts with his fellow-workers. When such a man witnesses for the Master, respect is paid to his testimony and belief.

**The Individualist.** Not all fall under the headings of "employers" and "employees." But for the doctor, the professional man, the one-man shopkeeper, etc., the standard is precisely the same. Life is to be lived as unto Christ.

The Christian will not be slothful, but diligent. He will, moreover, be honest and straight in his dealings with others. A Christian grocer would not sell sand for sugar, nor a Christian butcher foreign meat for English. A Christian doctor would not dispense coloured water for some non-existent malady, nor a Christian optician prescribe unnecessary glasses because his client was rich. The standard of business morality is higher for the child of God than for the unconverted man.

There are some lines of business which are obviously unsuitable for those who belong to Christ. Even if financial gain is at stake, such should be shunned. "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" (Mark 8. 36). Whatever the circumstances of life, it is always the honour and glory of Christ which should be in view.



## CHAPTER XII

# Foreign Missions

BY A. PULLENG.

THE question of arousing missionary interest amongst believers in the home-land is occupying many minds to-day. It is no new problem. At the World Missionary Conference, held at New York, in April, 1900, and attended by representatives of most missionary societies, the following was felt to be the question of major importance:

**“How is the Church to be reached and led on to place herself, with every member and with all her powers at her Lord’s disposal, for the work for which He has destined her and depends on her.”**

The problem is still with us to-day. Many of the best brains of the large missionary societies are constantly engaged in the production of missionary literature and graphic appeals with, it is to be confessed, little tangible result. Fuel is

of little use without fire. The real crux of the missionary problem lies in the low spiritual condition of the believers at home. Confessedly there is a lack of enthusiastic love to Christ, of whole-hearted surrender to the leading and empowering of the Holy Spirit. Only thus shall we be true witnesses to Him and realise that the one work of the Church and the believer is to have every creature know of Him and His love.

As one thinks of **the Assemblies and their participation in the missionary enterprise** one feels that little improvement and further advance will occur until this is generally recognised, and particularly by elders in Assemblies. Upon such devolves no small responsibility to discover these things and earnestly, indicate to the Assembly its responsibility to help send the Gospel to every creature.

A former secretary of the Moravian Board of Foreign Missions once said: *"Let this thought of 'personal love for the Saviour who redeemed me' burn into the hearts of all Christians and you have the*

*most powerful incentive there can be for missionary effort of every kind.* Oh, if we could make this problem a personal one, if we could fill the hearts of the people with a personal love for the Saviour who died for them, the indifference of Christendom would disappear and the Kingdom of Christ would appear." This then is the first task and objective to be attained.

Before suggestions are made as to **the importance of missionary interest** let us remind ourselves of the etymology of the word "interest." It comes from a word which means "to come between so as to make a difference." Is our missionary interest of such a character that it comes between us and other interests which would claim attention and makes a difference in our lives? A difference in the way leisure time is spent; a difference in the prayer life; a difference in the stewardship of money. Interest to be worthy of the name should do this. It has been said that there is a good deal of missionary knowledge possessed by many believers but little real interest in the

Lord's work. If this stricture be a just one, speaking generally, then it predicates a sad condition of soul; that knowledge of the heathen world, with all its need of the Gospel of Christ, can leave us virtually unmoved. We are out of touch with the spirit of our Master. True, it takes time and a humble, reverent, loving spirit to enter into the meaning and realise the character of Christ's great love for a lost world. He died for all. His dying love was aflame for all, His love seeks all. So the words of His great commission, "disciple *all* nations, preach the Gospel to *every* creature," reveals to the Church the boundless love which is to be the measure of our love.

Missionary interest is also of **vital importance to the Home Church**. Some may feel in the light of difficulties at home, the few converts being won, it would be best to concentrate attention upon our own localities, build up strong virile churches, and so be the better able in future to evangelise the heathen. It is difficult to reconcile such an attitude

with the terms of the Church's commission :  
"Go ye . . . *all* the world."

Further, such a policy is unlikely to be successful in achieving its first objective. The truth which we seek to share with others becomes the more precious and real to our own souls. The torch we hold up to others illumines our own path. On the other hand, hug to our bosoms spiritual joys and blessings, their appeal to us and their power to influence our lives wanes. The truth of Prov. 11. 24 holds good here. "There is that scattereth and yet increaseth ; there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty."

Thomas Chalmers was wont to say that Foreign Missions act on the Home Church not by a process of exhaustion but *fermentation*. Says Dr. A. T. Pierson also : "The surest way to keep the Church pure in faith and life is to push Foreign Missions with intelligence and holy zeal."

**Doing nothing for the heathen world** will keep a Church weak. On the other hand, unselfish effort will quicken its spiritual pulse and strengthen it.

If missionary interest is of vital importance to the Home Church, it is scarcely less so **to the missionaries on the field.** How quickly they discern a rise or fall in the spiritual barometer of the Home Churches. Lack of interest limits the progress which they are able to make. Paul indicates this in 2 Cor. 10. 15: "As your faith grows so we shall be enlarged unto further abundance so as to preach the Gospel in the regions beyond you." He longed to reach out to the regions beyond but evidently he felt restricted and confined in his labours until the believers in Corinth had an enlarged faith and interest in the spread of the Gospel. There is thus an inescapable connection between the spiritual condition of the churches at home and the progress of the Gospel in lands afar.

Hudson Taylor once declared, "that the most consecrated missionary band finds in an apathetic Church at home a hindrance more fatal to success than the most violent opposition in Satan's stronghold."

Then also lack of interest deprives the missionary of the sympathetic support of which, labouring amidst intense spiritual darkness and conflict, frequently alone, he stands in so much need. A. N. Groves and his co-workers at Baghdad appear to have felt this keenly, attributing the lack of success to **the low tide spiritually in the Church at home**, and the abandonment of the work at Baghdad seems to have been due *to the sense that their hands were not being strengthened by prayer and spiritual power at home*. Likewise Adoniram Judson who, when informed that the Mission in Burma would be allowed 10,000 rupees less per annum realising that, instead of advance as he had hoped, he would be unable to hold positions already gained after great sacrifice, declared that the Churches in the U.S.A. were behind the age in missionary spirit.

Much might (and should) be written by some missionary of **the importance of missionary interest to the heathen world**, to those millions who are perishing to-day without the knowledge of Christ,

and who will remain in that condition unless the Church applies herself more devotedly to the work for which she was redeemed and endowed with the Holy Spirit.

How may missionary interest be brought to a higher level than ever before?

One feels that the first thing is a frank acknowledgment of its lack in many quarters and without excuse or palliation bow low before the Lord in prayer and humiliation. There is a false optimism abroad, which puts the best complexion on matters. We are afraid of discouraging one another and while this attitude persists things get steadily worse. Let us then recognise that this lack of interest is symptomatic of the low spiritual condition of the Church. Are not the sins of blood-guiltiness, unbelief, disobedience, selfishness and worldliness woefully prevalent amongst us? Should not this humble us before God?

Might it not be possible for brethren and sisters not engaged in business to gather together in many places during



the day, say for one hour, with this burden upon their hearts? *The appalling need demands some special effort.* It is estimated that the population of the heathen world *is increasing at the rate of 18 millions annually.* Alongside this, almost all the great missionary societies report *a decline in support.* Further, in this pleasure-loving and slothful age younger believers need special prayer that they may overcome its inimical influences and wholly yield heart and life to the transforming power of the Holy Spirit.

This may seem a circuitous method of seeking to attain the desired objective compared with the more direct appeal of missionary information and argument, but one is convinced that it will prove the quicker and more effective method in the long run.

**Is there anything else that can be done?** Yes, indeed. Let those who take a lead in Assemblies and to whom God has given a measure of concern engage in a threefold study.

(1) Christ in His dying love for a world

and the implications of His commissions to the Church.

(2) The world in its sin and misery.

(3) The Church as the link between the two.

Ignorance is the source of weakness in missionary effort. Knowledge means that faith in the Divine purpose of Foreign Missions will grow. Be informed and we shall be moved to intelligent intercession. There is probably a need now and it is hoped that the near future will see an increasing demand for special literature. Several articles on chosen subjects might be written by brethren of spiritual power and knowledge of the missionary situation which could be incorporated in a leaflet for distribution amongst the comparatively indifferent, and so add to the number, praise God not inconsiderable, who are warm-hearted friends of Foreign Missions.

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