

CHRISTIAN WATCH

A PROTESTANT BIBLICAL WITNESS

"And what I say unto you

I say unto all, Watch"

Mark 13:37

NEWSLETTER

October 2014

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To all Christian Watch Members

Dear Friends,

ARE WE DOING OUR DUTY?

The great naval Battle of Trafalgar (1805) was one of the most important victories ever won by the British navy. The battle also claimed the life of its hero, Admiral Lord Nelson, who, although fatally wounded, lived long enough to learn that he had won. His last words were *'thank God I have done my duty'*. It is indeed important for us to do our duty – and Psalm 85 reminds us of three important duties to be undertaken by Christian men and women.

Firstly, we have a duty to remember our past history. Verse 1 says, *"Lord, Thou hast been favourable unto Thy land."* Each year presents us with special national anniversaries which remind us of God's hand at work in the past. This year marked the centenary of the start of World War 1, the 75th anniversary of the start of World War 2 and the 70th anniversary of D-day. It also marked the 500th anniversary of the birth of the Scottish Reformer, John Knox, and the 300th anniversary of the death of the Bible commentator, Matthew Henry. We must remember these things and pass them on to our children, for Satan rejoices when God's people forget and are silent.

Secondly, we have a duty to defend and proclaim the message of God's love to sinners. God has forgiven the iniquity of His people (verse 2) and, when we think of Calvary, we see *"that mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other"* (verse 10). What a wonderful Gospel – so precious to martyrs such as Hooper, Latimer and Ridley! It is our duty to declare it in our day so *"that glory may dwell in our land"* (verse 9).

Thirdly, we have a duty to look to the future and to pray for revival. Our nation, once so blessed of God, is in the grip of paganism and false religion. It has lost its way and the outlook seems bleak. But this should drive us to cry out to God *"wilt Thou not revive us again; that Thy people may rejoice in Thee?"* We praise God that He still hears and answers the prayers of His people.

*"Revive Thy work, O Lord,
And give refreshing showers;
The glory shall be all Thine Own,
The blessing, Lord, be ours."*

It was my privilege and honour to be invited with my family to the **Memorial Service** in Belfast for the late Lord Bannside (Dr. Ian Paisley). Dr. Paisley was a great friend of Christian Watch and the Ulster Hall was packed on 19th October as family and friends gathered – from all walks of life – to pay tribute to a great man of God who had been called home. Representatives from all the political Parties in Northern Ireland, a former Prime Minister in Southern Ireland, the First Minister in Scotland, The Speaker of the House of Commons, Westminster MPs and Stormont MLAs were all present – and many more besides – and a powerful Gospel message was proclaimed urging those present - and others watching on TV and listening on the radio – the importance of being right with God. The service was broadcast live, giving the opportunity for a world-wide audience to come under the sound of His Word. (*N.B. It can now be viewed on Youtube on the internet*). Pray that our political leaders who attended were challenged by that which they heard and will realise that there is a Heaven to gain and a Hell to shun.

The Annual General Meeting of Christian Watch was held this year on Friday, 3rd October, 2014 at Tamworth Road Baptist Church, Croydon. This was the first time that the meeting had been held in the Croydon area and it was good to share fellowship with both old friends and new and to meet with the Lord's people who attend the Church week by week.

The meeting opened with prayer and an introduction to Christian Watch and I outlined the reason for the existence of Christian Watch and the need to stand four-square for the truths of the Gospel. With the continuing decline in so many Churches, the need to 'stand in the breach' was emphasised and to keep faithful to the old-fashioned Gospel message of repentance and salvation.

Outlining some of the major developments in our society today, reference was made to the promotion of same-sex 'marriage'; the continuing desecration of the Lord's Day; ecumenism – with all its links with a range of false religions; the growth and general acceptance of gay rights and the depravity that can be witnessed in all our major cities as a result of the Gay Pride parades; the introduction of women clergy and women Bishops and the constant threat to introduce Constitutional changes in our land. But, in spite of all these things, the Christian's rest and trust is in a Sovereign God – and His Word has not changed one iota. God is still on the throne – and He maintains the same attributes today as He ever has – attributes of holiness, righteousness, justice and sin-hating.

The meeting was informed of the Ten Commandments Project – a project that aims to get the 10 Commandments into all the schools in the country. With this in mind, the subject chosen for the Annual General Meeting was '**Divine Law for Daily Living**' and the guest speaker, the Rt. Rev. Dr. J. Barry Shucksmith (Royal Navy (Rtd)), based his comments on Matthew 5 verses 1-20 – part of the Sermon on the Mount – where the first 12 verses outlined those who are blessed – and (verse 11) – blessed even in persecution. Salvation, he said, is entirely dependent on the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ. For our many members and supporters who were unable to attend, the full transcript of the message is included in this current Newsletter.

The presence of the Lord had been keenly felt as the meeting progressed – and Bookstalls from Christian Watch and George Wise Publications were both on hand for the benefit of those that had gathered - at the close of the meeting – when light refreshments were also served.

Various **News Items** are also included – some of you may have seen the first one in the latest copy of the British Church Newspaper, but we felt that it was well worth reproducing and it is included under the heading **British Values and All That**. The subject of **UK Immigration** is a hot topic these days and the facts included in this brief report make for disturbing reading. Other matters of interest have been included from **West Africa and from China** where Ebola and the One-Child Policy are highlighted.

Living to God's Glory – a message from J.C. Philpot (Sin and Salvation) – is also included for your spiritual benefit and you are reminded of the **Autumn Conference** of the **United Protestant Council** (of which we are in membership) to be held on Saturday, 1st November – see Page 14 for more details. Two important subjects - John Knox on the Mass and Jonathan Edwards on Islam - are to be discussed and if you can attend this Meeting, you will be most welcome.

Continue to pray for the Ten Commandments project in the schools as momentum begins to build.

Yours in the Saviour's Name,

Ian R. Henderson

Ian R. Henderson,
Vice-Chairman

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Christian Watch Annual Meeting

Held on Friday 3rd October, 2014 at Tamworth Road Baptist Chapel, Croydon

Reading: Matthew 5:1-20

Address by: The Rt. Rev. Dr. J. Barry Shucksmith

“Divine Law for Daily Living”

The subject is, I must say, an impossible subject to deal with in one brief address. But, perhaps, by God’s good grace and mercy, I may be able to indicate a few pointers for our own personal study and on-going reflection. May Almighty God be among us in power and with illumination. We look to the Holy Spirit to be our teacher, through His holy and inerrant Word. Our thoughts will centre, in particular, around Matthew 5:13-20.

The context of these verses is abundantly clear. The Sermon on the Mount is fundamental to our Lord’s teaching on the Kingdom of God and with respect to those true children of God who belong to it (Matthew 5:1-12). Moses went up into a Mountain (Ex.19:20) to receive the Law of God. Our Lord Jesus Christ, similarly, was on a mountain when He expounded the character of His true disciples. “They are the Blessed Ones,” He says.

(i) They are poor in spirit. They recognise their own spiritual impoverishment and acknowledge a complete dependence upon the mercy and grace of God.

(ii) They mourn - for themselves and for others. They weep over their sin. In the words of the Psalmist (119:136) “*Rivers of waters run down mine eyes, because they keep not Thy law.*”

(iii) And they are meek, like Moses of old. Meekness is not weakness, and self-assertion is not a Christian virtue either. Meekness is Jesus praying in Gethsemane... “*Not my will, but Thine be done.*”

(iv) The true believer hungers and thirsts after righteousness. The Lord Jesus Christ is our only Righteousness (Jeremiah 23:6), which is accounted to us. Any actual righteousness we have, comes through and by Him. We are, says Paul, “*in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption*” (1 Cor. 1:30).

(v) The true believer is merciful. He knows he must show mercy, because he has experienced mercy and grace for himself. The adjective for ‘mercy’ used here is found only once more in the New Testament - in Hebrews 2:17. There the reference is to the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. “*It behoved Him to be made like unto his brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.*” Hebrews 4:14-16 is singularly precious - He - the Great, Gracious, Merciful High Priest - is touched with the feelings of our infirmities!

*There are three more indisputable marks of the true **born-again believer**...*

(vi) He seeks to be pure in heart. Our Lord Jesus Christ applies this in Matthew 5, when expounding the Commandments on murder, adultery, on not bearing false witness and on loving God and our neighbour. The whole of our inner state, thought, will, as well as our emotions, are involved. Because “*Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies*” (Matt.15:19). This work of purifying or sanctifying begins with regeneration, and will be completed only as we leave the body in death. “*We know that when He (Jesus) shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is*” (1 John 3:2). For without holiness no one shall see the Lord!

(vii) The true believer is a peacemaker. His sins have been forgiven. He is at peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, and he is called to be at peace with his fellow brethren. *En Christo* - in Christ- reconciled to God and man.

(viii) The final Beatitude speaks of persecution. It is the longest and the most detailed of the Beatitudes - describing a Christian - and assumes persecution in some measure or other is unavoidable. *“Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake”*.

These characteristics and qualities of the Beatitudes, as expressions of a true believer, flow from the grace and goodness of Jesus Christ. We are saved by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone. With remarkable economy of words Augustus Montague Toplady expresses it magnificently:-

*Not the labour of my hands,
Can fulfil Thy law's demands;
Could my zeal no respite know,
Could my tears for ever flow.
All for sin could not atone:
Thou must save, and thou alone.*

I have laboured this introduction, so as not to be misunderstood later on in the address. Salvation is entirely dependent on the finished, complete, perfect, singular work of the Lord Jesus Christ, who became sin for us. No amount of good works, or law keeping, can save fallen creatures like you and me. ***“Thou must save, and Thou alone!”***

Let's move on to consider three main things:

- 1. The Church called to leaven Society.**
- 2. Christ called to fulfil the Law.**
- 3. Christians called to keep the Commandments.**

Again, we should notice the context in which our Saviour speaks of Law.

1. THE CHURCH IS CALLED TO LEAVEN SOCIETY

(a) **Jesus speaks of SALT.** (Matt.5:13). *“Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men”*. These words show how totally different we are to society around us and, yet, how closely related to the world believers must be. Secularisation and world-mindedness are condemned here, but so is isolationism. The Church has to be separated from the world and also, severely and lovingly, has to deal with sin in the Church. Yet, we are to engage unbelievers in the world, and not to stand aloof from them... Otherwise, says the Apostle, *“ye needs go out of the world”* (1 Cor. 5:10).

Salt has many notable characteristics: whiteness, pungency, flavour, a preservative power. But there's much more. It has an antiseptic ability. It saves whatever is salted from corruption and decay.

Illustration: Some are perhaps old enough to remember (like myself) the hanging salted pork in the cottage living room. The family pig was killed, the ham prepared, the meat was salted, and the ceiling hooks, for another year, were decked out with the tasty meat! But the salt has to be more than sprinkled for preservation. *It has to be rubbed into the meat.* So, salt has a negative effect, but it is nonetheless essential to preserve from absolute decay!

We Christians are called to leaven society. It is not a social gospel - let's be clear on this! There is no such thing as a social gospel that can save. On the contrary, *“The Gospel of God's grace is the power (dunamis) of God unto salvation to everyone who believeth”* (Romans 1:16-17). Why?

“For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.”

But we are saved to serve! There are personal and social consequences in receiving Christ’s righteousness in the Gospel. We are saved for God’s glory and for the world’s good. We are called continually to combat moral and spiritual decay, as well as to evangelise with the Gospel. And, in this respect, not only is the Gospel good, but the law is good as well, says the Apostle Paul. It brings knowledge of sin. Here is the great missionary Apostle to the Gentiles with his testimony:

*“For without the law sin was dead. For I was alive without the law once; but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death. For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me. **Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good**”* (Romans 7:8-12).

In another place, the Apostle Paul says something similar (Galatians 3:21-24) when he pictures the law like a schoolmaster (or tutor to a child). The tutor, as it were, takes the child by the hand, teaching, instructing, guiding, pointing, in the right direction - to the Lord Jesus Christ. *“Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith”*. You see, what appears to be negative, in the end proves to be positive, for it takes us to the Lord Jesus Christ - our only true, satisfying, lasting HOPE. We are to use the law of God, to preserve society, like salt, because it is good for sinner and saint alike.

(b) The second image, used by the Saviour, is LIGHT (Matthew 5:14-16). The Lord Jesus Christ is the Light of the Cosmos. *“The True Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world”* (John 1:9). So the Lord is already at work in the heart and conscience (however imperfectly) of every human being. There is a law of conscience also written into Creation, in all we can see and reflect upon. This should be a driving force for all evangelism and good works. *“That which may be known of God is manifest in them, for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead; so that they (we?) are without excuse”* (Romans 1:19-20).

As lights, entirely dependent upon Him who is the Light of the world, believers reflect the Lord Jesus. *“Ye are the light of the world,”* said Jesus (Matt. 5:14-16)... *“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven”*. What the lamp is to a house, the believer is to the world.

There are many ways then in which Christians work and witness - but always as salt and light. We glorify God by our good works, says Jesus in Matt.5:16. To paraphrase in the words of a Reformed document: *“Good works cannot put away sin...yet are they pleasing and acceptable to God in Christ, and do spring out necessarily of a true and lively faith; insomuch that by them a lively Faith may be as evidently known as a tree discerned by the fruit”* (Article 12 “Of Good works”).

But surely, we can add... *“If the Law of God is a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, and it also brings knowledge of sin, is it not an excellent good work, of the highest order, to promote it? Should we not seek to teach unconverted men and women, boys and girls - at the very least - the 10 Commandments of God - the moral law - given in Exodus (ch. 20) and Deuteronomy (ch. 5)?”*

ILLUSTRATION: Think of the rich, fulsome, content of the 10 Commandments. Is there not a worthy task of pre-evangelism here for the Christian Church today? Imagine for a moment a country where a majority are seeking to embrace and affirm the Commandments of Almighty God. What might this do for human relationships, for the crime figures, for stability, for honesty, and so on. Doesn't this generation need to hear again that there is only one true and living God? That worship should be directed only to Him? That God's name and all He stands for is sacred? That He has given two creatorial ordinances for the benefit and blessing of all mankind - the Lord's day and Marriage - marriage being only between a man and a woman. That parents matter, and love and respect is due to them, just as love and respect is due from the parents to their children. That life is sacred and killing is forbidden - except under command of Almighty God, and the civil authorities, as directed by Him in Holy Writ? That adultery is wrong and includes all sexual activity outside of marriage? Our society is pagan and ignorant in this respect - is it not? For true marriage is not only about privilege but responsibility towards their children - the fruit of a true marital relationship. Is not the taking of property, reputation, and much else wrong, as indeed is bearing false witness and lying, which has become so common? And that all forms of covetousness is idolatry, as the Apostle says? Indeed, more seriously, outside of Christ no covetous person, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ and of God (Ephesians 5:5). To circulate the moral laws of God is a large part of what it means to be "salt and light" in this wicked world - engaging the world, evangelism, and doing good works! But let us bring the searchlight closer still to our subject.

2. CHRIST WAS CALLED TO FULFIL THE LAW AND THE PROPHETS (Matt.5 17-19). *"Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the Kingdom of Heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven"*.

(a) Christ was called to fulfil THE LAW (Matt.5:17). *"Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil"*.

The great Geneva reformer, John Calvin, immediately gives a word of warning on this verse in his exposition - to those who intend to use the LAW OF GOD. *"If we intend to reform affairs that are in a state of disarray, we should always exercise such prudence and moderation as will convince the people that we are not opposing the eternal Word of God, or introducing any novelty that is contrary to Scripture. We must take care that no suspicion of such conflict shall injure the faith of the godly, and that rash men shall not be emboldened by a pretence of novelty"*.

This is wise counsel from a seasoned saint. Surely, Calvin warns against creating an impression of either **Legalism** (one who seeks salvation by works of the law) or **Antinomianism** (a belief that it is not necessary to keep the moral law). We must leave aside (for this occasion) "prophecy", mentioned in the text (a massive subject on its own). We know our Lord fulfilled it, minutely - as the long-prophesied Messiah. And will fulfil what remains to be completed at His return. Rather let us think a little more about these life-challenging, life-changing, words of our Lord. *"I am come not to destroy the law...but to fulfil it"*.

(i) The law is PERMANENT - says our Lord! And He further strengthens His statement in v18-19... ***Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.***" Furthermore (Matt.5:19), those leaders who wilfully break the commands of God and teach others to do the same, are least in the Kingdom of God.

Immediately in mind were the Scribes and the Pharisees. They buried the Divine oracles under a load of tradition and regarded doing the law as the only way of salvation. By that attitude and act, they were guilty of setting aside the Old Testament altogether, but being blind leaders of the blind, they couldn't see it! On the other hand, the Lord Jesus was showing that in the lives of His true followers the spiritual requirement of the Old Testament - "Moral Law" - would be, by grace, filled to the brim.

This emphasis of Jesus regarding the Law is affirmed in all of the major historic Reformed documents, drawn up at the Reformation:

Article 7 of the 39 Articles is clear:-

“The Old Testament is not contrary to the New...although the Law given from God to Moses as touching Ceremonies and Rites, do not bind Christian men, nor the Civil precepts thereof ought of necessity to be received in any Commonwealth; yet notwithstanding, no Christian man whatsoever is free from the obedience of the Commandments which are called Moral”.

The 1647 Westminster Confession says much the same: *“The moral law doth for ever bind all, as well as justified persons, as others to the obedience thereof ; (Chapter on Law of God; part 5).*

This leads Professor Chad van Dixhoorn, in his brilliant new exposition of the Westminster Confession - recently published by the Banner of Truth Press - to add this comment...(quote) *“The matter or content of the moral law still binds each one of us, no matter who we are. But perhaps the most significant thing to keep in mind is the most basic relationship of all people to the one God who does not change: He for ever remains the God of all power and authority; we remain His subjects. He is ‘the Creator who is also the law-giver. We are His creatures, obliged to keep that law. This reality is not altered by the coming of Christ and the inauguration of the final age”* (‘Confessing the Faith - a reader’s guide to the Westminster Confession of Faith’; Chap.19; Of the Law of God; page 247; Banner of Truth, Edinburgh.)

And what about the admirable 1689 Baptist Confession of Faith? *“The moral law doth for ever bind all, as well justified persons, as others, to the obedience thereof, and that not only in regard of the matter contained in it, but also in respect of the authority of God the Creator, who gave it, neither doth Christ in the Gospel in any way dissolve, but much strengthens this obligation”* (The Law; paragraph 5).

In other words - **God’s law is permanent for all!**

(ii) The Law is not only permanent - it is PRECIOUS. This may not be easy for some to immediately appreciate? Let me try and summarise it again - the place of the Divine Law in the Bible, as it affects the life of the Christian believer and as it relates to all human beings?

(a) God gave to Adam a law, as a covenant of works. This bound him and all his posterity. He promised life upon its fulfilment and death upon disobedience. Adam was given power to keep God’s law. *“Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die”* (Gen.2:17). But we know Adam and Eve fell into sin.

(b) This law, after the fall into sin, continued to be a perfect rule of righteousness, and, as such, was delivered by God upon Mount Sinai in 10 Commandments (Ex.20; James 1:25; Romans 13:8-9). Remove the Commandments from the world and the Holy Spirit of God who has given them (John 16:7-11) and all society would disintegrate - because of man’s wickedness. Think of the idolatrous, immoral behaviour of the Lord’s people at the foot of Mt. Sinai, at the very moment Moses was on the top, receiving God’s permanent and precious Word!

ILLUSTRATION: As a child I attended a Church School and an Anglican Mission Church, in the town where I now live. With respect to “religion” I had to learn three things off by heart. *The Lord’s Prayer, the Apostles Creed and the 10 Commandments.* Later, in order to be a full member of the Church, I had to learn the Book of Common Prayer Catechism, and then be catechised, publically, from this Catechism, when I was just 13 years old. With respect to the Commandments, I had to rehearse these memorable words in response to the questions put:

1. Question: *What dost thou chiefly learn by these Commandments?*

Answer: *I learn two things: my duty towards God and my duty towards my neighbour.*

2. Question: *What is thy duty towards God?*

Answer: *My duty towards God is to believe in Him, to fear Him, and to love Him with all my heart, with all my mind, with all my soul and with all my strength; to worship Him, to give Him thanks, to put my whole trust in Him, to call upon Him, to honour His Holy Name, and His Word, and to serve Him truly all the days of my life.*

3. Question: *What is thy duty towards thy neighbour?*

Answer: *My duty towards my neighbour is to love Him as myself, and to do to all men as I would they should do unto me: to love, honour and obey the King, and all that are put in authority under him: to submit myself to all my governors, teachers, spiritual pastors and masters: to order myself lowly and reverently to all my betters; to hurt nobody by word or deed: to be true and just in all my dealing: to bear no malice nor hatred in my heart: to keep my hands from picking and stealing: and my tongue from evil-speaking, lying, and slandering: to keep my body in temperance, soberness and chastity: Not to covet nor desire other men's goods; but to learn and labour truly to get mine own living, and to do my duty in that state of life, unto which it shall please God to call me".*

ILLUSTRATION: Perhaps a word of testimony would not be out of place? One year after learning and publicly rehearsing this Catechism, I joined the Armed Forces as a Band Boy Musician. I was a poor churchman. I broke all these Commandments. But I never did so without a sense of conviction. One Saturday evening, while taking part in the Edinburgh Military Tattoo, I returned to the barracks where I was billeted for the four weeks duration, *drunk*. The party had been given by friends of the R. M. Band and I had over-indulged their generosity. But under deep abiding conviction of sin, I knelt in the barrack room in front of all my band colleagues and prayed for Almighty God to help me get rid of this heavy conviction of sin which was weighing me down. On the Sunday morning, although a stranger in Edinburgh, I left the barracks to find a Church and help get rid of this terrible oppressive conviction. A car pulled up - the driver had recognised my Royal Marines uniform. He was an ex-Royal Marine. "Could he give me a lift somewhere," he asked? "I'm trying to find a Church and I don't know Edinburgh," I replied. "You'd better come with me to my little Baptist Chapel, he continued." He took me there in his wee Austin Seven Ruby car. What was a little Baptist Chapel turned out to be a congregation of 1200 people in 1956. The preacher entered the pulpit, prayed, and preached his sermon - lasting about an hour. To my great shame, I was drunk on the Saturday Evening - but, now, mightily saved on the Sunday morning. And what was the preacher's text? Jesus said, "**If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink. He that believeth on Me.... out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water**". I believed and was saved. *The Gospel-word did the saving work, but it had been preceded with the convicting work of the Law of God.* This is the only reason I'm here tonight. Romans 3:20 ... "By the law is the knowledge of sin" & 1 John 3:4 "Whoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law".

(c) Besides this law, commonly called "Moral," Israel was given ceremonial laws and typical fore-shadowings of the Messiah who would come. All these ceremonial laws and types are now fulfilled in the Lord Jesus and therefore abrogated. (Read the Epistle to the Hebrews!).

(d) There were also political and judicial laws given, which applied only to the Nation State of Israel - also now done away with through the Gospel - because Jew and Gentile belong together in the New Israel - *a spiritual household* - a city yet to fully come (Hebrews 11:10)...whose Builder and Maker is God.

"Permanent and Precious" is how we summarise the Law. And permanent and precious for believer and unbeliever alike. At this point, Arthur. W. Pink summarises far better than I could! Says Pink:

“Christ has redeemed His people from the curse of the law and not from the command of it; He has saved them from the wrath of God, but not from His government”.

This brings us, now, to the all-important third point!

3. CHRISTIANS ARE CALLED IN THEIR DAILY LIVING TO KEEP THE 10 COMMANDMENTS. If Matthew 5 teaches us anything, it is this. The whole chapter is an application of the wider implications of these moral laws. Anger, adultery, divorce, vows, retaliation, love and hate, and much else is in the Sermon on the Mount, at this point. It takes up all of Matthew chapter five. This is practical Christianity - daily living out the Commandments - reduced to these words... ***“Loving God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength, and loving our neighbour as ourself”***. We are to keep God’s Commandments - in two special ways.

(a) We are to use them personally. As Paul says in 1 Corinthians 9:21.., *“We are under the law to Christ.”* and again, Romans 3:31, *“Do we then make void the law through faith? “God forbid,” he replies, “We establish the law”*. By using the Law, believers are drawn closer to the Lord Jesus. He becomes more precious to us. (Gal.3:13, 4:4-5).

The Law of God shows us God’s will and helps us regulate our conduct - Micah 6:8... *“To do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God”*.

The Law of God makes us utterly dependent on the Lord Jesus - it inspires our constant progress in holiness (Phil.3:10-14)... *“Pressing on toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”*

The Law (1 John 3:19) also serves as a test of our sincerity... *“My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth”*. **Use the Law of God personally.**

(b) We are also to promote the 10 Commandments generally. It helps the unregenerate. It is all part of the foundation of evangelism, in the preaching of the Gospel.

(1) The Moral Law restrains the unbeliever from sin. *“Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners”*

(2) The Law convinces the ungodly of the misery of sin. *“By the law is the knowledge of sin”* (Romans 3:20).

(3) As we have seen, the Law also reveals to the sinner their absolute need of Jesus Christ (Galatians 3:24) and

(4) It will render them inexcusable if they continue in sin and finally reject the Saviour of lost sinners (John 3:18,36).

ILLUSTRATION:

Very briefly I will take one of the Commandments (Matthew 5:27-28). *“Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery? But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart”*. Then follows the consequences of marital sin - v31 ff...putting away the wife, divorce, causing her (or him) to commit fornication and other complications. When we fail to teach the Commandments, we leave even unbelievers without a standard for daily living. Yet, God’s Law is true, good, and practical.

Family breakdown probably costs the taxpayer in the region of £50 billion pounds - £2000 per household. Behind that colossal sum lies an unquantifiable human misery of broken relationships. In July this year, the CSJ (Centre for Social Justice) said, ***“The modern British Family is teetering on the brink of extinction”***. Half the children who have just started primary school at five are from broken homes; one million children lose contact with their

grandparents because of separation or divorce; the average 15-year old is more likely to have a smart phone at home than a father and, unless action is taken, by 2020 half the pupils sitting GCSEs will come from broken homes.

To cap it all - the pernicious culture of what the CSJ calls "disposable dads" means that one million children are growing up without meaningful contact with their fathers. Moreover, children from broken homes do far less well at school and are far more likely to turn to crime and drugs than those from married families. (These facts are not produced by some crackpot religious extremist, or even by an evangelical preacher like myself! They were recorded in the Daily Telegraph, on 18th August, 2014, by the hand of two politicians - Jeremy Lefroy and Fiona Bruce. My dear brothers and sisters - the Nation would be 100% improved with the Law of God and the Gospel of Jesus Christ!

The Law of God is powerful and pure - Psalm 19:7-11. *"The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple, The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward".*

A Royal Navy Chaplain's Historic Story to finish with!

200 years ago exactly (1814), 25 years after the mutiny on board HMS Bounty (1789), a Captain of the Royal Navy came ashore on Pitcairn Island and made the report in his ship's log... *"I have never witnessed a more ordered Christian Society"*. At the time of the mutiny, Pitcairn became a living nightmare of sexual abuse, drunkenness and murder. Within 4 years everyone was dead, except Alexander Smith, Edward Young, Matthew Quintall, William McCoy and some Tahitian women and their illegitimate children.

McCoy learned how to distil liquor. He threw himself off a high cliff.

Quintall became insane and threatened everyone's life, so Smith and Young axed him to death.

Young was dying from T.B. He was the only one who could read. He found the ship's Bible. Before he died in 1801, he taught Smith to read from the HMS Bounty Bible.

Alexander Smith, through the law and the Gospel, was soundly converted. He taught the children and the mothers to read the Bible. They held family prayers. They said grace before meals. They put the laws of God into practice. And the Holy Spirit worked mightily. By the grace and goodness of God, Alexander Smith was not executed for mutiny, but allowed, by mercy of the King, to live freely on Pitcairn.

Our God is well able "to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us. Unto Him be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end" (Amen! Eph. 3:20-21).

CDs of the above address are available priced at £2.50 each (including P&P) from:

Christian Watch (Resources),
PO Box 2113, Nuneaton, CV11 6ZY
Email: jean@christianwatch.org.uk

NEWS ITEMS

1. British Values and All That – Editorial in British Church Newspaper, 17 October 2014

Human rights are very much in the news with talk of Parliament defying the European Court of Human Rights and bringing in its own British Bill of Rights.

The waters are muddied by plans to incorporate ‘British Values’ into this new Bill of Rights, which is one way of saying that Westminster will seize the opportunity to give political correctness the force of law.

That is likely to lead to a confrontation with a large body of law abiding citizens and ultimately with God Himself.

Could the day arise when people will again say, as they did in the reign of Bloody Mary Tudor, that if you want to hear godly conversation, go down to the prisons?

It has been said that there are no human rights, only human obligations. The Law of Moses does not list human rights but consists of commands to render unto God what is God’s and our neighbour what is our neighbour’s. That is, it lists not rights but obligations. It gives others their rights. In this way, the Ten Commandments become a Bill of Rights.

Similarly the Apostle Paul lays down the duties of each member of the household – husbands, wives, children, parents, employers and servants – so that in the end each gets their due. As a result we find ourselves with a Bill of Rights for the family.

We note incidentally that the Ten Commandments start with God’s rights.

Modern so-called rights, unlike those of the Bible, are an illusion. It is fashionable to emphasise freedom of religion. But does that mean the right of ISIS to practise its brand of Islam in our midst? There was a recent case where a Hindu cow had to be put down by law in the face of strong religious protests because it had tuberculosis. Freedom of religion is dangerous. Our obligations are a much better starting point.

Starting with rights leads to a clash of rights. Therefore a hierarchy of rights emerges. For example, it seems now to be accepted that the rights of homosexuals trump those of Christians.

We are left with great admiration for the laws of the Bible.

Alfred the Great added the Ten Commandments to his legal code. Because our forefathers incorporated God’s laws into our law, they have spread throughout the earth. Fools are now trying to winkle the divine commands out of our legal system that they may be more free to sin and thereby to oppress other people and deprive them of their rights.

“Woe unto them that decree unrighteous decrees, and that write grievousness which they have prescribed.” Isaiah 10:1.

Our Lord Jesus Christ is on His way. “He shall judge the poor of the people, He shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor.” Psalm 72:4.

2. UK Immigration - *Eurofacts*, 17 October, 2014

Latest figures about immigration to the UK reveal a figure of 243,000. This is up from 175,000 announced last March, when the Prime Minister announced his target of 100,000,

Breaking down the figures shows that two thirds of that increase came from the EU, who due to EU membership have unrestricted rights to enter the UK.

The Prime Minister however, has said that his target of reducing net migration below 100,000 could still be achieved, he does not explain how!

Separate figures show that over a quarter of births in England and Wales last year were to mothers who themselves were born outside the UK.

3. West Africa: Ebola Orphans Stigmatised and Abandoned – Russ Jones, ReligionToday.com contributor, 3 October 2014

An International humanitarian aid organisation reports that at least 3,700 children in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone have lost parents to Ebola since the start of the outbreak in West Africa.

“Orphans are usually taken in by a member of the extended family, but in some communities, the fear surrounding Ebola is becoming stronger than family ties,” Manuel Fontaine, UNICEF’S regional director CNN.

The report also finds that as the death toll from Ebola continues to rise, the number of children orphaned by Ebola has spiked in the past few weeks and is likely to double by mid-October.

“Thousands of children are living through the deaths of their mother, father or family members from Ebola,” said Fontaine, who just returned from a two-week visit to Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. “These children urgently need special attention and support; yet many of them feel unwanted and even abandoned.”

4. 34th Anniversary of China’s One-Child Policy Sparks Abortion Discussions - Carrie Dedrick, Editor, ChristianHeadlines.com , 26 September, 2014

China has been requiring citizens to abide by its one-child policy for 34 years; the anniversary of the policy’s installation has now sparked conversations about forced abortions in the nation.

Reggie Littlejohn, ‘Women’s Rights Without Frontiers’ has written a letter that condemns the one-child policy and urges President Xi Jinping to abolish it immediately.

“Your Government has boasted that it has ‘prevented’ more than 400 million births through this policy. These births have been prevented through forced abortions, involuntary sterilizations, confiscatory ‘terror fines’, gendercide and infanticide – all in violation of international human rights law,” Littlejohn wrote.

The Chinese Government has recently altered the policy slightly. December 2013, a resolution was made that states couples may have two children if their mother and father are both only children themselves. Also, couples in the Chinese countryside may have two children if the first child is a girl.

China has the most skewed ratio of men to women in the world with 117-118 boys born to every 100 girls. The numbers have contributed to human trafficking and gender violence.

Littlejohn wrote, “The Chinese forced abortion policy is systematic, institutionalised violence against woman. Because of the sheer numbers involved, it is the most massive women’s rights issue in the world today and it must be stopped.”

LIVING TO GOD'S GLORY

By: J. C. Philpot

Wherever the grace of God is, it constrains its partaker to desire to live to His honour and glory. But he soon finds the difficulty of so doing. Such is the weakness of the flesh, the power of sin, the subtlety of Satan, the strength of temptation and the snares spread on every side for our feet, that we can neither *do* what we would, nor *be* what we would. Before we are well aware, we get entangled with some idol, or drawn aside into some indulgence of the flesh, which brings darkness into the mind and may cut us out some bitter work for the rest of our days.

But we thus learn not only the weakness of the flesh, but where and in whom all our strength lies. And as the grace of the Lord Jesus, in its suitability, in its sufficiency and its super-aboundings, becomes manifested in and by the weakness of the flesh, a sense of His wondrous love and care in so bearing with us, in so pitying our case, and manifesting mercy where we might justly expect wrath, constrains us with a holy obligation to walk in His fear and to live to His praise.

We are such strange creatures. We are willing and more than willing to be taught of the Lord, for we are continually, in all sincerity of heart, begging Him to teach us; and yet we do not like His way of teaching when it crimps the flesh. We feel earnestly desirous to live to the honour and glory of God; and yet when to do so demands some sacrifice of money, or ease, or comfort, or reputation – still more when it seems to require the plucking out of a right eye, or the cutting off of a right hand, then we draw back and rebel that there is not a more easy and pleasant way for the flesh. And yet, perhaps, if we are enabled to make the sacrifice required by the Word and our conscience, there is a sweetness to our spirit mingled with the bitterness to the flesh. It is almost with these bitters to the flesh as Mr. Hart speaks of repentance:

“Nor is it such a dismal thing
As 'tis by some men named;
A sinner may repent and sing,
Rejoice and be ashamed.”

It, perhaps, has been a call to make a sacrifice of a little money in possession or in prospect; and after a stout battle between a liberal spirit and a covetous heart, the better principle prevailed. Now, when the victory has been gained, do we not often find that what has been given is but little missed; and the good it has done to the cause of truth, or to any of the Lord's poor and needy children, is an ample compensation for having overcome the opposition of a covetous spirit and the crying out of the old man as he had a nail or two driven into his miserly fist? But, soon, perhaps, as he dies hard and writhes under the crucifying nail, there will come forth a cry from us, or someone connected with us, “Spare thyself. Why, if you go on like that, you will rob your wife and family and bring them to beggary. There is this and that bill to be paid and you know how hardly money is got, and how swiftly gone.”

But some kind providence turns up and then drops the head into the dust, with a “Lord, I am vile, and Thou art good. Pardon my covetous, unbelieving heart. O let me never doubt Thee again.” So, if a little of our good name or fame, or darling respectability must be parted with, the flesh soon begins to cry out and cannot endure the shame of the cross. But how soon the Lord can so break in upon our heart with a sense of His goodness, mercy and love as to make us feel even unworthy to suffer shame for His Name's sake and count it an honour to endure His reproach.

We need not pursue the subject further. Our readers' own experience will supply them with abundant instances both of the weakness and wickedness of the flesh and the super-aboundings of grace; and they will agree with us that both misery and mercy, all that we have seen and felt of the evil of sin and all that we have tasted, felt and handled of salvation, all that we know of self and all that we know of the Lord, call upon us and constrain us, as with one

voice, to walk in His fear, live to His praise and seek to glorify Him with our body and spirit, which are His.

And with this desire will certainly follow a willing readiness to serve the Lord's cause, help the Lord's poor, sympathise with them in their afflictions and trials and manifest to them our esteem, affection and love.

In what other way can we manifest the truth and reality, the life and power of our religion? Men will judge us, and rightly judge us, by our works, not by our words; by our fruit, not by our leaves; by our Christian spirit, meekness, quietness, humility, sincerity, disinterestedness, readiness to serve rather than to rule, and general willingness to bear and forebear, to seek others' advantage, not our own, and do what good we can to the souls and bodies of our fellow-men.

**From: Sin and Salvation – Selections from J. C. Philpot
Edited by B. A. Ramsbottom**

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SATURDAY, 1ST NOVEMBER, 2014

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2.30 p.m. Jonathan Edwards on Islam**

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Rev. E. Trevor Kirkland

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