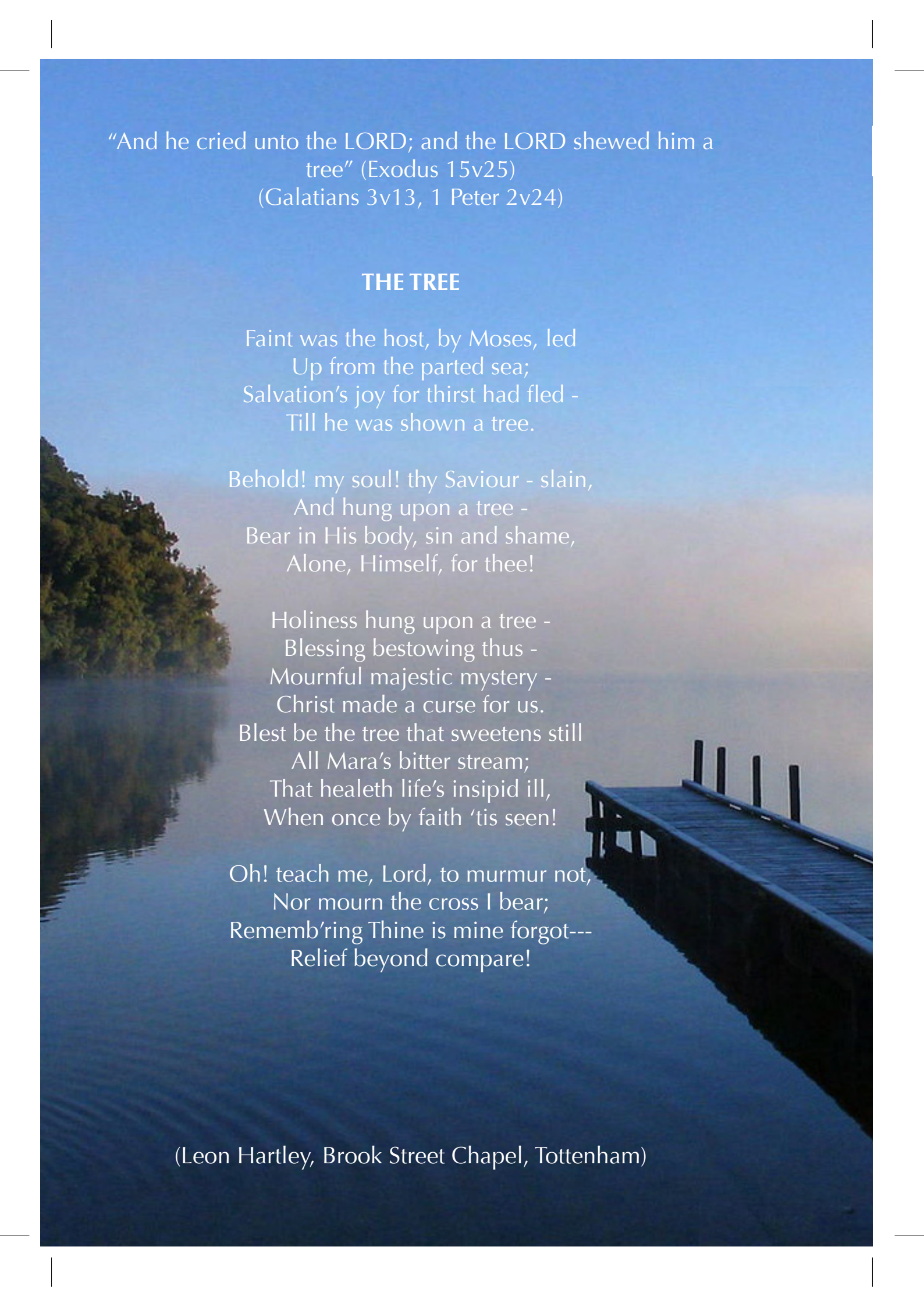


Clifton News

No 270 July - September 2015

Published since 1948





"And he cried unto the LORD; and the LORD shewed him a
tree" (Exodus 15v25)
(Galatians 3v13, 1 Peter 2v24)

THE TREE

Faint was the host, by Moses, led
Up from the parted sea;
Salvation's joy for thirst had fled -
Till he was shown a tree.

Behold! my soul! thy Saviour - slain,
And hung upon a tree -
Bear in His body, sin and shame,
Alone, Himself, for thee!

Holiness hung upon a tree -
Blessing bestowing thus -
Mournful majestic mystery -
Christ made a curse for us.
Blest be the tree that sweetens still
All Mara's bitter stream;
That healeth life's insipid ill,
When once by faith 'tis seen!

Oh! teach me, Lord, to murmur not,
Nor mourn the cross I bear;
Rememb'ring Thine is mine forgot---
Relief beyond compare!

(Leon Hartley, Brook Street Chapel, Tottenham)

News

Thornton Heath Festival - Sunday 6th September

We are planning to have an outreach at this year's Thornton Heath festival. Every year, the high street is closed from 12 pm to 6 pm for a festival when thousands come to see various performances on a stage, enjoy rides, displays, food and the like. We give out tracts every year but this year have decided to book a stall all day where we will display information banners on the Bible and have gospel literature and CDs to give away. Prayer is valued for the Lord's blessing on this new outreach.

The Breaking of Bread meeting will be at 9:30 am on that Sunday and various shifts have been organised for believers to man the stall.

Bible Exhibition - October 5th - 15th

The Hildenborough Bible Exhibition is coming again to Clifton Hall from the 5th to 15th of October and we are praying that the local schools will respond and send children to it. This year we are going to try something new. We are planning to have guided tours and ten minute talks during the exhibition to interest folks to learn more and understand the gospel.

Children's work

Children's work is doing well for which we praise God. Seekers has around 25-30 every week and Friday club numbers vary between 13-17. A few children also come regularly to the Family Service and from the answers to questions seem to know the gospel well.

Published by Clifton Hall, 45 Whitehorse Lane, South Norwood, London SE25 6RD
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Meetings

THE WEEK AT CLIFTON

Lord's Day

Breaking of Bread	11.00 am
Family Service	4:00 pm

Monday

Prayer & Ministry	7:45 pm
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Wednesday

Seekers Club (Term time only for under 10s)	6:30 pm
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Friday

Friday Club (Term time only for 10+)	7:30 pm
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SUNDAY AFTERNOON FAMILY SERVICE

July

5	Nitish Patel
12	Glyn Davies
19	Andrew Hall
26	Norman Gibbons

August

2	John Aston
9	Nitish Patel
16	Mike Surry
23	No meeting
30	Richard Catchpole

September

6	THORNTON HEATH FESTIVAL OUTREACH
13	Phil Briercliffe
20	Andrew Hall
27	Alastair Rodger

MONDAY PRAYER & MINISTRY

July

6	Richard Catchpole
13	Timothy Miller
20	Timothy Miller
27	Timothy Miller

August

Due to a number away on holiday, 3rd, 10th, 17th and 24th of this month will be arranged at short notice depending upon how many of the assembly are able to attend.

31	Bank holiday
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September

7	Alastair Rodger
14	Norman Gibbons
21	Nitish Patel
28	Nitish Patel

Question Box

What should I do if people make fun of me for being a Christian?



If you seek to live openly as a Christian, I can almost guarantee that you'll face some kind of opposition.

This can range from being called names, all the way through to being killed because you are a believer in the Lord Jesus. Fortunately for us in the UK, the type of opposition we're likely to face is more towards the name-calling end of the scale as opposed to martyrdom. So if we're all going to face opposition, what should we think and do about it?

Firstly, we shouldn't be surprised about it. As He was preparing his disciples for His departure, in John 15:18-20 Jesus told them: "If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. Remember the word that I said to you: 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you."

Many passages in the New Testament speak about the opposition and persecution we can expect (Romans 5:3, Philippians 1:29, James 5:7-11). The world, which hates Christ, will hate those who call Him their Lord.

Secondly, we shouldn't fight fire with fire. If someone gives us abuse, we shouldn't give abuse back. If someone hits us, we shouldn't hit back. It can be very tempting to give as good as we get, but the Lord Jesus instructs us about this in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7).

You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' But I say to you, do not resist the one who is evil. But if anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if anyone would sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well. So we shouldn't react as the world reacts, but in the exact opposite way.

Respond to insults with kind words, mistreatment with generosity.

This brings us to our third point; we might wonder why we're suffering and those who make us suffer seem to be doing fine. The Psalmist wondered the same thing too, in Psalm 73:3 he writes: "For I was envious of the arrogant when I saw the prosperity of the wicked."

Why did the wicked have an easy life and why did the righteous suffer? How did he find an answer? Verse 17 tells us: "I went into the sanctuary of God; then I discerned their end."

Our third point is that we need to leave these things to the Lord, rather than trying to get vengeance ourselves. Paul could show us this in Romans 12:17-21: "Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honourable in the sight of all. If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.' To the contrary, 'if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head.' Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."

David could write similar things in Psalm 37, as could Peter in chapter 3 of his first letter. When we're made fun of or suffer as a Christian in some other way, realise that nothing is outside of God's control, He is sovereign over all things. As sovereign, He works all things according to the counsel of his will (Ephesians 1:11). His purpose will ultimately come to pass, even if it looks unlikely while you suffer.

A final thought I can offer. God hasn't called us to isolate ourselves from the world, the Lord Jesus called us to be salt and light in this world (Matthew 5:13-17). So we need to be there to tell our schoolmates, our work colleagues, our neighbours about Him. But it's also vital that we find friendship and fellowship with fellow Christians, with them we can find comfort and support as we face opposition together.

Alastair Rodger

Bible Teaching

Elisha Prophet of Water (Part 9)

By the late Charles Wigg (Tasmania)

WHAT IS THE ANSWER?

This is the situation faced by many today, the “Creditor has come”, but how can we avoid this disaster? The answer lies in the ‘pot of oil’, the person of the Holy Spirit, and the revival of true evangelism. We need to borrow vessels from abroad, empty vessels, and the measure of our faith will determine the number. These empty vessels represent people that are without Christ. Because, until Christ comes into the human life we are but an empty shell, an empty vessel. Though men were meant to contain the Life content of God, yet through sin, there is just an emptiness, a vacuum in the human soul. The number of the vessels borrowed, was determined by the faith of the widow, and ultimately determined what the widow’s wealth would be, but the prophet told her, “Let it not be few”. It has been said, that “Faith attempts great things for God, and faith expects great things from God”.

They must have gazed with awe as the oil flowed, such a small pot, and such large vessels, yet while ever the widow poured, the golden oil flowed. It is to be noted that she held the pot, and the boys brought the empty vessels to her. The pouring out was not entrusted to the inexperienced, but the oil flowed from the pot that was held in the hands of a mature, experienced mother figure. Thank God for the exuberance and the enthusiasm of youth, it is very refreshing to see, but it needs to be tempered by the mellowness and maturity that age, experience, and in this case, sorrow, brings. The oil flowed until the last vessel was filled, and then it ceased. Perhaps then they wished that they had borrowed more vessels, that their faith had been greater.

WHAT TO DO NEXT?

The widow now had another problem, she had a house full of borrowed vessels filled with oil, what was she to do? So she returned to Elisha for advice, and he told her to sell the oil, to pay her debt, then to live with her sons on the residue of the great profit that she had gained.



While ever the vessels full of oil remained unsold in the house, the debt, and the consequent danger of losing her sons remained. She was to distribute her oil to others, who would give her money for it. Thus she shared the blessing, and became rich as she did so. The writer of the Proverbs says, "There is that scattereth yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is fitting, yet it tendeth only to poverty". Prov. 11:24. When God gives an undeserved blessing, He intends that we share it with others. It is thus that we become spiritually wealthy as we share His blessing with others.

There is one thing that we must note, that is that the vessels were borrowed, the oil was the property of the widow and her sons, but the vessels were not. I have noticed over the years that those that adopt aloof, pharasaical, and exclusive attitudes, seem to regard the members of their fellowship as belonging to them. They dare not go anywhere else, or break bread with any other believers, except those that they regard as being in 'fellowship' with them. Some go so far as to teach that it is only those people that are in fellowship with them or their group, that are truly saved, and will at last be in heaven. Thank God, that is not so! If it was so, then heaven would be a very lonely place.

No the vessels will always belong to ANOTHER, and for us this means that even if we are used to the blessing of God's people, yet we can never claim them as ours. "The Lord knoweth them that are His",

(2Tim.2:19), it must always be so. Let us thank God for those with whom we can pursue righteousness, faith, love & peace, those who call upon the Lord out of a pure heart, but never let us claim them as ours!

THE WEALTHY SHUNAMMITE

Next in 2 Kings chapter 4, we read of the wealthy woman of Shunem. Here we have an example of how God rewards the love and hospitality shown to His own, especially to His servants. Matt. 25:31-40, reveals that the Lord Jesus regards anything done in love to His brethren, as done unto Him. In Heb. 13:1 we are warned not to forgetful to entertain strangers, because in doing so, some have entertained angels, though they have not been aware of it.

Each time Elisha passed that way, he went into this lady's house for a meal. It seems that she did not know who Elisha was, but she discerned, (probably by his conversation), that he was a holy man of God. So she consulted her husband about the advisability of preparing a special chamber where he could turn into, and enjoy both rest and privacy. It was agreed, and duly built. It was not a large or luxurious room, but large enough for the needs of the prophet. In that small room she placed a bed, a table, a stool, and a lampstand, just such things as the prophet would need, to enable him to rest, to meditate or to study.

It is rather sad when the servants of God demand luxury, and special treatment, as they move from place to place in their service. I recall one such servant who had been involved in a car accident. He was showing me a photo book, which recorded the different stages of his recovery to health. I noticed particularly that in many of the photos he was wearing different tee shirts, and each one of these was advertising some of the world's most luxurious and expensive hotels. It seemed obvious that he would not be content to stay in a small room in a believer's house. This to me was very sad.

As Elisha enjoyed this provision for his needs, he thought of seeking some reward for the kindness thus shown to him and his servant. So the woman was called and asked what she would wish to be done for her. Doubtless she was surprised that such a thought should come into the prophet's mind, as she had done these things out of love and generosity, she never had any thought of reward. She declined the offered privileges that were suggested by the prophet. He was thus in a quandary as to what to do.

Gehazi had the answer, as he had noticed that she had no son, and that her husband was old. We may think it to be strange that Elisha did not notice this, but it seems that he had never married, and had never had a child of his own, whereas Gehazi was married and had children of his own, he understood the joys of parenthood, of having his own child in his arms, but the woman had never experienced such joy. So she was called, and she stood in the doorway. Elisha then announced the news, which she thought was impossible, and too good to be true. (She even accused him of lying to her). However her unbelief did not hinder God in fulfilling the promise, and what seemed impossible took place in the due time.

This reward for her kindness did not come from the prophet, but from God. What joy it must have brought to her heart, as day after day she held that precious child in her arms. She had longed in vain for this experience all the years of her married life, and had given up all hope of ever having a child of her own. But now the miracle had happened, and only because of a little kindness that she had shown to God's servant. It reminds me of the doxology in Eph. 3:20-21, where we are told of a God who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we can ask or think.

..... to be continued

Good News

Is There Any Word From the Lord?

by Robert E. Surgenor (USA)



In the title of this little tract, we have a question asked over 2,500 years ago by a troubled king and the immediate answer from God's prophet Jeremiah — (Jeremiah 37:17).

King Zedekiah's day was overshadowed with perplexity and distress. God's Word had been despised, judgment was near, and false prophets deceived the people.

Since our day is so similar, let us apply this king's question to six different classes of people among us today. Thanks be to God, there is a word from the Lord for each of them as well as you!

THE INDIFFERENT

How many fit into this class! They are not religious, neither are they riotous. Their attitude is, "What you do is your business, what I do is mine." They are perfectly content with themselves and have no interest in hearing God's gospel. Is there any word from the Lord for the indifferent? — There is!

"Because there is wrath, beware lest He take thee away with His stroke: then a great ransom cannot deliver thee." (Job 36:18)

THE PLEASURE LOVERS

You see them everywhere, running to and fro. Their heart is never satisfied, and their thirst is never quenched. The theater, ball game, bowling alley, race track and amusement park are just a few of their pursuits in life. Their affections are wretchedly misplaced. They love the pleasures of sin and despise Christ. In other words, they love what they should hate, and hate what they should love! Is there any word from the Lord for the pleasure lovers? — There is!

“Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment.” (Ecclesiastes 11:9)

THE COVETOUS

He may be poor, or he may be rich, but his eyes are never satisfied. The love of money motivates him and material gain is foremost in his heart; while at the same time he gives little or no thought as to his soul’s eternal welfare! Is there any word from the Lord for the covetous? — There is!

“For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?” (Mark 8:36)

THE RELIGIOUS

Devout in their ways, they prove to be an asset to their community. Sincere in their beliefs, they faithfully support their church and may even teach a Sunday school class. Their word is as good as gold, and you can depend on them for help in times of need. However, they are depending on all these virtues to take them to heaven. They have never been “born again” (John 3:7). Their case is sad indeed! Is there any word from the Lord for the religious? — There is!

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.” (Ephesians 2:8,9)

THE PROCRASTINATORS

This title is a big word but it just means, “one who puts a matter off.” Many souls have been awakened to see their need of God’s salvation, yet they have said, “I’ll get saved later.” My friend, what if the gates of death were to swing open to receive your soul tonight? Where would YOU be? Life is so uncertain. Death lurks at every corner. Is there any word from the Lord for the procrastinators? — There is!

“Behold, NOW is the accepted time; behold, NOW is the day of salvation.” (II Corinthians 6:2)

THE ANXIOUS

I have seen this class but they are rare. At one time, they were merry and careless, or perhaps satisfied with their religion; but now the gaiety is gone, their countenance is troubled, and their hearts ache with a burden of sin. They have been made to see that their sins are taking them to hell, and that religion affords no true shelter or peace. It has dawned upon them that they are LOST! Yes, the Holy Spirit has been working on them as a potter with clay, forming them into a vessel emptied of self, the right condition to receive Christ. Listen to the confessions of men with whom God was dealing. Job — “I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes” (Job 42:6). Isaiah — “Woe is me! for I am undone: because I am a man of unclean lips” (Isaiah 6:5). Peter — “I am a sinful man, O Lord” (Luke 5:8). Oh, that the Holy Spirit would enlighten you to see yourself as God sees you and bring you to the place that He brought these men, for He never imparts salvation until one is convicted of his sin, and repentance is wrought in his soul.

Are you anxious to be saved? Do you desire salvation more than anything else in this world? Is there any word from the Lord for the anxious? — There is!

“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.” (Acts 16:31)

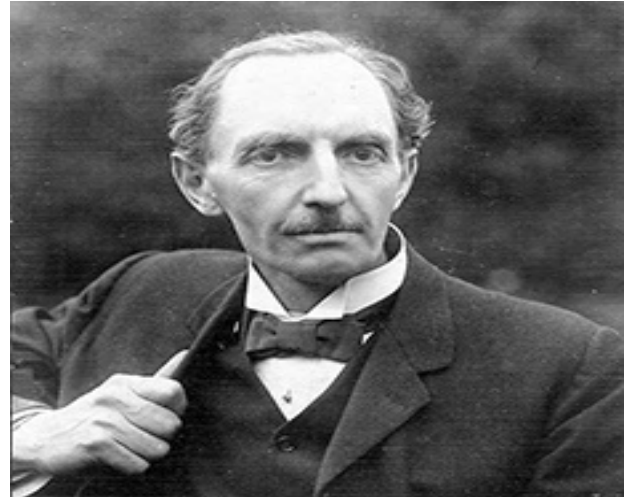
Church History

C. T. Studd

Cricketer and Missionary (Part One)

By Mark Beardall (Lewisham)

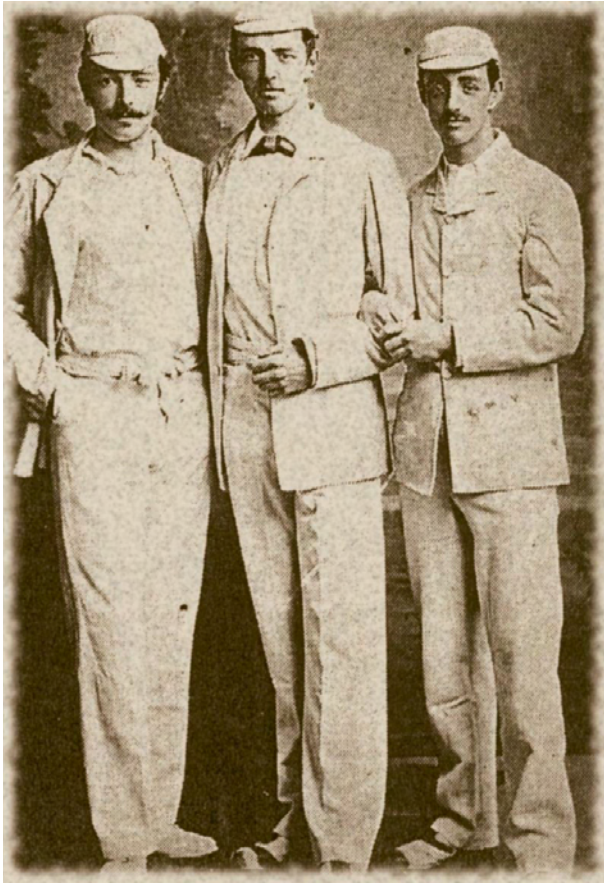
C.T. Studd was a famous cricketer who gave up fame and fortune to become a missionary in China. He later went to India and spent his final years labouring for God in the Congo. Studd founded the Heart of Africa Mission which later became WEC, World Evangelization Crusade.



Charles Thomas Studd was born on 2nd December 1860 in Spratton, Northamptonshire. His father Edward Studd had retired to England after making a fortune as a planter in India. Edward moved from his large house called Hallaton Hall in Leicestershire to a larger one called Tedworth Hall in Wiltshire. Mr. Studd was a keen sportsman who enjoyed fox hunting and encouraged his boys to do the same. He was also good at horse racing. He won a number of major steeplechases and even won the Grand National.

C.T. grew up on his father's estate where he could enjoy the finest sporting facilities, including a first class cricket ground. Studd and his two brothers went to school at Eton, and all three were members of the Eton XI cricket team.

The Studd family lived for sport until his father was converted under the preaching of D.L. Moody in 1877. Studd's father gave up racing and gave a horse each to his elder sons and sold the rest of his horses. He prepared a large hall in his house to hold gospel meetings and invited well known preachers to speak. He rode all



The three Studd brothers

over the country inviting people to the meetings. Hundreds came to hear the Word of God. When a guest asked the coachman about a rumour that Mr. Studd had become "religious or something," the coachman replied, "Well Sir, we don't know much about that, but all I can say is that though there's the same skin, there's a new man inside!"

Mr. Studd set out to see his three boys saved. He called them all home from Eton to see him. They didn't know that he had been converted and thought that he was going to take them to a show but he took them to hear Mr. Moody preach. C.T. grew up going to Church but thought that Christianity was just for Sundays. He compared going to Church to having a toothache.

Then all of a sudden he came to meet a "real live play the game Christian," his own father. Father often came in to his room and asked him if he was converted. C.T. would hide from his father during the day and pretend to be asleep at night.

Mr. Studd often had visiting preachers in his house and when the boys returned home the following year for their summer holidays there were two preachers in the house. The boys liked one preacher but not the other as they thought that he was a 'milk sop'. But this so called 'milk sop' preacher led all three boys to Christ without the others knowing.

In 1877 all three boys played cricket for Eton. The boys were known as J.E.K. (Kynaston) G.B. (George) and C.T. (Charlie). When Eton beat Winchester, J.E.K. made 52, C.T. made 53 and G.B. made 54 in their first innings. C.T. stayed at Eton another two years and became

Captain before going to Cambridge.

In 1882 C.T. Studd was ranked no 1 batsman by Lillywhites Annual, having scored 118 against Australia, 100 for the Gentlemen v Players at Lords and 126 not out v Gentlemen of England. He helped Cambridge to beat Australia by six wickets on their first visit to England. All three brothers played for Cambridge. They also beat Lancashire and Oxford that year.

C.T. played for England that year in the first Ashes when Australia beat England for the first time. They went to Australia in the winter and returned the ashes. Studd's name is inscribed in a poem on the urn. C.T. obtained his B.A. degree from Cambridge in 1884.

C.T. Studd was a backslider for about six years and he kept his faith to himself, whereas his brother J.E.K. was a zealous witness in the University. J.E.K. organised a very successful Moody mission at the university where many were saved. When C.T. went to Australia for a test match, two old ladies began to pray for him. Then his brother George became sick and it was thought that he would die. He saw that fame and popularity would not help his brother who might soon be in eternity. C.T. was made to see the vanity of fame. These things meant nothing to his brother. He was only interested in the Lord. The Lord was gracious in restoring George to health and restoring to Charles the joy of his salvation at one of Mr. Moody's meetings. Then C.T. began to serve the Lord as well. He tried to persuade people to read the Gospels and he spoke to them about their souls. Studd found much greater joy in winning souls than all of the joys he had known in the world.

Studd returned for another season with England and he managed to get several of the members of the England XI to attend one of Mr. Moody's meetings.

Studd realised during that season his cricket career would not last forever and that his heart was not in the game. He became more interested in winning souls than playing cricket. C.T. wanted to serve

the Lord but he didn't know what God wanted him to do. After a few months of prayer he decided to read for the bar until God gave him further direction. He was a rich man and didn't need to work for money. He couldn't with good conscience go into any profession while thousands of people were dying in their sins. After a time of seeking the Lord's guidance, Studd decided to go to China as a missionary.

Studd went for an interview with Mr. Hudson Taylor of the China Inland Mission and was accepted as an associate member. Six other men from Cambridge also joined the China Inland Mission within a few weeks. They became known as the Cambridge Seven.

..... to be continued

Update of work in Wembley (N Patel)

In May, out of the blue, we received a message on the Wembley Gospel Hall website from a young man named Paresh Morarji. He was looking for Eric Dyer to thank him for pointing him to the Saviour when he was a young lad attending the Tuesday Special in the 1990s. Eric sadly went to be with the Lord a number of years ago after faithfully serving the Lord and did not live to see the fruit of his labours. Paresh moved back to the area and wanted to be baptised and now live for the Lord. We had the joy of baptising him on June 13th and a number of the children from the Saturday children's club were present to witness their first baptism. He is the fifth Gujarati Hindu the Lord has saved in Wembley and we take this as a sure proof that the Lord is going to save many more.

The children's work is progressing well and this month we are setting up our Bible Exhibition for two weeks at the hall from the 20th of July. Prayers valued for the new believers to be established and for the Lord's blessing on this outreach.





Above, the traditional site of Jesus baptism at the River Jordan. Below, view looking east down the Wadi Suweinit, the pass through which Jonathan and his armour bearer went through to fight the Philistine garrison (1 Samuel 14:1-15)

