

The Nazarene Fellowship Circular Letter No. 77

April 1986

In this Issue:

Page 1 Editorial	Harvey and Evelyn Linggood
Page 2 Too True To Be New continued	Brother Ernest Brady
Page 3 Letter from a Christadelphian	
Page 3 Reply from	Brother Phil Parry
Page 7 What Shall I do to be saved?	Brother Albert Woodhouse
Page 9 Walking With God	Mount Zion Reporter
Page 10 Waiting	Poem

Editorial

Dear Brothers and Sisters and Reader friends, Greetings in the Name of Jesus.

We wish to thank all who communicated with us during the past month.

As most of you will now know we received the sad news just before sending out the March issue of the Circular Letter that our Sister Ann Phillips fell asleep in Jesus after a Stroke on February 7th and was buried on the 14th, I am sure we all send our sincere sympathy to our Bro. David in his grief and loss and also to his family. Bro. David was in hospital when she died getting over a very painful operation on his eyes and did not get home until Feb. 12th, so it has been a harrowing time for him and we do pray for his recovery and that God will grant him strength and courage in the days ahead.

Sister Myrtle James of Ontario Canada wrote to say how she appreciates the efforts of the brethren who write for the Circular Letter and said she had enjoyed a visit from Bro. and Sis. Alan Bate originally from England and now living at 547 Van Norman Street, Thunder Bay, Ontario, Canada P7A 401. They wished to have the Circular Letter as they are in Isolation like most of us.

In this issue we have another instalment of "Too True to be New" by Bro. Brady and two letters which may be of interest, one from a Christadelphian friend of Bro. Albert Woodhouse and an answer to it by Bro. Phil Parry, and an exhortation by Bro. Albert entitled "What shall I do to be Saved."

We send our sincere love to all in the Name of Jesus Christ, your

Brother and Sister in His Service. Harvey and Evelyn Linggood.

It is not the deed we do,
Though the deed be ever so fair.
But the love that the dear Lord looketh for,
Hidden with holy care.
In the heart of the deed so fair.

The love is the priceless thing,
The treasure our treasure must hold;
Or ever the Lord will take the gift,
Or tell the worth of the gold
By the love that cannot be told.

Continued from March.

Too True To Be New

If we are asked the question, "Why is the animal creation corruptible? does anyone reply "Because Adam sinned"? Why does a mayfly live for a few days and yet an elephant for a hundred years? Why is the life of a flower but a matter of hours, whereas a tree has a life of centuries? Is it not because these are the natural life span of their creation? Does a child who dies within a few minutes of birth lose his life or suffer for Adam's sin? Have the tribes of Africa and India, a thousand generations of ignorant and irresponsible savages, been perishing for Adam's one act of disobedience?

It needs no more than a moment's clear thinking to recognise that all living things, man included, are part of a natural order of creation which, within the limits of its organisation is very good. It is nevertheless a natural order, governed by the natural laws of reproduction, growth, maturity and decay which are vital to its continuance. Suffering, disease and death are as normal to it as are health, life and good, and indeed, unless evil formed a part of the design it would have been impossible for there to have been any appreciation or understanding of what is good. Contrasted with the harmony which existed in Eden; the creation is cursed; contrasted with the perfection which will be in the Kingdom, the present world is subject to vanity. From the point of view of the creature in search of happiness the whole creation groaneth in pain, but, and mark this, it is an essential framework and environment for the development of character.

For these reasons then, with Dr. Thomas at his best and a few writers who during the centuries have glimpsed light through the fog of misconception and tradition, we have rejected the belief that the laws governing all nature were set in operation by Adam eating the fruit of a particular tree. We have renounced the doctrine (that is why we have been called "Renunciationists") that at the fall man was literally impregnated with "sin" as a physical principle of decay and that natural death was the result and punishment. We believe it is false to reason and to revelation, and dishonouring to God, to teach that the Common death of all men, wicked and good, innocent and guilty, wise and foolish, is attributable to what Adam and Eve did in Eden. Nor do we believe that because of man's supposed physical defilement it is impossible for him to live a good life. If there was any single commandment which is beyond the capacity of any single man to observe and obey, the thought might be worth examination, but there is none. Where then, shall we look for the explanation of the Fall of Man? It was undoubtedly a matter of Law. A tremendous change occurred certainly, but it was a legal change, not a physical one. The change was in Adam's relationship to God. From being an obedient Son, living in harmony with his Creator, by a simple act of disobedience he alienated himself. This changed relationship is typified "by the expulsion from Eden and debarment from the Tree of Life.

It is not necessary to suppose that this tree of Life had a miraculous power to confer immortality; it typifies the fact that so long as Adam was obedient and free in the garden he was in a "living" relationship, but having transgressed the law under which he was placed, he incurred the penalty attaching to that law, namely the sentence of death. He was therefore cut off from the tree of Life and expelled from Eden; he was in a legally dead condition and estranged from God. It is this alienation or estrangement from God which Adam incurred both for himself and his descendants. Just as a man born under British law is by birth subject to the British Constitution, so men are born under the dominion of sin and subject to the laws governing sinners. But just as a child is not held to be responsible to the Laws of England before he has reached years of discretion, so men, even though born under sin, are not held amenable to the law of the sin and death until they are enlightened. This is what is implied by such Scriptures as "But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe" (Gal. 5:22). In 5th Romans this truth is put in several different ways. "Death passed on all men." "Death reigned even over them that had not sinned." "Through the offence of one many be dead," "Judgment by one to condemnation." "By one man's offence death reigned." "By one man's disobedience many constituted sinners." "Sin hath reigned unto death." To suppose that in these passages Paul is referring to natural death and to personal sins is to credit him with a very poor ability to express his meaning. Every one contains the idea of law and is only understandable from a legal point of view. In the following context, each one is paralleled by its reverse, the removal of the legal disability by faith in Christ's Sacrifice and consequently freedom from the power of sin and death as its wages. It is because the reign of sin is, for the present, a legal

matter, that those who choose can be delivered from it by an act of Faith, in a similar way to which one who is say a naturally born Britisher can assume American status by becoming naturalised.

Now some people argue that if our contention is correct that man was already corruptible or capable of death, he could not have incurred death by his sin. There is no weight in this objection as anyone will realise who considers what a world of difference there is between being capable of dying and being actually put to death. The vast difference is very evident if we think of a criminal under sentence of death. He will die in any case in course of time in the natural-order, but he does not worry about that; what he dreads is the execution of his sentence. The penalty attached to the law in Eden was "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shall surely die," and this implies a summary execution. In every instance where death is prescribed in the Law of Moses as a penalty of sin, it was ... death by violence, stoning or smiting.

To be continued...

Letter from a Christadelphian friend, to Brother Albert Woodhouse

Dear Albert,

I am extremely sorry that my letters to you are an abomination in your esteem. It would "be quite easy and pleasurable to write smooth things and have sweet company one with the other, but we find the position somewhat similar to that of the prophets of Israel who were demanded of their contemporaries to "Prophesy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits..." Isaiah 50:10. The exhortation to those called out by the Gospel (the saints) is to contend earnestly for The Faith which was once delivered to the saints." This we have faithfully fulfilled, and if our testimony is not received it is because others speak not according to this Word and therefore there is no light or knowledge in them. I will endeavour not to weary you dear Albert, with a lengthy chore, as you term them, but in fairness to you and myself I will God willing answer the question which you say we cannot supply. If it were a matter of the thinking of sinful flesh, alias human nature, we would have to admit failure, but having been taught of God through the Word of God, we will give the scriptural understanding to your queries.

We will take first the account of the birth of Jesus in Luke chapter 1, the full details start not at verse 55 but at verse 26 and end at verse 55. Read that conversation between the angel and Mary. There is no difficulty whatsoever, it carries its meaning on the surface, The Holiness or to use the words of Luke "That holy thing to be born of Mary shall be called The Son of God. The holiness consists in the manner of his paternity, nothing more nothing less. He was the only begotten Son of the Father. He was the child promised in Eden. The seed of the woman. No other son of man but Jesus can claim to be the Son of God, God's holy child Jesus. God has many sons, but none separated from amongst them all in the manner revealed concerning Jesus. This is the truth of the matter, it is when the sophistry of the flesh introduces theories and speculations which draw away from the simplicity of the Truth, that error upon error are adopted, the end result destruction to themselves and others carried away with their specious ramblings. I am leaving this matter, whether it is accepted or rejected. I could scripturally enlarge but seeing you put these things far from you, I will refrain myself.

I am extremely sorry for the estrangement between us, but two cannot walk together except they be agreed and the differences between us are as wide as the ocean. We must therefore leave the issues to the judgement seat of Christ.

Yours Sincerely, Stafford.

Reply to the above letter from Brother Phil Parry: dated 19-12-85

Dear Mr. Clarke,

May I introduce myself as a Brother-in-Christ "by faith and profession, and for this reason, a brother "in the Spirit" of your friend; or should I say your ex-friend Albert Woodhouse? I have been aware of your

correspondence with Albert over a considerable period and have read your views which are very far from conforming to what you profess them to be, "The Faith which was once delivered to the Saints." Obviously as a Christadelphian you should support the writings and teaching of the pioneer of that sect to whom Dr. John Thomas gave the name, and to which you profess allegiance, despite proof in the scriptures that Dr. Thomas taught truths which you and most Christadelphians reject in connection with the creation of Adam. I endorse the truth of the statement of Dr. Thomas in Elpis Israel that the animal creation including Adam was a natural one of corruptibility, that is, capable of dying, and so various nutritious food was available for the various species in order to remain living souls or creatures. This is proved in Elpis Israel under the heading "The Formation of Man," and also under the heading of "The Tree of The Knowledge of Good and Evil." Yet in an earlier letter to Albert you implore him, to read again the works of Dr. Thomas and Robert Roberts in order to establish the views you think are based on the scriptures of truth. It appears that what you ask Albert to do, you have not done yourself with any discrimination or the word of God as the standard and measure of truth and comparison; on the contrary we have read their works, and though we give both credit for much of it, especially Dr. Thomas, yet in all honesty we have to say that both of them contradicted their own works, and the works of each other, and sad to say, the scriptures themselves. Therefore it is highly objectionable and regrettable that in the B.A.S.F. under the heading "Truth to be Received" and split into clauses numbering thirty, one has only to read as far as Clause V to find Truth rejected, and this in fact the Divine record through Moses in Genesis on the formation of man and endorsed by Dr. Thomas and the apostle Paul, I Corinthians 15:45-47. I refer of course to the erroneous belief of Christadelphians that Adam's nature was changed to a process of natural decay to make him capable of death and in fact a contradiction of Elpis Israel under the heading I referred to. Dr. Thomas wrote many things which we regard as gems of Truth because they were based on the Word of God, but we regret the fact he went beyond that word in some cases and in so doing contradicted and marred the beauty of what he earlier expressed. I could quote several contradictions attributed to Dr. Thomas and Robert Roberts which places Christadelphians in a very unstable and foolish position as wresters of the scriptures to their own destruction; even Job's three friends are accepted as inspired of God in order that their words might be used to defend a theory of unclean physical flesh originated "by Dr. Thomas, Robert Roberts and the Apostate Church of Rome and defended fanatically by Christadelphians because of indiscriminate reading of the scriptures and blind acceptance of their Statement of Faith incorporated in 30 clauses not wholly substantiated by Holy Scripture. When we have tried leniency and persuasion in the past we have received little response, and when we apply the forceful approach of straight forward attack with the two-edged sword of the word of God, we extract from Christadelphians the complaints and statements that we are not adopting a brotherly, loving and Christian attitude towards them. I ask you Stafford, if you and others are aware of the libel introduced by Robert Roberts against one of his own brethren namely Edward Turney, and still perpetrated at this present time knowingly and unknowingly, in respect of the unscriptural term 'Clean Flesh' levelled against Turney, together with the quotation from II John v;7, and I John 4:5 wrested from the context, can you expect us to bow the knee in humility to those who corrupt the word in this manner?

I have read some of your letters to Albert and I have read similar matter by other Christadelphian writers and it all seems to be based on the inability of Christadelphianism to accept the fact believed and accepted by Jesus himself, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son etc. For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." John chapter 3 vs. 16-18 Here Jesus refutes the Christadelphian assertion that after Adam sinned God brought a physical change of defilement in Adam's nature transmittable Also to his posterity and defined as condemned-nature considered to be obnoxious to God. It is impossible to read such a thing into the words of Jesus, and the following verse 19 proves there is nothing physical in the condemnation but that it relates to light or enlightenment and a removal of the condemnation from him that believes on the Son of God though his flesh remains unchanged.

Even the Christadelphian formula of immersion is invalid for the removal of the condemnation, because it is regarded as a physical element in the literal flesh, and a candidate who enters the water with this belief, obviously emerges therefrom with that element or condemnation still in the flesh, for a good conscience toward God does not alter the physical flesh. Consequently the candidate is not "In Christ" but still "In Adam" having - failed to associate in the inflicted death of Christ (due only to the sinner) and risen to newness of life in him (a legal and moral position) through symbolic death and resurrection, the physical flesh unchanged. Let me now quote Dr. Thomas "Elpis Israel" - The Formation of Man, page 52 small

edition, “Incorruptible life might with equal propriety be styled spiritual life as indicative of that with which spiritual bodies are endowed. But here I use not the word spiritual, lest it should be confounded with that intellectual and moral life a man possesses when the incorruptible seed of the Kingdom takes root in his heart; and when in ‘the obedience of faith’ he passes from under the sentence of death to the sentence of justification unto life eternal.” Doubtless Dr. Thomas obtained the authority for this statement from the words of Jesus, John 5:24 and they are confirmed also by Paul in Romans 8:1. Only unfaithful conduct to the New Master can reverse this position and incur the judgment of condemnation to the second-death at the resurrection of the unjust, so what have those faithful ‘in Christ’ to fear at his coming? Will he not have already judged them faithful and in accordance with Him who hath predestinated them according to the good purpose of His Will? Is this presumption? Nay, it is the Father’s good pleasure. How can any Christadelphian be relied upon to give a complete definition of the Gospel of Truth for the salvation or as the B.A.S.F. puts it, “Truth to be Received,” if that so-called Truth turns out to be a fabrication of error and contradiction? I was a Christadelphian for 17 years and never thought the time would come when I had to ask such a question or make such a truthful statement. Taking into account his misguided view that natural death was the penalty for Adam’s sin, Dr. Thomas stated, “It required no ‘miracle’ for the infliction of death, seeing that man had become a transgressor of Divine Law,” (Eureka Vol. 1 page 248) R. Roberts stated, “It required what men call a ‘miracle’ to depress to the level of the beasts that perish the noble creature made in the image of Elohim”, (Visible Hand of God pp 19 and 20). Dr Thomas in harmony with the Bible believed Adam was created a corruptible being capable of death if left without any modification or change to incorruptibility. Robert Roberts believed the exact opposite when he wrote ‘Visible Hand of God,’ and that Adam’s nature must have been a higher nature than the beasts, which is a contradiction of Dr. Thomas and the Apostle Paul and the Genesis record. You, Stafford, set yourself up before Albert as a man who teaches truth, you quote the words of Isaiah to him as though you were the inspired prophet speaking, “To the Law and the Testimony, if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them”, and yet you, with others accept a Statement of Faith as a basis of fellowship which is founded on the contradictions mainly of R. Roberts “Visible Hand of God” and the rejection of a truth which both Dr. Thomas and Robert Roberts originally defended, namely, “that there was no change in the nature of Adam when he transgressed.” If the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness! Pilate asked, “What is Truth?” I have not found a Christadelphian who is able to answer that question in harmony with the teaching of Jesus, the Apostles, and the Prophets, not in the spoken word or in writing. As with the Irish question and its people, the whole of Christadelphia needs re-educating by a clean start, swept and garnished of the unclean spirits of doctrine by the precepts of men and a return to the Bible with unbiased minds.

This brings me to the point in your letter to Albert where you say, “It would be quite easy and pleasurable to write smooth things and have again sweet company one with another,” then you quote Isaiah 50:10 concerning the Prophets of Israel who were demanded of their contemporaries not to Prophecy right things but deceits. You then continue, “The exhortation to those called out by the Gospel (the saints) is to contend earnestly for the Faith which was once delivered to the Saints.” You then have the audacity to follow on with the words, “This we have faithfully fulfilled, and if our testimony is not received it is because others speak not according to this word and therefore there is no light or knowledge in them.” Have I not shown you Stafford, that it is your own leaders who have prophesied deceits, confusion and contradiction; that you are not therefore contending for the faith which was delivered to the saints and this is the reason we do not speak according to your word by the precepts and contradictions of men, for the simple reason that there is light in us. Why do you think we left the Christadelphian community, do you think we take delight in opposing people rather than seeking and defending Truth through the word of God? If the contradictions, and in some cases, the erroneous teachings of Dr. Thomas and Robert Roberts, to name only the two principal Christadelphians, constitutes the faith once delivered to the saints and you have contended for it and fulfilled that mission faithfully, I marvel that you have found the Holy Apostles and Prophets also contradicting themselves, for this I have yet to do. I understand the Pope had the exclusive spiritual right to interpret the word of God and teach whatever he chooses for his converts, but it appears this is not so “Truth to be received” by those aspiring to become Christadelphians, is found in the contradictory B.A.S.F. and one thing they do share with the Apostate Church of Rome is the false doctrine of original-sin and even Christadelphians charge the Apostle Paul as the perpetrator of it by reason of the incorrect interpretation of the term “SIN’S Flesh” as being “sinful-flesh” an impossibility. It was on this theme I came to a true realisation of The Faith once delivered to the saints, knowing nothing about the so-called “Clean Flesh” controversy or their literature, yet the untrue accusation was that I had been reading it, my only regret afterwards that I had not had this opportunity long before but it was repressed. And so Stafford, you may

also have been guilty of this very thing by supporting the libel about “Clean-Flesh” and repressing their right to a hearing on the Basis of the Bible, and not the uninspired words of men, to which I have referred.

It seems Albert has been endeavouring to convince you from scripture that Jesus was not “condemned-nature” as Christadelphians believe, but Holy in accordance with the statement of the Angel to Mary, “That Holy thing that shall be born of thee etc.” You say in your letter, “The Holiness consists in the manner of his paternity, nothing more, nothing less.” I consider this to be a gross violation of God’s word and if you were such an expert expounder of scripture you should see it, but of course you have yet to see the many errors I and others have referred to. The answer is plain in Luke 2:22 and 23 and Divine Paternity does not enter into it in order that a firstborn male child should be described as Holy. Samuel was a firstborn - and Holy but he was not the only begotten of God. John the Baptist was a firstborn - and Holy - but God was not his direct father. Jesus if he had been the firstborn of Mary, would have been Holy even had Joseph been his father, but his begetting of the Spirit of God made him the Son of God for an extra special reason, and that not the false one some of your recent writers have given in “The Testimony” magazine 1984, i.e. “To give him extra strength to do the will of God which all other men were incapable of doing. R. Mellows.” The reason was that He had natural life direct from the source of all life and not through the Adamic or male line. A life therefore unforfeited to sin and therefore with power to purchase all from its bondage. This is even confirmed by Dr. Thomas under the heading of Redemption, but Christadelphians have not yet accepted his teaching on this matter for to do so would be a violation of the doctrine of original-sin in their B.A.S.F. How then can you state “This is the truth of the matter? It is you who are guilty of introducing theories and speculations which draw away from the simplicity of the Truth and wresting the scriptures to the exclusion of your own salvation and that of others. Even as in the case of the Lawyers Jesus accused. Luke 11:52 “Woe unto you lawyers, for ye have taken away the key of knowledge: ye enter not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered.” Edward Turney had that key given to him by the grace of God, but Robert Roberts forbade it to his followers and the practice is still in operation in the repression of our literature to those who are unaware of the false position they are in as a result of what happened in 1875 when R. Roberts wrote the blasphemous booklet “Slain Lamb”, not in the cause of Truth but with the avowed intention of casting a slur on Edward Turney and the Truth he had revealed from his study of the Scriptures. Hence the libellous “Clean-Flesh” accusation I have already mentioned and which, though proved to be false, has not even brought a word of apology from the leaders of the Christadelphian Body because it would mean a rejection of their own doctrine of “original sin”, “sin -in-the-flesh” etc., and their “unclean-Christ”. Who would not say “Amen” to this? Only those who have an axe to grind. You, Stafford are not proving the Holiness of Jesus by what you state in your letter, but the fact that He was Son of God through His Paternity. The other important thing you fail to appreciate together with Dr. Thomas, R. Roberts, and all Christadelphian leaders and writers, is that the firstborn male of human parents under the law of Moses had to be redeemed – but nowhere do we read that Mary offered anything to redeem Jesus but only for her own uncleanness according to the Law - after which, she was clean. This was a legal and moral cleansing nothing to do with the physical quality of the flesh. Does not this show that Jesus was not “born into the bondage and constitution of sin” as were other firstborn males and that Mary knew this fact by abstaining from arousing the wrath of God through an action which would deny the Divine Paternity of Jesus? Was not Jesus, even from birth, the very antitype or substance of the types offered from Eden and under the Law? Can you conceive then, that it is in any way possible for the type to redeem the antitype? See Exodus chapter 15 verses 11 to 16.

This is exactly what Christadelphianism enjoins upon its converts, and I am sure Mary would be ashamed to find such ignorance and disrespect of the Law that can be found in the works of its pioneers and more recent leader-writers in connection with her firstborn son by whom God reconciled the world unto Himself and gave men the option of being redeemed through faith, and works accompanying that faith in the shed blood of the antitypical Lamb of His Provision, and to obtain salvation and eternal life by him. It has been expressed that we can forgive Dr. Thomas for much of the erroneous doctrine he wrote because of some of the gems of truth he expressed in harmony with scriptures and in view also of the fact he was almost alone in his quest for truth and consequently did not discard many of the errors to which he was associated with Campbellism and Calvinism.

But from the time of Robert Roberts there can be no justification or excuse for the erroneous theories of Apostate Rome, a condemned Christ in the line of condemned David and Abraham which are to be found in the B.A.S.F. and recent Christadelphian writers, taking into account the efforts of such men as Edward

Turney, A. and L. Wilson, F.J.Pearce, E.Brady and many others who have brought these things into the limelight and which is also disturbing the consciences of many Christadelphians in Australia who have never been satisfied with the Carter/Cooper Addendum with the B.A.S.F as a Basis of unity and Fellowship. I sincerely hope you will reconsider your position. If you like the quotation "To the Law and To The Testimony," please read the enclosed leaflet of that title and note firstly Dr. Pllet, Back page.

I am therefore, Yours Sincerely, in The Hope of Israel.

Philip Parry.

The way to avoid great faults is to be aware of small ones.

Anyone wrapped up in himself makes a very small package.

What Shall I Do To Be Saved?

What - must I do to be saved? Acts 16:50. There is no doubt, this question has been asked many times. The question has been asked by men from all walks of life: men from different backgrounds: men of different personalities: men of varying intellectuality: in short, all different from each other in one way or another.

Like all which is written in the scriptures, we can learn something from these writings, which deal with the question: Lord, what shall I do to be saved? The answer is plainly given in Acts chapter 16 verses 51-53, "Believe and be baptised"

Let us look back in time, and imagine that we are actually present, when a certain incident took place in a very important city in Macedonia: Philippi. Paul and his companion in the Truth: Silas, are both falsely accused by certain men of the city of certain crimes. They are brought before the magistrates, who, in their fury, command that they should be flogged. In addition, the keeper of the prison is commanded to keep them safe. Both Paul and Silas were put into an inner prison and to make sure that they were completely secure, they were put into the stocks. Let us pause and think: All this punishment inflicted upon two men, because they were simply preaching the Truth.

This incident brings into focus a man who was referred to as the jailor. He was also referred to as the keeper of the prison. First, let us consider the type of man one would have to be, to be suited to this type of work. He would have to be strict and hard. We must bear in mind the type of people the keeper of the prison was responsible for. They were murderers: thieves: and all types of criminals. He would be a man, whilst on duty, who would have to be in complete control in all the circumstances which were likely to arise. He would be answerable to his employers, and would have to obey orders issued to him. These orders would entail the business of punishment of prisoners: flogging: executions: and sometimes, torture: which was resorted to in those days. Jailors in those days very often had a free hand: they were not bound by rules and regulations as at this time. Compare the keeper of the prison with the modern version: the prison governor. This man, the modern prison governor, spends a lot of his time behind a desk, doing all the very important paper work, and making certain decisions in connection with the smooth running of a complicated system which must exist in the running of a modern prison.

It has already been pointed out. In those days, the running of an institution of this kind was not hampered with many rules; regulations, and red tape; therefore, the responsibility rested directly on the shoulders of those who were in charge. It can be safely said that the people at the top were only interested in one thing. The certainty that these prisoners were safely under lock and key, as long as required. We can understand now why a keeper of the prison had to be a special type: hard; being responsible for executions;

and punishments; when ordered by their superiors. It will be noticed that the jailor was awakened, and that he drew his sword. He had to be armed at all times; he did not wear a sword for an ornament; he had to be prepared to use it at any time; it was a case of kill or be killed. The keeper was living in an institution which housed killers, who given the slightest opportunity would not hesitate to maim and kill. From these few words, one can get a picture of the man who was in charge of a prison. Briefly he had, to use a modern phrase to be tough to the extreme. He had to be able to do violence when required; and, he had to be able to take responsibility. It is very obvious that to allow prisoners to escape was looked upon as neglect of duty, in other words, it was a serious crime, and was punishable by death. The form of punishment which was to be expected in cases like this must have been awful; hence, the preference to commit suicide to having to face the terrible alternative. From the foregoing remarks, one can only get a fairly accurate picture of the type of man this prison keeper was. One could not possibly associate this type of man with Christianity, yet, the miracle happens: He comes to Paul and Silas, and kneels before them; humbling himself and asking that question: "What must I do to be saved?" One can well imagine, during this man's off duty periods, he would, at times, wander round the city. He would notice a group of people listening to a man who was giving a speech of some kind. Being, curious, he would join that gathering to listen to what was being said. This probably would be the first time he had heard this unusual doctrine being preached. It most certainly had an effect on him, because it is evident he must have been impressed, and consequently gave a great deal of thought to what he had heard. One can see very clearly the hand of God in these events which led up to this man asking that question. "What must I do to be saved?"

We have another account of great interest, in Luke 5:14. The soldiers here, ask John, "And what shall we do?" According to the authorised version, John the Baptist said, "Do violence to no man; neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages." To ask a soldier to do violence to no man, is like asking a doctor, not to cure his patients. A soldier is a man who is trained to do violence; otherwise, he would be useless on the field of battle, for which he is employed. What lesson do we learn from this? Can we imagine for one moment, a Christian aiming a gun at a man, with the object of killing him? Can we remotely imagine a Christian in a war plane, releasing bombs on a target; maiming and slaughtering thousands of men, women and children? It certainly does not fit in with the image of a Christian. In simple language, a military man, whatever his rank or position, is part and parcel of a system which trains men to kill. Whether any of these soldiers took notice of what John said, and took on the Saving Name of Jesus, remains to be seen, when Jesus shall call forth the dead from their graves.

It was on one of the many occasions when the Master was preaching, that a young man came to Jesus and said: "Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?" It was very evident that this young man knew sufficient of the Truth to prompt this question. It is also evident that he would like to have been included in the number who will inherit the Kingdom. This is brought out when it is recorded that the young man went away sorrowful. Why was he sorrowful? Because he could not bring himself to make the sacrifice Jesus had asked of him to "sell all that he had and give to the poor and come follow me." Let us look more closely at the record and try and get some idea what type of young man he was. It was very evident that he was a good living young man. Although he was wealthy, he did not use his wealth to live a life of debauchery. We can say that he was a young man of high moral standards. He kept the law in a blameless manner, because, he justified himself by telling Jesus that he had kept all these things from his youth up. It is very clear he was not a liar, because, if he had uttered a lie or even exaggerated Jesus would have immediately detected it. One senses, when we read this account, that this young man was a man with a charming disposition, yet, sad to say he turned his back on the True Riches. From the accounts of these different types of men, we can learn quite a lot.

There are lessons for all of us; whatever our age; background or personality. For instance, there is a lesson for the young Christian. There might come a time when the country he lives in, conscripts all young men to do military service. To object to being forced into the Fighting Forces, a young man contravenes the emergency law, which says that all eligible young men, when called upon to serve their country must do so. Refusal to do so, meant that they had to face a tribunal on the grounds of being a Conscientious Objector. They must apply for exemption from military service, giving their reasons why they object. Subsequently, they face a tribunal which decides whether the applicant has sufficient grounds for objecting to military service. Those who have taken part in an examination by one of these tribunals, know, with few exceptions, what a farce, and what a humiliating experience it can be. The judge, invariably, was a man whose background made him anything but sympathetic to the individual whose conscience was being examined,

consequently, it was very difficult for a C.O. to convince a judge of his sincerity. Those applicants who were not exempted were sometimes forced into the army, doing non-combatant duties, such as the Red Cross Units. Alternatively, they were ordered to do land work or some civilian service or the Fire Service. This arrangement did not alter the fact that a man belonging to the armed forces, in whatever capacity, is in no better position than the man who is in the front line. It has been pointed out, this experience is a humiliating one. The individual whose conscience is being examined has to stand in the middle of the examination room with his hands on the back of a chair: placed there for that purpose. He, of course has to face the presiding judge. The judge does all the questioning, and, very often, the questions are designed to confuse and sometimes ridicule. If the applicant manages to satisfy the judge that he is sincere; this being a great achievement; and we must not forget, we again see the hand of God: then that applicant is exempted and is allowed to continue his normal life. One, who is not experienced in this sort of procedure would tend to think that that was the end of it all. Not so, because to start with, the daily press, and the local press used to publish a list of all the C.O.'s who had to go to a certain designated city covering the particular area in which the C.O. lived. This news soon circulated round, and the people the C.O.'s had to work with, with few exceptions, treated him like a leper. I have known of a certain C.O. being ostracized by his fellow workers, years after the war. Through it all, incidents happened which showed very clearly that God, who sees all things at all times, was caring for those He loved, and brought about incidents which made these times of trial very easy to endure.

The reason for bringing these experiences to light is to compare the position of the modern C.O. with that of the jailor. The positions are very comparable. That man would most certainly change his way of life, after his acceptance of the Truth and his baptism. He would have to discard that sword which he always wore. What would his superiors say to him when he gave them his resignation? What would his neighbours and friends think? This man would have to change all his way of life and thinking. He knew now, that God was his new Master, and God was far stronger than all the earthly masters put together. To the young Christian particularly, this is a great lesson indeed. This man who was a prison keeper, would probably hold his own with most men. There was nothing soft about him, and would, if he were living now, be counted as a man amongst men, yet he became a Christian, being placed in the same position as a C.O. of this day and generation. If that man could speak now, he would undoubtedly tell us that it takes more courage for a man to be a follower of Jesus, than to be a man of the world. But what a prize for the true Christian when Jesus shall return and will reward those who are loving His appearance. We have mentioned the soldiers. It is evident they were interested because again, what prompted them to ask that question which they evidently did: "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" There is no record of any of these soldiers becoming followers of Jesus. If they did, they, like the jailor would have to make great changes in their lives. The rich young man. A great deal can be learned from this account. It has to do with worldly riches. What a snare riches can be. As we get older, we realize more and more that riches are a snare. One of the greatest blessings which can be "bestowed upon a Christian is to be placed in such a position that he is allowed to work for his living, and have sufficient for his daily needs. Nothing more. Nothing less. The man or woman whose daily life consists of a humdrum sort of existence, has an incentive to look for the Better Things. The true Christian knows what these "Better Things" are: The Gift of God to those who are loving Jesus' appearing. They know; these are the "True Riches."

We will conclude with a few words about 'the poor rich man.' He has at the very most, a few uncertain years in which he can enjoy the doubtful pleasures of this life. After that - Eternal death. Let us all consider: the young, middle aged, and the aged, that the trials of this life are as nothing compared with the true and everlasting riches stored up for those who are "loving His appearance."

Bro. A. Woodhouse

Walking With God.

An article appeared in the Mount Zion Reporter with this title. A summary is given to encourage us in our walking with God, as we do through His son Jesus Christ. How lamentable is the fact that so few are to be found who enjoy this highly privileged state. We read that Enoch (Genesis 5:24) and Noah (Genesis 6:9) walked with God. Many today should do so by their profession, e.g. Pastors, Bishops, Fathers etc of

orthodox Christianity and Rabbi's of Jewry, but few from conviction, yes they believe there is a God, that His word should be obeyed, but they know Him not in Christ; they are not united to Him; they have no access to Him, and some have no desire to have fellowship with Him; some merely from educational or parental persuasion just walk with God in His ordinances, but are not created anew in Christ to God. In the natural order to walk we must have life. To walk with God we must have life, a Spiritual life made available to us through a union with His son Jesus Christ. Those who have entered into a covenant with Jesus will experience much opposition from the world with its fashions and friendships. Those who walk with God will have to fight an offensive and a defensive battle with the world and what of our weapons? They are provided for us as seen in Ephesians 6:15-17, the whole armour of God. For defence. Truth: Righteousness: Shield of Faith: Helmet of Salvation and the Gospel of Peace. For our attack use The Sword of the Spirit, which is the WORD of GOD, Sharper than any two-edged sword (Hebrews 4:2). With this attire and weapon we shall have to bear a continual testimony against nominal Christians, irrespective of whatever banner they are under. All who walk with God dare not join in others for in one form or another they all appear to deny Christ; whereas to walk with God we must be reconciled to Him through His Son.

Walking with God is a distinguishing mark of sonship - a seal of adoption - none but those for whom Christ shed His blood will be invested with this privilege, such men were Abraham Hezekiah. In the natural order children walk and dwell with their parents and have special claims on them. None but those who love God supremely can walk with Him and why? They were 'first loved by Him' as the cause, they love Him 'as the effect.' To walk with God in amity we shall need the continual influence of the Holy Spirit, to quicken, incline and strengthen us in the way, John 14:16, 15:26, 16:7. Those who walk with God cannot be satisfied without the friendship of God. It is one of the privileges of the saints to hear the voice of God. "He will speak peace to His people" says David. Jacob could not be content until a blessing was spoken to him, he said "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me." Genesis 32:26-29. Yes Jacob was blessed by God, this is confirmed in effect in verse 28 "for as a prince hast thou power with God..." said the angel with whom he wrestled.

Waiting

Watchmen, waiting for the morning,
 Canst thou see its glimmering light?
 Canst thou tell by signs prophetic
 When will end this long dark night?

Night so long, so dark and dreary,
 Casts her sable garb aside;
 Morning breaks with rays transcendent,
 All her gates are open wide.

When we see the fig tree budding,
 Know we not that summer's here?
 So by prophecy fulfilling
 Know that Morn will soon appear.

Marching through her portals glorious,
 Jesus with His convoy come;
 Crowned with might, His robes resplendent,
 Brighter than the noonday sun.

Christian, wait! The Day is breaking
 O'er the hilltop Morning dawns;
 See! Light streaks the east horizon
 Wait! And hail the coming Morn!

List! His voice fills every dungeon,
 Ope's the prison gates of earth;
 And the prisoners, then immortal,
 Shout the victory over death.

L.T.N.