

The Wicket Gate Magazine

A Continuing Witness



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- Through the Bible with the Children – Bible Stories told by Mr Seaton.
- Congregational Praise – the singing of our Church during Worship Services
- Sermons preached by Dr Needham and Mr Seaton
- Lectures given in the Church by Dr Needham

"A Common Confusion"

(The Pastor's Letter May 1976)

Dear Friends,

There is very often a tendency in many professing Christians to confuse the *effects* of the work of salvation in a person's life with the *source* from which that salvation springs. Therefore, when we speak of a person "believing" in our Lord Jesus Christ to the salvation of their soul, we should clearly understand that such believing on the part of the person in question is not the *source*, but the *effect* of the work of salvation operating in that person's life. The failure to distinguish between these two things – cause and effect – very much stems from the practice of dividing asunder portions of the scripture that must, of necessity, stand together in order to teach us the whole breadth of the truth that it deals with.

One of the most notorious examples of this practice is the isolating of verse thirteen from verse twelve in the first chapter of John's gospel. That verse 12 of John chapter 1 says, "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name." "There you are," people say, "it's as simple as that; you simply believe on the Lord Jesus Christ; you 'receive' him as your Lord and Saviour, and you are saved." Now while that is true, gloriously true, it is not the whole of the truth. Salvation *is* made manifest and evident in a person's life by "receiving" the Lord Jesus Christ and "believing" on His name. It is simply believe and receive. It is not "easy believe-ism," but it is most certainly "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." But what we fail to see at our peril – and this has resulted in our man-centred evangelism of our day – is the fact that the believing and the receiving are the "outworkings" of some thing that has, first of all, had an "inworking" in the person under review. What the 12th verse of John chapter 1 displays is the marks of spiritual life present in a man or a woman. Receiving Christ and believing on His name – these are

spiritual activities suddenly coming forth out of a sinner who before this time only showed that he was “dead” to all the spiritual things of God. But now, all of a sudden, he begins to show spiritual life; he begins to move spiritual limbs, as it were; this man is “alive” we might rightly say – he is believing, he is receiving, he is reaching out the hand of faith, he is looking unto Jesus, he is saying, “My Lord and my God.” All these are spiritual activities; they belong to the work of salvation in a man or a woman's heart and soul. But they are not the first cause of that work; they don't belong to the source of the work – they belong to the effects of the work.

Now then, if John chapter 1 verse 12 was not violently divorced from John chapter 1 verse 13 we would see that clearly. For having spoken of these effects of salvation which are made manifest as men and women put their trust in Christ, John then goes on to show the source from which that salvation springs in the first place.

Have these people actively displayed signs of spiritual life in believing and receiving Christ? Well, then, says the apostle John, come to the cause and the source of that life: - “But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: *which were born*, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.” You see that term John uses? And how apt that term is: “Which were *born*,” he says. And here is the source of that spiritual life which has just been displayed in those who “received” and “believed” the things concerning our Lord Jesus Christ. They were “dead”, they were without spiritual existence, they were in darkness – take as many of the gospel descriptions of the sinner as you like. But suddenly they began to stir – they began to cry out and reach out – they began to show life – they looked, they believed, they received. How was that? Well, says John, there is only one explanation, they were *born*.

Here is a child scurrying across the floor on its hind-quarters; in another few months it is on its feet; it begins to grow and its appetite seems to increase with every passing day and night. Soon the sensibilities begin to develop, it knows what pleases it and what

displeases. That's life! We say, That's life. Indeed it is. And so also with “spiritual” life. First the crawling and toddling stage, then, the walking and the running; the growing appetite from milk to strong meat, and so forth, and the development of good and pure Christian sensibilities to those things that belong to our eternal peace. But, here is the point, before there can be life there must be birth. That child on the floor didn't spring out of itself; it has a parentage, it was born. And so, says John, these people in verse 12 who show forth these signs of spiritual life in Jesus Christ our Lord, that life has a source, they were “born”. And so, John goes on to tell us how they were born and how they were not born.

There are three very definite ways in which they were not born, says John: they were not born of blood, they were not born of the will of the flesh, they were not born of the will of man. That is fairly comprehensive. “Not of blood.” If there was one thing the Jews loved to imagine it was the thought of automatic salvation on account of national standing. Our Lord clears up that question in the eighth chapter of this gospel: they were children of Abraham as far as natural birth is concerned, but the true child of Abraham is one by faith in Jesus Christ. “Not of blood.” The application of that for our own days is simply contained in the fact that we have children according to our natures and not according to our grace; grace doesn't run in the Adamic blood.

“*Nor* of the will of the flesh,” says John. This remark is absolutely vital. A person can never bring about spiritual life by a natural (fleshly) act. Again our Lord in this same gospel – in the famous interview with Nicodemus – makes this abundantly clear, “that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit, Marvel not that I say unto thee, Ye must be born again.” “The spirit warreth against the flesh and the flesh against the spirit.” You can't marry the two and produce a spiritual off-spring. Those who show signs of true spiritual life have never, never been born of the “will of the flesh”.

“Nor of the will of man,” he says in the third place. Not anything I have of myself by blood-birth, not anything I can do of myself by the deeds of the flesh, and not anything that any other man, woman, young person or child can do for me. This, of course, doesn't eliminate for one moment the preachers task, or the believer's task in witness, teaching, instructing, testifying by life and example, and so forth. But it does most assuredly lay down the guidelines for the way in which we undertake all of these things, lest we are found producing “man-made” converts and conversions psychological and not spiritual. We must never forget our Lord's words to the Pharisees, how they compassed sea and land to make one convert (one proselyte) and when they had done so they only made him “twice the child of hell that he was before.” Those who truly believe, who truly show true signs and marks of spiritual life in their behaviour, are those who have been “born”, but not by “the will of man”.

Well then, how were they born? And says John, they were “born of God”. They “received”, they “believed”. How did they receive and believe? They “were born”. How were they born? Through blood? No. By the flesh? No. Through men? No. They were *born of God*. They displayed, and showed forth, and manifested those spiritual signs of life, because they underwent a spiritual birth: they were “born of God”.

It's the doctrine of regeneration, of the rebirth: the very thing that our Lord told Nicodemus in the third chapter those many years ago, “Ye must be born again”. We would mark that well. Our Lord isn't telling Nicodemus of something that he must do – that is how that passage is normally preached and understood in these days – but our Lord is telling him of something that must *happen* to him – he must be “born again”, he must be regenerated by the workings of the Holy Spirit of God, he must be born of God. And it's when a person is spiritually born of God that that same person exercises that new-found spiritual life. And the very first exercise in that new-born thing is the full cry of its spiritual lungs before the God who has begotten it. And with that first cry, and those first manifestations of a new-born

spiritual life before God, comes the “power”, or the “right”, or the “authority” to become a child of God.

His is the process. We are dead by nature; God gives us birth, and we show our birth by receiving that One whom God sent into the world to die for sinners. When this happens, our “standing” before God is immediately changed, and we are “adopted” into the family of God with all the rights and privileges of that family. And here is the wonderful thing, before He gives us the “standing” of children, He first of all, gives us the “nature” of children through being born again, born of God. We are born, by nature, of our father the devil, and it's the works of our father that we do. **But**, as soon as we are “born of God”, then it is the works of God that we do. And what is the work of God? “This is the work of God”, said Jesus, “that ye believe on him whom He hath sent.”

And so, the whole picture of John chapter 1 verses 12 *and* 13, fall into perfect place and perfect harmony. Believing in Christ and receiving Him is not the first cause in the things of our salvation – not the source. It is the outworking – and the blessed outworking. But to halt there is to miss the most blessed fact of all, that if ever we show those signs of spiritual life at all, we show them on account of our spiritual birth at the hands of our very God Himself. What a thing if it should be said of us as was said of old Israel, “The ox knoweth her master .. but my people ...” Shall we be worse than the beasts of the field and not know the God who has begotten us? Children who cannot rightly trace who their father is? Brethren and sisters of an “elder brother” beyond compare and fail to know how we have become “joint heirs” with Him? Surely these things shouldn't be, brethren; but surely we should know that those who stand rightly in the same family with Jesus Christ their Saviour are those who have been “born” into that family – not “of blood nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, **but of God.**” “To God be the glory, great things He hath done.”

Let us rejoice at each and every time that we see the manifestations of newly created spiritual life showing itself forth in

every sinner that repents and believes the gospel. But let us never forget to look back to the “source” as we behold the “effect”, and return all our thanks to the God who first breathed that spiritual life into that soul in this second creation and birth, as surely as He breathed into Adam the breath of life in the first creation, and Adam became a living soul before his God. “And God said, Let there be light; and there was light.”

Yours sincerely,
W.J. Seaton

Gleanings in the Psalms

(Psalm 73)



Verse 1. “Truly God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart.” The seventy-third psalm is a very striking record of the mental struggle which an eminently pious Jew underwent when he contemplated the respective conditions of the righteous and the wicked. Fresh from the conflict, he somewhat abruptly opens the psalm with the confident enunciation of the truth of which victory over doubt had now made him more and more intelligently sure than ever, that “God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart.” And then he relates the most fatal shock which his faith had received, when he contrasted the prosperity of the wicked, who though they proudly contemned God and man, prospered in the world and increased in riches, with his own lot. Though he had cleansed his heart and washed his heart in innocency, he had been “plagued all the day long and chastened every morning.” The place where his doubts were removed and his tottering faith re-established, was “the sanctuary of God,” and God Himself was his teacher.

Thomas Perowne

Verse 2. “But as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped.” Let those who fear God and who are beginning to look aside on the things of this world, bear in mind that it will be hard, even for them, to hold out in faith and in the fear of God in a time of trial. Remember the example of David. He was a man that had spent much time travelling towards heaven; yet, looking but a little aside on the glittering show of this world, had very near lost his way – his feet were almost gone, his steps had well nigh slipped.

Edward Elton

Verse 2. “... my feet were almost gone ...” And what was it that kept him from entirely slipping away and being lost in perdition? It was the restraining and restoring grace of his God in his life. As old John Hooper the martyr said, almost four-hundred-and fifty years ago, “Here is the presence, providence, strength, safeguard, and keeping of man by Almighty God, marvellously set forth.” Does such grace, then, lead to presumption and careless living? No! Presumption and careless living denies the existence of such grace. “Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed, lest he fall.”

Verse 3. “For I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.” The sneering jest of Dionysius the younger, when he had plundered the Temple of Syracuse, is well-known. “See you not,” says he to those that were with him, “how the gods favour the sacrilegious?” In the same way the prosperity of the wicked is taken as an encouragement to commit sin; for we are ready to imagine that, since God grants them so much of the good things of this life, they are the objects of His approbation and favour. We see how their prosperous condition wounded David to the heart, leading him almost to think that there was nothing better for him than to join himself to their company and to follow their course of life.

John Calvin

Verse 3. “For I was envious at the foolish ...” Who would envy a malefactor going up a high ladder, and being mounted above the rest of the people, when it is only for a little time and in order that he might be hanged? That is just the case of wicked men who are

mounted up high in prosperity, only that they might be cast down deeper into destruction. Who would have envied the beasts of old the garlands and ribbons with which the heathen adorned them when they went to be sacrificed?

John Willison

Verse 4. “For there are no bands in their death: but their strength is firm.” But men may die like lambs, and yet have their place for ever with the goats.

Matthew Henry

Verse 6. “Therefore pride compasseth them about as a chain ...”

A young minister, addressing a rather fashionable audience, attacked their pride and extravagance, as seen in their ribbons, ruffles, chains and jewels. In the afternoon, an old minister preached powerfully on the corruption of human nature, the enmity of the soul towards God, and the necessity for a new heart. In the evening as they sat together in private, the young minister asked the older man, “Why do you not preach against the vanity and pride of the people for dressing so extravagantly?” “Ah, son Timothy,” he replied, “while you are trimming off the top and branches of the trees, I am endeavouring to cut it up by the roots, and then the whole top must die.”

From the Religious Tract Society

Verse 6. “Therefore pride ...” Pride thrust Nebuchadnezzar out of men's society, Saul out of his kingdom, Haman out of the court, Adam out of paradise, and Lucifer out of Heaven.

Thomas Adams

(To be continued)



The Baptists in Scotland (Part 1)

From “Leith” to the “Scotch” Baptists.

In the first quarter of the 19th Century, Sir Walter Scott, the novelist, produced one of his famous “Waverley Novels” - “The Heart of Midlothian” - where he more than once reflects on the religious climate of his homeland, always coming to the same conclusion, that “the air of Scotland” was “alien to the growth of Independency.” By Independency, of course, Sir Walter Scott and the Scotland that he spoke of generally meant anything that wasn't Presbyterian; and if any one has ever taken more than a casual breath of that air, they will know that the old author's dictum holds good – even up and until this present time. Of all the Independents, of course, there were none that the air of Scotland was more alien to than the Baptists, and the inhospitable nature of that air was to be easily detected at a very early stage. Whether or not there were actually any baptists, as such, in Scotland in the early days of the Reformation, is hard to determine. However, the position was clear for any who were, or for any who had notions of venturing into its borders. For as good John Knox was slaying the papacy with the words of his mouth he also had in reserve a few choice comments against that people who were then called “Ana-baptist”, and whom he declared to be, “Most horrible and absurd!” Well, be that as it may; but as we all too-readily know, it is very often those things that we consider “horrible and absurd” that have the horrible and absurd habit of persisting. And, in spite of the words of the old novelist – and the old Reformer, too – the baptist movement did manage to lift up its head, and even survive, in the “alien” air of the northern part of our United Kingdom.

As we have mentioned, there might have been, and probably were, those in the early days who had come to see the true nature of baptism as set out in the Word of God. However, as far as any organised groups or Churches of such people are concerned, the first beginnings of the baptist movement date around the middle of the 17th century and centre on the town of Leith which then lay on the outskirts of old

Edinburgh. These were the days of the Commonwealth, of course, and when Cromwell had sent his Model Army north of the Tweed, many of those soldiers had carried with them the baptist convictions that they held dearly to their hearts. In 1653, then, we find “A Confession of Faith” being published in that town. It is a goodly document, and is reproduced, according to its title page, from “A Confession of Faith of the several congregations or Churches of Christ in London, which are commonly (though unjustly) called Anabaptists.” In all probability, this church at Leith was largely a garrison church; but for all that, it appears to have had an evangelistic spirit, as an old entry in a contemporary diary shows: - “This year,” it says, “Anabaptists daily increased in this nation, where never any were before. But now, many make open profession thereof and avow the same, and say that thrice in this week – on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, there were some dipped at Bonnington Mill, betwixt Leith and Edinburgh, both men and women of good rank. Some days there would be several hundred persons attending that action (of baptism) and fifteen persons in one day baptised by the Anabaptists.” This, too, was in the year 1653 the same year in which the Confession was published, but the same diary of eleven years earlier also mentions the name Anabaptist. However, in spite of the apparent evangelism and activity of those baptist soldiers at Leith and in other place, the baptist movement, as such, doesn't seem to have long outlived the departure of the Cromwellian forces. For the next hundred years almost, the “alien” air seems to have all but stifled that distinctive witness to the gospel which we call Baptist, and it is not until the mid-eighteenth century that there are stirrings afresh in the hearts of one or two enquiring saints who are to give new impetus to the cause.

The first name of the list is that of Sir William Sinclair of Keiss in Caithness, one of the most northerly shires on the mainland of Scotland. It is perhaps, somewhat out of keeping with what is to follow regarding the general conditions of the baptist in Scotland that the very first real “national” baptist church in the land should have been formed, and conducted its worship, within the walls of a castle! But so the providence of the Lord had ordained it to be, and on New Year's Day 1750 the church at Keiss was founded and constituted.

Sir William Sinclair probably came under baptist convictions during his army career in the south, and as soon as he returned north again he began to make those convictions as widespread as possible. He was dubbed “the Preaching Knight” by the Bishop of the Diocese, who also tells us that he was looked on as “a wrong-headed man confessedly by all who knew him.” This is a pretty sweeping statement, of course, and the basis of the charge of “wrong-headedness” seems to lie in the fact that “he has taken up that odd way of strolling about preaching without commission or appointment of any man.” It was also said that he vented “the wildest and most extravagant notions that were ever hatched in the most disordered brain.” Some of Sir William's “notions” may, indeed, have tended to the extravagant; but it was that extravagance of zeal that very often accompanies the



breaking forth of the truth of God upon a sincere soul. And, of course, there is nothing extravagant whatsoever in his “notions”, as they were called, concerning the right mode and subjects for Biblical baptism, or the proper observance of the Lord's Table, or indeed, the preparation of his little collection of Scriptural hymns – probably the first hymn book ever produced in Scotland for a non-conformist congregation.

The church at Keiss, then, under the pastoral care of Sir William Sinclair - “the Preaching Knight” and “the wrong-headed man” - came into being and numbered around thirty at the time of his removal to Edinburgh where he died in the year 1768. He was succeeded to the pastorate at Keiss by John Budge, one of the members and probably an Elder of the congregation. This took place in 1763, the actual year of Sir William's departure from the north.

Now we may note that date – 1763 – for as the old founder of the first “home-bred” Baptist church in Scotland was preparing to leave, or had just left, his home in the northern county, another man by the name of Robert Carmichael, in Glasgow, set a question before one of

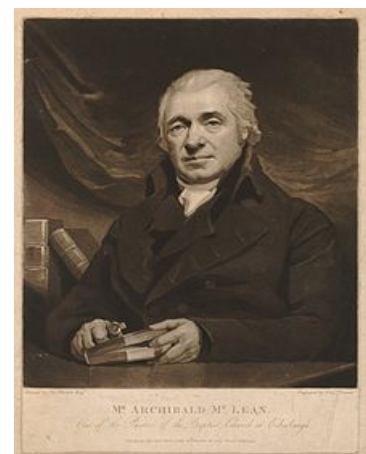
his closest friends, Archibald McLean. “What do you think of baptism?” he asked him. And the results of the enquiries of both men into that question was the eventual founding of that grouping of churches that would become known as “Scotch Baptists”, one of the strongest arms of the movement in Scotland during those early days.

Both Archibald McLean and Robert Carmichael were members of the “Glas-ite” movement that had created a great deal of rumbling and division within the national Presbyterian Church of Scotland.

(Carmichael was actually a minister of a Glas-ite congregation in Glasgow). John Glas had been a Presbyterian minister in the Church of Scotland, but had been “deposed from his living” in 1730 on account of his views on the church being separate from the State and independent of the State. “Christ's kingdom was a purely spiritual one,” he pronounced, and “a National Church (was) unwarranted under the New Testament.” He also held that “a society or church of believers was self-ruling.” It was these kinds of views, then, that Carmichael and McLean had already embraced. And it was as a follow on to those views concerning the nature of the church of Christ that the question of baptism within that church became a daily topic of conversation with them, and the subject of many letters between them after Carmichael went to take over a new charge in Edinburgh.

Eventually, on October 9th 1765, Robert Carmichael was baptised in the public baptistry at John Gill's meeting house at the Barbican in London, and, on his return to Edinburgh, he baptised a few others who had embraced baptist views and had seceded from the Glas-ite church like himself. A similar train of events took place with Archibald McLean: he, with a few others, received baptism at the hands of Robert Carmichael, returned to Glasgow, and formed a branch of the parent church in Edinburgh.

Now, although McLean was the second of the two brethren in question to be baptised it was, nevertheless, his stamp that was to settle on the movement of the Scotch Baptists which followed. He was rightly referred to as “Father



McLean” in that loving fashion that belongs to such titles, for he was the “father” of the Scotch baptist churches. McLean was a printer to trade, and he used the business under his control to good purpose, producing many first class works on the subject of baptism, and on other subjects doctrinal and practical. Mr Spurgeon makes mention of McLean's Commentary on Hebrews in his “Commenting and Commentaries,” and calls it, “One of the most judicious and solid expositions ever written.” And there is an interesting footnote on one of the pages of John Brown's Commentary on 1st Peter, reproduced by the Banner of Truth. John Brown is just about to make a quotation - “it is justly remarked by a judicious divine,” he says. However, as soon as he says that, he apparently feels inclined to inform us who this “judicious divine” is that he is about to quote, and in the footnote he gives us a little anecdote concerning him; “the late Archibald McLean,” he tells us, “from whose writings I have derived much advantage. It may be worth stating that when introduced to the late Robert Hall, one of the first things he said to me was, 'Sir, you have found me reading your countryman, Archibald McLean. He was a man mighty in the Scriptures, Sir; mighty in the Scriptures.’” Such was Archibald McLean; a man of no mean ability, and a man greatly revered in circles other than his own.

But what were his own circles? Who were the Scotch Baptists? Well, as far as their doctrine of the essential things of the gospel are concerned, they were in absolute accord with the other baptist churches that came into existence up and until the middle of the 19th century. That is, they were Calvinistic, holding to the truth of God's free grace in the salvation of sinners. However, it was in the realms of church “order” that the differences arose.

One of the strongest points of the Scotch Baptist system was the plurality of elders, or pastors, as they were also called, within each local church. These elders or pastors were men normally engaged in a daily job, but who took the oversight of the church between them outwith their regular working hours. On the other side of the divide stood the “English” baptists (of whom we shall hear in a later magazine). These “English” churches were not called English

because they were composed of Englishmen, nor even because they had English pastors; but it was because these pastors were men set aside by the churches from their normal work for the work of the ministry, so following on in the general accepted pattern of the churches south of the border. But, for the Scotch churches, the plurality of the elders, was a cardinal doctrine in their scheme of church government. As churches grew, an elder was sometimes set aside, at least in part-time, over the care of the flock, but, strangely enough this was with regards to the pastoral oversight in visitation etc., and not in regards to the ministry of the word.

Alongside this view of the ministry, were some other features. These are listed in “The History of the Baptists in Scotland.” “The breaking of bread took place every Lord's Day and was for baptized believers only, and of those only such as held the same principles of faith and order; the prayers and exhortations of the brethren in the public meetings, the fellowship or contribution for the poorer brethren, the Agape or Love Feast were all scriptural institutions to be observed. Minor observances held as obligatory were sustained with a sober judgment, the kiss of charity, and the washing of feet, reserved for special occasions, were not regarded as religious institutes. It was the duty of a Christian to marry 'only in the Lord', and submission to the civil power in all things lawful, were prescribed.”

Such were the Scotch baptists; brought into being in the providence of God through those early remarks and conversations between Robert Carmichael and Archibald McLean in 1763. In spite of some setbacks and dissensions, there were about a dozen churches by the end of the century, making good and steady progress.

(In the next edition – the Brother Haldane etcetera)

BOYS AND GIRLS PAGE

Dear Boys and Girls,

Many years ago, a young man who was an American, came to know the Lord Jesus Christ as his Saviour, and the joy that this brought him made him very very anxious that others should know of the Saviour, too. David Brainerd, for that was his name, became determined to take the gospel to the Red Indians of North America.

Those red-skins of that time were very fierce and had many strange customs, and above all else, they were very suspicious of the “pale-face”, as they called the white skinned people. It would be very dangerous for this young man to go into their country. However, so great was David Brainerd's love for the Lord Jesus that he prayed earnestly that he would be given strength and courage for the task. (You know, boys and girls, God never leaves us to our own strength when we seek to do His work in telling the gospel to others, and David Brainerd found this out in a very special way).

On his first journey to the forks of the Delaware river a strange thing happened. He had been told of a very ferocious tribe of Indians who lived in the forests of New Jersey, and he made up his mind to take the gospel to them. So, off he went, and as he approached their settlement he saw the smoke of their camp fires. It was evening, so he decided to wait until morning before going into the settlement. Before going off to sleep, David got down on his knees as usual to ask God's blessing and help for all that was before him the following day. As he kneeled in prayer, a rattlesnake crept to his side, lifted its horrible head as if to strike, flicked its forked tongue almost in his face, and then, without any noticeable reason, glided swiftly away into the brushwood.

Now, as David Brainerd was on his knees, thinking that he was alone with his God, there were others present – Redskins! They were silently watching all that took place and were amazed at the rattlesnake's behaviour. “The great spirit is with the paleface,” they said; and they gave him a prophet's welcome, and listened to all he had to tell them about God and His Son Jesus Christ the Saviour. Surely God answered his prayers in a wonderful way.

Love,
Mrs Seaton

A Good Confession: -

“Little Thomas Bilney,” as he was most often called was one of those early reformers in England who had a keen desire for the salvation of those that he came into contact with.

One man on whom he set this desire above all others was young Hugh Latimer, then a Roman Catholic Priest, but soon to become “stout Hugh” on account of his noble stand and martyrdom in the cause of the gospel. In those days it wasn't in any way safe to be found speaking about the things of this “new” reformation, but little Thomas approached Latimer one day and asked him if he would like to “hear” his confession. As a conscientious priest, Latimer couldn't really refuse, and so, in the quiet of his study the pair met and the speaking and listening began. In after years, Hugh Latimer told that when Bilney made his study his confessional, he poured forth such a tale of sin and faith that it gave him his first “smell of the grace of God.”

“The faster a man rides, if he be in the wrong road, the farther he goes out of his way. Zeal is the best or worst thing in a duty; if the end be right, it is excellent; if wrong, worthlessness.”

(William Gurnall)

Alarm: -

As the Lord liveth, before whom I stand, I have not the least hope of seeing you in heaven, unless you be converted. I completely despair of your salvation, unless you will be prevailed upon to turn and give up yourself to God in newness of life. These lines are upon a weighty errand indeed – to convince and convert and save you.

I am not baiting my hook with attractive language or fishing for your applause, but for your souls. My work is not to please you, but to save you. If I were to please your ears, I would sing another song. If I were to preach myself, I would steer another course. I could tell you a smoother tale; I could make a pillow for you, and speak peace. But how much better are the “wounds” of a friend than the fair speeches of a harlot? If I were to quiet a crying infant, I might sing him into a happier mood, or rock him asleep. But when the child is fallen into the fire, the parent takes another course.

I know, if we succeed not with you, you are lost: if we cannot get your consent to arise and come away, you will perish for ever. **NO** conversion – **NO** salvation!

(Joseph Alleine)