

# 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
- Historical Lectures given in the Church by Dr Needham
- Podcasts on Various Subjects
- Audio Archive of Sermons from 1970 to 2002. (A Work in Progress)

# ***The Church's Loss of Identity and Purpose.***

## ***Pastor's Letter October 1981***

Dear Friends,

It was thought appropriate to give a little space in this edition to a few of the perils that have beset the Church over the past number of years, and which have helped to create much of this loss of identity and purpose with which we have become surrounded.

First and foremost, in some ways, perhaps we have come to witness ***an evangelicalism that has created an unhealthy and unbalanced personalized view of salvation.***

This usually expresses itself in the sentiment that Christ is "Mine own and personal Saviour." It is a precious sentiment, of course; and without it no one will ever see the Lord. But, like many other precious sentiments – although culled from the Word of God, unless it is used and understood in the light of the ***totality*** of the Word of God, it becomes isolated from the Word of God and ends up at variance with the Word of God.

We witness the misuse of the sentiment, then, when a person uses it as a slogan for being a freelance Christian; not subject to any Church of the Lord's people, or committed to any Church of the Lord's people. The idea is usually undergirded with the notion that the person belongs to the Church of Christ in heaven above – the mystic Church, or the universal Church – and therefore, doesn't need to have any visible attachments, or visible links with any of the visible expressions of that church here below. Such people are members of ***the*** Church, and therefore, do not even have to consider being members of ***a*** church; Christ is their "own and personal" Saviour and therefore, they will live their own and personal lives for as long as they are left in this world.

What this mode of thinking drastically fails to take into account is the fact of the existence of the visible (local) Churches of Christ on the

pages of the New Testament. Those Churches – at Ephesus, at Philippi, at Corinth, etc., - didn't just spring into being because a bunch of Christians – nor, indeed, a bunch of Apostles – thought it would be a good idea. Their existence and being are in accordance with the Divine Sovereign will of God who would have His people live and conduct themselves in a certain way while they are in this world, and, while they are in this world, to "show forth his praise" in the manner that He would designate and design for His own purposes.

Nor will it do for any Christian to satisfy his or herself with the idea that as long as they "attend" some church or other they are really doing all that the Word of God would require of them. This is not the case. When the apostle exhorts the Hebrew Christians not to "forsake the assembling" of themselves together, "as the manner of some is," he is not exhorting them to engage in some legalistic face-saver that will make their Christian profession appear alright; but he is exhorting them to their place in, and of, and with the Church of Christ there in their midst. "And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more as ye see the day approaching."

Those verses – like the whole of the Word of God – bristle with the concepts of mutual exhortation, mutual comforting, mutual stirring-up, mutual subjection. Any real reading of the New Testament scriptures will show that it is impossible to fully live the Christian life apart from participation with fellowship in, guidance by, and subjection to the local Church. To think any differently is to fly in the face of God's arrangement for our growth in grace. We may, indeed, rejoice in Paul's assurance that "Jesus loved *me*, and gave himself for *me*," but never to the detriment of the truth that "Jesus loved *the Church* and gave himself for *it*." For Paul knew that Jesus had loved him and given Himself for him, *as* part of the Church, and *to be* part of the Church. Christ is "The saviour of the Body"; and it is by virtue of that fact that He saved men and women to be "members" of that Body. It is not simply *you*, or *I*, that is going to be presented in heaven at last to the glory of the Saviour, but the Church; and there will not be one soul presented outwith the

Church, or in isolation to the Church. It is a gross misreading, then, of the Word of God to imagine that we can live full Christian lives here below apart from taking our rightful place within the local, visible manifestations of that Church. With absolute ease, the New Testament scriptures of God move between speaking of the Church in heaven at last and the Church on earth here and now. There is no dichotomy; the Church in heaven and the churches on earth, Biblically founded, etc., are not two different things, but simply two manifestations, or developments of the one thing. With the utmost simplicity, those who "gladly received the word" – those who saw, by the grace of God in the gospel, that they had been made partakers of the inheritance with the saints in light – were "added to the Church," where they "continued steadfastly in the apostles doctrine, and, fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and prayers." They showed themselves as members of the body, sheep of the flock, soldiers in the army, co-labourers together in the vineyard, fellow-workers in the cause of the gospel.

We realise the difficulties for some with regards to the issue of local Church membership, but we would exhort every soul to clearly examine their own conscience in the light of God's Word. If there is any hint of arrogant isolationism based on the pretext that Christ is "mine own and personal Saviour," and I need none, and will be subject to none, then, bear in mind that that is indulging in one of the attitudes that has helped to erode the testimony of the church for which Christ gave His life, and that the person who indulges in such behaviour is the ultimate loser.

A second factor in the general downgrading of the Church today is – ***A dispensationalism that has divested the Church of the awareness of its uniqueness and centrality.***

Dispensationalism is that Form of Biblical interpretation fully introduced by men such as J. N. Darby and popularized through the agency of the Scofield Reference Bible. One of the central teachings of Dispensationalism is that God's main concern and plan lie with the earthly nation of Israel, and that the Church as such, is simply an "interim arrangement" brought about by the Jews' refusal of Christ

during His days on this earth. The Jews as a nation refused the "Kingdom" that Christ came preaching, and so, the Lord brought in the age of the Church as an "interim arrangement" until such times as Christ will return again when He will, once again, present the Kingdom for the Jews, which they will, this time accept.

We need only deal with the one, basic, underlying idea of the system of dispensationalism for now. It should be perfectly clear to anyone how such an approach to the Bible and to the ultimate plans and purposes of God had within it, the seeds of erosion for the dignity and calling of the Church. We hasten to add that good men can produce strange notions at times; and if Peter himself could get dazzled with things Judaistic, as he did at a couple of points, small wonder that the same happens to lesser mortals. But, most assuredly, the idea of the Church of Christ as the "interim arrangement" in the great plans and purposes of God was to have its debilitating effect on the Church that has come about through her loss of identity as being the very centre of God's purposes, now and for ever.

How good it would be for Christians to read what God says about the Church; some of her titles and the implications of those titles; what she cost – the blood of Jesus Christ – and how God so willingly gave His Son for her, who, likewise, poured out His life on her behalf. It was the Church that Christ died for; it is the Church that is "the fulness" of Christ; it is for the Church that "all things" are put under the feet of Christ; it is in the Church the "glory" of God is – *now*, and then for ever and ever.

There is one very remarkable passage in the epistle to the Ephesians that, in a way, says it all. Paul is exhorting wives and husbands, in chapter five of the epistle, with regards to their mutual callings and duties, etc., and in verse 25 he exhorts the husband to love his wife "even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it." In that passage, the apostle Paul follows his usual pattern under the Holy Spirit of God – that is, he delivers an exhortation with regards to some piece of ethical conduct in the Christian's life, and then, he backs home that exhortation by pointing the Christian to some great central

fact of his soul's salvation. In this case, he exhorts the husband to love the wife, and he does so by reminding the husband that Christ loved the church and gave himself for it.

We should not miss the point: *how* did Christ love the Church? Did He love the Church as under the terms of some kind of an "Interim arrangement" that He was one day going to set aside to see to the affairs of another? The Nation of Israel? Or did He love her exclusively, fully, and with none other at all besides? Surely, the latter! For what kind of a basis would it be for a husband to love his wife as Christ loved the Church if Christ's love to His church is not unique and unparalleled in all the realms of time and eternity. And, on the other hand, what kind of attitude, and reaction, and behaviour might we expect from a wife who came to the idea and notion that she was only some kind of an "interim arrangement" of her husband? Might we not expect that wife to lose much of her sense of dignity, wifely vocation and calling, and sense of position? Indeed! And should we act surprised, then, that we are confronted with a Bride of Christ who has allowed her house and herself to go to pieces? After all, if she has been told for years now that she is not really the centre of a Sovereign God's plans and purposes small wonder if she has come to believe it and to act with awful logic in the light of what she has come to believe.

May God bring the Church in our day to an awareness of who she is and what she is. She is the one thing in all this world and out of all this world, that Christ died for, He died for no others, or none other. That one fact alone stamps the Church as unique, and absolutely unique, in all the ways of God.

A third factor is, what we might call – *A traditionalism that has institutionalised and thereby helped to fossilize the spiritual nature of the Church.*

Into this category fits the whole notion of State Church religion, and so forth. So much of it stems from the failure to see that no country today is anything like the Theocratic State (the "Church State") that Israel was in the days of the Old Testament. One of the great needs of

our day is for the Churches today to become *New* Testament Churches. That is in no way to disregard the *Old*: but we must learn to be governed by the *New* and act accordingly. All the trappings that we have become accustomed to – sanctified buildings of a particular kind, clerical dress, ceremonial rites that have no Biblical foundation on which to rest – we need to have the courage and the ability to ask what such things have to do with the Churches of Christ – *especially* where such things have become the virtual sum-total of any professed Church of Christ.

It saddened our heart to read about a professed (historic) reformed Church who pronounced their public witness and testimony now to be at an end, because another denomination had taken away their Church building from them. Isn't it the case that the early Churches worshipped wherever they could? It is, surely, not the building that makes a Church of Christ! But institutionalised Christianity creates such thinking because it relies on such things for its very existence. There is more than an ounce of Rome in much of present-day Protestantism, even of the Reformed or Evangelical ilk; and where a denomination, or Church, begins to debate more over its subordinate standards, or subordinate accoutrements, it has well departed from the Word of God as rule, and it better get back there as soon as possible. Holding to the "traditional" view of the Church, within a person's tradition, need not necessarily mean that the person is holding to the Biblical view of the Church. Traditional reformation, and Biblical reformation, are two different things. They may blessedly converge at points, but where they don't, it is the way of the Word that must be taken and followed, regardless of cost.

It is no accident that the religion of the Old Testament and the New are so outwardly different. From the Temple, with all its ornamentation and so forth, you move to the house of Philemon, or the school of Tyrannus; from the peculiar garb of the priesthood, you move to the apostolic band and their followers, and Paul asking for the "old cloak" that he left at Troas; from the extended seasons and feast days, and observances, you move to the Church gathered on the first day of the week to break bread. The differences are not minor, they are radical; and, above all things, they are God-revealed on the pages of His Word.

The essentiality of the outer things have gone, *but*, where the essentiality of the outer things are re-introduced, or have been re-introduced, there the Church is indulging in a traditional institutionalising of the Church and the results will sooner or later show.

How we all need to endeavour to bow to the Word of God. There is not one of us but who constantly needs the Scriptures before us. God give us grace in our day to build again the walls of God's true Sion.

Yours Sincerely,  
W. J. Seaton (October 1981)

***Preaching in Revival Times***  
***By***  
***J. C. Ryle***



The instrumentality by which the spiritual reformers of the eighteenth century carried on their operations was of the simplest description. It was neither more nor less than the old apostolic weapon of preaching.

The sword which St Paul wielded with such mighty effect, when he assaulted the strongholds of heathenism eighteen centuries earlier, was the same sword by which they won their victories.

***They preached simply.*** They rightly concluded that the very first thing to be aimed at in a sermon was to be understood. They strove to come down to the level of the people, and to speak what the poor could understand. To attain this they were not ashamed to crucify their style, and to sacrifice their reputations for learning. They carried out the maxim of Augustine, - 'A wooden key is not so beautiful as a golden one, but if it can open the door when the golden one cannot, it is far more useful.'



***They preached fervently and directly.*** The cast aside that dull, cold, heavy, lifeless mode of delivery, which had long made sermons a very proverb for dullness. They proclaimed the words of faith with faith, and the story of life with life. They spoke with fiery zeal, like men who were thoroughly persuaded that what they said was true, and that it was of the utmost importance to your eternal interest to hear it. They threw heart and soul and feeling into their sermons, and sent their hearers home convinced, at any rate, that the preacher was sincere and wished them well. They believed that you must speak ***from*** the heart if you wish to speak ***to*** the heart, and that there must be unmistakable faith and conviction within the pulpit if there is to be faith and conviction among the pews.

"But what was the substance and subject-matter of the preaching which produced such wonderful effect in the eighteenth century? I will not insult my readers' common sense by only saying that it was 'simple, earnest, fervent, real, genial, brave, life-like,' and so forth; I would have it understood that it was eminently doctrinal, positive, dogmatical, and distinct."

For one thing, then, the spiritual reformers of the eighteenth century taught constantly ***the sufficiency and supremacy of the Holy Scripture.*** The Bible, whole and unmutilated, was their sole rule of faith and practice. They accepted all its statements without being uninspired. They never flinched from asserting that there can be no error in the Word of God; and that when we cannot understand or reconcile some part of its contents, the fault is in the interpreter and not in the text. In all their preaching they were eminently men of one book. To that book they were content to pin their faith, and by it to stand or fall.

Furthermore, the reformers of the eighteenth century taught constantly the ***total corruption of human nature.*** They knew nothing of the modern notion that Christ is in every man, and that all possess something good within, which they have only to stir up and use in order to be saved. They never flattered men and women in this fashion. They told them plainly that they were dead, and must be made alive again;

that they were guilty, lost, helpless, hopeless, and in imminent danger of eternal ruin. Strange and paradoxical as it may seem to some, their first step towards making men good was to show them that they were utterly bad; and their primary argument in persuading men to do something for their souls was to convince them that they could do nothing at all.

Furthermore, the reformers of the eighteenth century taught constantly that ***Christ's death upon the cross was the only satisfaction for man's sins***; and that, when Christ died, He died as our substitute – 'The just for the unjust.' This, in fact, was the cardinal point in almost all their sermons. They loved Christ's person; they rejoiced in Christ's promises; they urged men to walk after Christ's example. But the one subject, above all others, concerning Christ, which they delighted to dwell on, was the atoning blood which Christ shed for us on the cross.

Furthermore, the reformers of the eighteenth century taught constantly the great doctrine of ***justification by faith***. They told men that faith was the one thing needful in order to obtain an interest in Christ's work for their souls. ... Justification by virtue of church membership – justification without believing or trusting – were notions to which they gave no countenance. Everything, if you will believe, and the moment you believe; nothing, if you do not believe – was the very marrow of their preaching.

Furthermore, the reformers of the eighteenth century taught constantly ***the universal necessity of heart conversion and a new creation by the Holy Spirit***. They proclaimed everywhere to the crowds they addressed, 'Ye must be born again.' Sonship to God by baptism – sonship to God while we do the will of the devil – such sonship they never admitted.

Furthermore, the reformers of the eighteenth century taught constantly ***the inseparable connection between true faith and personal holiness***. A true Christian, they maintained, must always be known by his fruits. 'No fruits, no grace,' was the unvarying tenor of their preaching.

Finally, the reformers of the eighteenth century taught constantly, as doctrines both equally true, ***God's eternal hatred against sin, and God's***

*love towards sinners.* Both about heaven and about hell they used the utmost plainness of speech. They never shrunk from declaring, in plainest terms, the certainty of God's judgment and of wrath to come, if men persisted in impenitence and unbelief; and yet, they never ceased to magnify the riches of God's kindness and compassion, and to entreat all sinners to repent and turn to God before it was too late.

Such were the main truths which the English evangelists of those times were constantly preaching.



## ***Gleanings in the Psalms***

### ***Psalm 92 Continued.***

**Verse 3 "Upon an instrument of ten strings, and upon the psaltery: upon the harp with a solemn sound."** There was a "glare", if I may so put it, which characterised the divine appointments of Judaism. An august temple, ornamented with gold and silver; precious stones, golden candlesticks, golden altar, priests in rich attire, trumpets, cymbals, harps – all of which were adapted to an age when the church was in a state of infancy. But, when the "substance" is come, it is time that the "shadows" flee away. The best exposition of "harps" etc. in singing, is given by Dr Watts –

"Oh may my heart in tune be found,  
Like David's harp of solemn sound."

*Andrew Fuller*

**Verse 4. "For thou, Lord, hast made me glad through thy work."** It was natural for the psalmist to sing because he was glad; and to sing unto the Lord, because his gladness was caused by a contemplation of

the divine work. If we consider either creation or providence, we shall find overflowing reasons for joy. But when we come to review the work of redemption, gladness knows no bounds, but feels that she must praise the Lord with all her might. There are times when in the contemplation of redeeming love we feel that if we did not sing we must die; silence would be as horrible to us as if we were gagged by inquisitors, or stifled by murderers.

*C.H. Spurgeon*

**Verse 5 "O Lord, how great are thy works! and thy thoughts are very deep."** Verily, my brethren, there is no sea so deep as those thoughts of God where – "the wicked flourish," and "to good suffer." There is nothing so profound, nothing so deep as that. And dost thou wish to cross this depth? Then, remove not from clinging to the wood of Christ's cross, and thou shalt not sink; hold fast to Christ alone.

*Augustine*

**Verse 6 "A brutish man knoweth not; neither doth a fool understand this."** In this and the following verses the effect of the psalm is heightened by contrast; the shadows are thrown in to bring out the lights more prominently. What a stoop from the preceding verse; from the saint to the brute, from the worshipper to the boor, from the psalmist to the fool! Yet, alas, the character described here is not an uncommon one. ... A man must either be a saint or a brute, he has no other choice. His type must be the adoring seraph, or the ungrateful swine, ... O God, how sorrowful a thing it is that men whom thou hast so largely gifted, and made in thine own image, should so brutify themselves that they will neither see nor understand what thou hast made so clear. Well might an eccentric writer say, "God made man a little lower than the angels at first, and he has been trying to get lower ever since."

*C. H. Spurgeon*

**Verses 12-15 "The righteous shall flourish. ..."**

David here tells us *how* the righteous man shall flourish. He shall flourish "like the palm tree; he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon." He

has just said that the "wicked" spring up like the grass. What a contrast, then, this picture of the evergreen and durable palm and cedars.

He tells us *where* he shall flourish. "Those that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God." Within the sanctuary of the Church of God we have the communion of saints. *There* our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. *There* are dispensed the ordinances of our religion, and the word of truth. *There* God commandeth the blessing, even life for evermore.

He also tells us *when* he shall flourish. "They shall bring forth fruit in old age." This is to show the "permanency" of their principle of life, and to distinguish them from natural productions.

He also tells us *why* he shall flourish. "They shall be fat and flourishing; to show that the Lord is upright." We might have supposed that they would flourish to show that *they* were upright. But, it is by the grace of God that they are what they are – not they, but the grace of God which is in them. From *Him* is their fruit found. Their preservation and fertility are to the praise and glory of God. What He does for them He has *engaged* to do, to show that He is upright.

*William Jay*

## ***Flowers from a Puritan's Garden.***



*This article is continued from edition 157.*

*First, we have Manton's illustrations, or similes, and then, Spurgeon's comment.*

### **Manton:**

A traveller and a merchant differ: a traveller goes from place to place that he may see; but a merchant goes from port to port that he may take in his cargo, and grow rich by traffic.

**Spurgeon:**

Thus there are travelling "hearers", who merely observe and criticise, and go their way very little the better for what they have heard. There are also merchant-hearers, who listen to profit, and make a gain to their souls out of every sermon. O Lord, put me among the wise merchantmen, and in my trading may I find the one pearl of great price, even Jesus, thy Son.

**Manton:**

The Spirit of God rides most triumphantly in his own chariot.

**Spurgeon:**

That is to say, he is best pleased to convey conviction and comfort by means of his own Word. God's Word, not man's comment upon God's Word, is the most usual means of conversion. This is done to put honour upon the divine revelation, and to make us prize it with all our heart. Our Lord said not only, "Sanctify them," but "Sanctify them through thy truth;" and then he added, "thy word is truth." The scriptures do not make our hearts burn until the Spirit kindles them into flames and then we say, "Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures." Let us reverence Holy Scripture, because the Holy Ghost is its author, expositor, preserver, and applier. We cannot too often use the weapon which the Spirit himself calls his Word.

**Manton:**

The earth is never the more unsettled because to giddy brains it seemeth to spin round.

**Spurgeon:**

Even so the salvation of the saints is sure, though to their trembling hearts it may seem to be in terrible jeopardy. A passenger crossing the channel is none the less in safety because he himself feels ready to give up the ghost with the nausea brought on by the rolling of the vessel. Our feelings are poor judges of facts. Some who felt sure of heaven are now in hell, and others who had almost lost hope can arrive in heaven

for all that. My head may whirl and make me think that everything is spinning round, and yet I know those things to be steadfast as the hills. Therefore, I do not believe my feelings, but trust the facts. And so, when my poor silly heart imagines that the eternal promises will fail, I must chide its folly, and fall back upon the everlasting verities.

**Manton:**

There is a difference between merit and means; a schoolmaster may teach a child gratis, and yet the boy must himself take pains to get his learning. Mercy is never obtained but in the use of means: wisdom's dole is dispensed at wisdom's gate.

**Spurgeon:**

This is a very important remark, and tends to protect from the charge of legality those who earnestly exhort men to gospel duties. There is no "merit" for us in seeking the Lord, but we may not hope to find him without it. Prayer does not deserve and answer, and yet we are to pray without ceasing, and we may not hope to have unless we ask. The cup must be held under the flowing fountain, or it will not be filled; yet the cup does not create the water nor purchase it. All the exertion which a man makes in running the heavenly race will not merit the prize of eternal life, but it would not, therefore, be right for him to lie in bed and hope to win it.

**Manton:**

It is easier to crush the egg than to kill the serpent.

**Spurgeon:**

It is prudent to break up all the eggs we can find before the reptiles are hatched. Far greater wisdom will be shown in early dealings with an error or a temptation than allowing it time to make headway. In our own cases, it will be best to correct ourselves as soon as possible, and unhesitatingly to stamp out the first sparks of ill desire before passion rises to a flame. A serpent's egg a child can break, but who is to contend with a venomous creature which may be hatched from it, if it be left unbroken? So it is with that vice (of drink) which, the scripture says, "stingeth like a viper." The first glass can readily be refused; it is quite

another matter to stop when the wine has entered the brain. The first impropriety we may readily avoid, but when unclean desires are fully aroused, who shall bridle them? O Lord, out of thy grace, teach me to crush sin speedily, lest it should gather strength and crush me

**Manton:**

A man goes to bed willingly and cheerfully, because he knows he shall rise again the next day. Confidence in the resurrection would make us go to the grave as cheerfully as we go to our beds.

**Spurgeon:**

This is a choice word; it needs not a line from us.

**BOYS AND GIRLS PAGE**

***Mrs Seaton's  
Letter***

Dear Boys and Girls,

Most of you probably know the story of the Rich Young Ruler who came to Jesus once and asked Him what he must do so as to have "eternal life." Our Lord told him the particular thing that He wanted him to do: "If you would be perfect," said the Lord, "go and sell what you have, and give to the poor." The Bible tells us that the young Ruler "turned away sorrowful." He was very rich, and he did not want to give up his riches in order to follow Jesus.

In this letter I want to tell you of another young rich man who heard these words that Jesus spoke, but who did what Jesus said in His Word, as he heard that word in the Bible.



The young man's name was Peter Waldo, and he lived in the city of Lyons, in France. About the year 1170 – that's more than nine hundred years ago – Peter Waldo called to see a priest in a church in Lyons. "Sir Priest," he said, "I have a question to ask. The other day a friend of mine died. Men will die, I suppose; I will die. But my friend was not ready to die. Sir Priest," he said, "tell me, what is the surest way to heaven?" the priest took down a copy of the Bible, which was written in Latin, and read some words. He then put the words into Peter Waldo's own language, and they were the words that our Lord Jesus Christ had spoken to the Rich Young Ruler many years before: "If you would be perfect, go and sell what you have, and give it to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven; *and come, follow me.*" Peter Waldo thought on these words; day after day he thought on them. At last he said to the Lord, "I will do it."

"Soon Lyons was ringing with the news," we read, "that rich Peter Waldo the merchant had sold everything he possessed and had given the money to the poor." He wasn't sad, or sorry, for now he knew that he had that "treasure in heaven" that Jesus spoke about. Like most people in his day, he wasn't able to read or write, but he began to learn, so that he could read the Bible for himself. He was disappointed, however, for he soon discovered that all the Bibles were like the one the priest had read from and written in Latin, or some difficult language. But Peter refused to be beaten, and in a little time he persuaded two of his friends, who were great scholars, to translate the Bible into the people's own language.

As Peter Waldo now began to read the words of Jesus for himself, he was struck by another saying of the Saviour's; "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Gathering his friends around him, he read these words and said, "Then we must go." They had very little money, or even none at all; but they each had a copy of the words of Christ, and off they went. Some of them carried a pack on their backs which was full of items they could sell in order to buy some bread and things to live on. As they went to the lonely farms and houses they used to call out their "wares," and once the people had bought what they wanted, Peter Waldo and his friends would say, "But I have a

treasure much more rare and precious than these." Then, out would come the words of the Lord, and soon the gospel was being told to people who had never heard it before.

After a time, however, the priests began to forbid the people to listen to these Waldensians, as Peter Waldo and his friends were now called. They were greatly persecuted because they believed that they must preach the gospel to everyone. Many hundreds were put to death by the priests and their armies; sometimes whole villages were burned, and every person killed or taken prisoner to the dungeons. Some of them were frozen to death in the winter snows, and some others, who had hidden in caves, were suffocated as the priests lit fires at the mouth of the caves to try and smoke them out.

In spite of all this, however the Waldensians refused to deny the Lord Jesus Christ, or to give up His Word – the Bible. We promise, "they vowed, "to maintain the Bible without admixture ... persevering in this holy religion, though it be at peril of our own life, in order that we might transmit it to our children, intact and pure, as we received it from our fathers."

Peter Waldo has now long-since died, boys and girls; but now that he has died he has gone to be with Christ in heaven because of his faith in Him; and there, of course, he will have that "treasure in heaven" that our Lord Jesus spoke about in His words. I trust that you have faith in Christ and that you serve Him in the way He asks you to.

Love,  
Mrs Seaton