

# The Wicket Gate Magazine

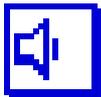
## A Continuing Witness



Internet Edition 58 issued January 2006

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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

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# The Christian's Blessed Hope

(The Pastor's Letter February 1970)

Dear Friends,

It was the taunt of the unbelievers in the early days of Christianity that Christ had failed to "come again" for His church, as He said He would. "Where is the promise of his coming?" they taunted. And, of course, they knew where to hit the believers hardest, for the great motivating power of the church of that days was the blessed fact that "this same Jesus," who has been taken up into heaven, would "so come again in like manner" as they had seen Him go into heaven. Jesus was coming again! That was all they knew and all they wanted to know. And although some of the saints had acted somewhat foolish with regards to the blessed hope, it was still the blessed hope for all that, and well the unbelieving sceptics realised it and so, used its apparent failure to occur as a handle for their attacks on that young church.

Now, the devil doesn't seem to stir up the unbelievers in our own day to throw doubts, and scorn, and disbelief of the truth of our Lord's coming again for His people, and this is significant. You see, as believers, we should be on the alert concerning, not only what the devil is doing, but what he is NOT doing. And why is he NOT attacking this great doctrine of the second coming of our Saviour – this blessed truth? Well, brethren, perhaps it's because it is not "a blessed truth," in the hearts and minds of so many in the Lord's professing church today. Oh! A truth, it may be, but a BLESSED truth it certainly does not appear to be.

Of course, some of the Lord's people have acted foolishly in the past with regards to the doctrine of our Lord's second advent – and there, the devil has been busy, filling the minds of many with mere speculation and fanciful fables. But surely, if ever there was an age that needed a firm grip of the FACT and the glorious prospect of Christ's appearing for His Bride, it is this age in which we find ourselves. Every one of us needs that same yearning that was in the heart of the church in the last chapter of the Revelation: "An the Spirit and the bride say, Come." She had got a glimpse of her Heavenly Bridegroom and she had heard His voice speaking to her and reminding her of His tender mercy in sending His Word of truth throughout the churches – "I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches." (Verse 16) He has also shown Himself to her in all His Kingly, Sovereign

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Majesty – "I am the root and the offspring of David." And, in all His enlightening grace – "And the bright and morning star." And, beholding that vision, the espoused of the Lord can do nothing else but plead for His appearing again: "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come."

Is the desire "of the flesh"? Ah, no; it is "of the Spirit" Who is dwelling in the church and holding sway in the church and prompting the desire for Christ's coming. And surely, brethren, the very absence of such a desire in the professing church of Christ today only betrays the absence of the Spirit of God in those places where the Name of Christ is named. It was said of Andrew Bonar that he would look out of his window every morning to see if "Christ was coming."

Why are we so impotent? So ineffective? So lacking in testimony? So compromising? So un-Christlike? So slothful in our day and age? WHERE IS THE PROMISE OF HIS COMING? In our plans? In our hearts? In our minds? In our behaviour? In our churches? In our words and actions? "Where is the promise of his coming?"

Would that we really felt the darkness of the days in which we live, then, perhaps, we would yearn – like the church in the Revelation – for the appearing of "the bright and morning star" to scatter our darkness. Would that we knew more of the burden and heat of the battle, for surely, that would put a new, much-needed song, into our mouth in these days.

"I've wrestled on towards heaven,  
'Gainst wind and rain and tide;  
Now like a weary traveller that leaneth on his guide.  
Amidst the shades of evening,  
While sinks life's lingering sand;  
I'll hail the glory dawning, in Emmanuel's Land."

Maranatha – The Lord Cometh.

Sincerely  
W.J. Seaton.

"...I go to prepare a place for you; and if I go and prepare a place for you I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also."

# Sweet Notes From The Song of Songs

(Part 2)

"They made me the keeper of the vineyards, but mine own vineyard have I not kept." (Chapter 1 verse 6). How often has this phrase fallen in desolation from the lips of the believing child of God? Like the young bride of the Song of Solomon we have followed hard after Christ in our new-found faith, but how soon we have had to bear the testimony "Mine own vineyard have I not kept." "Draw me..." was the cry of the believing soul in verse 4 of this chapter of the Song of Solomon; "look not upon me ..." is the theme that breaks forth here just a few lines later. The love of the believer in Christ does, indeed, "ebb and flow", just like the love of Solomon's Bride.

But, praise God for the "grace of enquiry". "Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth," in verse 7, "where thou feedest, where thou makest thy flock to rest at noon; for why should I be as one that turneth aside by the flocks of thy companions?" None other but Christ will satisfy the searching soul; not even the best of the "companions" will warm the heart that has lapsed into the coldness of spiritual winter. "No man save Jesus only." Listen to His reply, my seeking soul! "If thou know not, O thou fairest among women," He says to you, "go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock, and feed the kids beside the shepherds' tents." There is a way back to your Beloved! It is the way that all the ransomed have ever travelled back to green pastures again! It's by the "footsteps of the flock."

"Thy hand, O God has guided  
Thy flock from age to age."

"Go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock," and feed your soul beside the tents of the shepherds of God's unchanging grace, and soon you will know what it is to have communion with your Saviour again and to pour out your love in His presence. "While the king sitteth at his table", says the young bride in verse 12 where she has gone by the "foot steps of the flock" and found her beloved again, "my spikenard sendeth forth the smell thereof." Like Mary of old, we can break our "box of spikenard, very precious," upon the head of our Saviour in glad sacrifice and adoration; but only when we have returned to Him by searching for Him with all our hearts. "Go thy way forth, then by the footsteps of the flock," to the place where you can work and worship to the praise of His name.

# WHAT IS THE CHURCH?

Part of the word delivered  
By Dr Martyn Lloyd-Jones  
At a conference in 1969

But, let us just take another glance at these people, and just ask a few questions as to how this life, this wonderful unity, this wonderful life, shows itself. The first way in which it always shows itself is this – that they have a love of the same doctrine always: "They continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine". Doctrine before fellowship, doctrine before breaking of bread, doctrine before prayer. It is the reverse today, is it not? Fellowship is the greatest thing. "Let us all get together; let us all pray together." No, no! Doctrine first. Why? Well, this is inevitable. A man who has got something of the life of God in his soul is always the man who desires to know the teaching and doctrine. Peter uses this as a comparison: "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby." How do you know that that little child that has been born is a live child and not a dead birth? The answer is, the live child makes for the milk, every young animal does the same; it makes for the food. Its nature demands it, cries out for it. And the man who is born again is a man who wants teaching.

I want to ask some plain questions here tonight – I am addressing evangelical people. Do you enjoy doctrine? Are you interested in teaching? I sometimes hear from my brethren that they visit churches where a limit is put on the length of their sermon, and indeed on the content of their sermon. The people say they can't follow doctrine, they are bored by doctrine. They want entertainment, they want more singing, they want more "happiness", they say – and they do not want doctrine.

Now I am free to admit that a man may preach doctrine in such a dull manner that it really is boring. I am making no defence of that. But I am here to say this, that unless you have got a desire within you to know of this precious blessed Truth, you cannot be a child of God: it is impossible. The child craves for it, as the babe always makes for the milk.

How vitally important this is for us in every department of our lives. Do you not see the dangers? Look at the false teachings round about us. How can I be safe with regard to these unless I have got an objective standard? Take all this emphasis upon experience. People say "I don't care what you believe as long as you have had an experience, or your life has been changed, or you are a good and a kind man", and so on. But, my dear friends, the cults can talk like that, and they do talk like that. How do you know that you are right and that that man who is selling you those books at your front door is not right? How do you

prove it? It is no use saying, "Well, I have had an experience." He says he has had one. It is no use saying, "I am zealous in my church." He is. He gives up watching football on Saturday afternoons to go round from house to house to sell his books. He is very zealous, probably more than you are. How do you tell whether a man is right or wrong? You cannot in terms of zeal and enthusiasm or experience. There is only one ultimate test – objective Truth. The teaching! The doctrine! So this is the thing that is put first.

And then you come to fellowship; but you cannot have fellowship unless you are agreed. "Can two walk together except they be agreed?" How can you ever have real fellowship with a man when you know that he does not believe in the Deity of Christ and His atoning sacrifice? It is impossible. Fellowship is based upon Truth.

"Breaking of bread." What are we commemorating in our Communion Service? Is it the death of a pacifist? Is it a tragedy that once took place? You cannot partake truly at the Table with a man who holds such views. Doctrine is essential in fellowship and breaking of bread.

And to prayer. They say, "We can all pray together. We do not agree perhaps, but we can all pray together." But you cannot. What is prayer? How do you get access to God? One man says that all you need to do is to sit on a comfortable chair and relax and start listening to God. My friends there is only one way to enter into the holiest of all, there is only one way to pray – it is "by the blood of Jesus." ..... and there we see them "continuing stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayer.

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"Take away a toy from a child and give him another, and he is satisfied; but if he be hungry, no toy will do. As newborn babes, true believers, desire the sincere milk of the word".

John Newton

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# Sermon in Candles

By  
C.H. Spurgeon



(Part 2)

Outside some of the older meeting-houses there used to be a wooden stand near the graveyard gate, on which a lantern was placed with a candle inside it, to light the way to the place where prayer was wont to be made. The natural light was dim in those times; but I am old-fashioned enough to believe that the gospel light was in many a lowly sanctuary far more brilliant than it is today in mimic gothic chapels. The blaze of "Modern Thought" which pleases lovers of novelty does not guide the perplexed to heaven, nor cheer the passage of the departing through the valley of the shadow of death.

Remember that remarkable parable of the woman who had lost her piece of money. The question is put in Luke 15 verse 8, "What woman having ten pieces



of silver, if she lose one piece, doth not light a candle, and sweep the house, and seek diligently till she find it?" In this way must we look for lost souls with the light of the Gospel, and the besom (broom) of the law. You must be at some expense if you would find the lost! You must light a candle, and let it be burnt up.

You must make a little dust, too; for nothing worth doing will be accomplished without a stir. Yet dust-making is not all. Some people think that you will find all the lost pieces of money by merely making dust enough and noise enough; but they are wrong. There must be more light than dust. Nothing can be done without the light of the candle. Instruction must be given, as well as excitement created. Indeed, we must not be content either with the dust or the light; we may not rest until we spy out our lost treasure, and place it in safety.

One allusion I will venture to mention, though the word employed is "lamp". David says "Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path". David drew his comparison from what is seen every night in an oriental city. He who goes out into the street at night in an eastern town is bound to carry a lantern with him. You would find it very necessary if you were there, if only because of the dogs that prowl about for their living. They are very fond of shin bones, and they do not like them any the less if they happen to be alive, with a little meat upon them.

This is a very common lantern, with which children are so pleased, resembles what David used; for things in the east undergo little or no change. The proper use of such a lantern was to guide the feet, and this is the use of the Word of God. Certain brethren hold it up so as to see the stars, hoping to find out what is going to happen next week, or next year. How great they are over seals and trumpets! One admires the depth and the darkness of their research. We may leave them to their discoveries: time will show whether they are correct or not. The Bible is a blessing to us in many ways; but he is wisest who makes it his "Every Day Book"... Read the prophecies, prize the promises, but fail not, by God's grace, to practise the precepts.

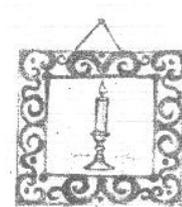


This is a very simple affair – "Field's Self-fitting Candle"; but it is very handy.



You see, owing to the shape of its lower end, the candle will fit into any candlestick, whether it be large or small. A man of this sort makes himself useful anywhere. In poverty he is content; in wealth he is humble; if he can preach, he will do so; and if that is beyond his capacity, he will teach in the Sabbath School. Like the holy missionary Brainerd, if he cannot convert a tribe, he will, even on his dying bed, be willing to teach a poor child his letters.

Here is a picture of a candle. In artistic circles the drawing of an object may cost far more than the object itself. No doubt a well-painted picture of a candle would cost as much as would light us for many a month, and yet it would never yield to our necessity a single beam of light. So the resemblance of true godliness.



# Gleanings in the Psalms

(Psalm 22)

This is beyond all others THE PSALM OF THE CROSS. It may have been actually repeated word by word by our Lord when hanging on the tree; it would be too bold to say that it was so, but even a casual reader may see that it might have been. It begins with "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" and ends, according to some, in the original with "It is finished".

Before us we have a description both of the darkness and of the glory of the Cross, the sufferings of Christ and the glory which shall follow. Oh for grace to draw near and see this great sight! We should read reverently, putting off our

shoes from off our feet, as Moses did at the burning bush, for if there be holy ground anywhere in the scripture it is in this psalm.

*C.H. Spurgeon*

**WHOLE PSALM.** The volume entitled "Christ on the Cross" by Rev. J. Stevenson, has a sermon upon every verse. We give the headings; they are suggestive. Verse 1 – The Cry. 2 – The Complaint. 3 – The Acknowledgement. 4-6 – The Contrast. 6 – The Reproach. 7 – The Mockery. 8 – The Taunt. 9-10 – The Appeal. 11 – The Entreaty. 12-13 – The Assault. 14 – The Faintness. 15 – The Exhaustion. 16 – The Piercing. 17 – The Emaciation and the Insulting Gaze. 18 – The Partition of the Garments and Casting Lots. 19-21 – The Importunity. 21 – The Deliverance. 22 – The Gratitude. 23 – The Invitation. 24 – The Testimony. 25 – The Vow. 26 – The Satisfaction of the Meek; the seekers of the Lord praising Him; the Eternal Life. 27 – The Conversion of the World. 28 – The Enthronement. 29 – The Author of Faith. 30 – The Seed. 31 – The Everlasting Theme and Occupation. The Finish of the Faith.

*Hints to the Village Preacher*

**Verse 1. "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"** The first verse expresses a species of suffering that never at any other time was felt in this world, and never will be again – the vengeance of the Almighty upon his child – "My God, why has thou forsaken ME?"

*R.H. Ryland*

**Verse 3. "But thou art holy ..."** No matter how black temptations are, faith will not listen to an ill word spoken against God, but will justify God always – "Thou art holy ..."

*David Dickson*

**Verse 6. "But I am a worm ..."** Christ calls Himself "a worm" on account of the opinion that men of the world had of Him. The Jews esteemed Christ a worm, and treated Him as such; He was loathsome to them and hated by them; every one trampled upon Him, and trod Him under-foot as men do worms. The Chaldee paraphrase renders it here "A WEAK worm;" and though Christ is the mighty God ... yet there was a weakness in His human nature that He was crucified through. It has been observed by some that the word here used signifies the SCARLET worm, or the worm that is in the berry with which scarlet is dyed. And like this scarlet worm did our Lord look, when by way of mockery He was clothed with a scarlet robe; and especially when He appeared in His dyed garments and was red in His apparel.

**Verse 7. "ALL they that see me laugh me to scorn ..."** There is a look of satisfaction on every countenance. None are silent. The theme is far too great for one member to utter. Every lip and head and finger are now a tongue. Cruel Romans! And O ye regicidal Jews! On this sad day Christ made you one indeed! Dreadful unity!

*John Stevenson*

**Verse 14. "I am poured out like water ..."** "What marvel" asks St. Bernard, "that the name of the Bridegroom should be as ointment poured forth (Song. 1-3) When he himself for the greatness of his love, was poured forth like water!"

*J. M. Neale*

**Verse 16. "...they pierced my hands and my feet"**. The evangelical prophet testifies it "Behold I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands". Isaiah 49 verse 16. And were we not graven there when His hands were pierced for us? "They DIGGED my hands and my feet". And they digged them so deep that the very prints remained after His resurrection, and their fingers were thrust into them for evidence sake. Some have thought that those scars remain still in His glorious body, to be showed at His second appearing; "They shall look on Him whom they have pierced." That is improbable, but this is certain, there remains still an impression upon Christ's hands and His heart – the sealing and wearing of the Elect there as precious jewels.

*Thomas Adams*

**Verse 17. "...they look and stare upon me"**. Oh, how different is that look which the awakened sinner directs to Calvary. And what gratitude should perishing men feel, that from Him that hangs upon the accursed tree there is heard proceeding the inviting sound – "Look unto me and be ye saved."

*John Morrison*

# BOYS AND GIRLS PAGE

By Mrs Seaton

Dear Boys and Girls,

I wonder how many of you know the name of Francis Ridley Havergal. I'm sure some of you may know some of the hymns she wrote, for Francis Ridley Havergal was a hymn-writer. Have you ever sung "Golden harps are sounding, Angel voices ring"? or "I am trusting Thee, Lord Jesus"? or "Who is on the Lord's side"? These, and many other great hymns were written by Francis Ridley Havergal and in the hymns that she wrote she always loved to speak about the Lord Jesus Christ and all that He meant to her.

It wasn't always so, however, boys and girls, and the only thing that Francis Ridley Havergal really seemed to love when she was a little girl was her parent's garden where she used to spend most of her time looking at the flowers and sitting under the trees. She knew a great deal about the Bible and when she was only about eight years of age she could repeat whole chapters of the Bible without making one mistake. But, although she knew the Bible, she didn't know the Lord Jesus Christ as her Saviour, and so, she had no real love for Him, but only for her garden.

One day when young Francis was reading some hymns written by a man called William Cowper she came across these words -

"My Father made them all"

She had always believed that God had made the world and all things in the world and all the things that grew in her garden. However, the words that struck young Francis Ridley Havergal were those two words at the beginning of the line – "MY FATHER made them all." Even in her young life she began to realise that, although God was her Creator – although He had made all things – still withall, God was not really her heavenly Father. Before God would really be her Father she would have to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ with all her heart.

This is true for every one of us, boys and girls; and as Francis Ridley Havergal later found Christ to be her Saviour we pray that you too, might find Him soon.

## **In the Early Church**

They had an alter (Christ),  
    But no sacrifices.  
They were all baptized believers,  
    But no Baptists.  
They had Presbyters,  
    But no Presbyterians.  
They had methods in their meetings,  
    But no Methodists.  
They had Bishops in the Church  
    But no Episcopalians.  
They trembled at the Word of God  
    But here were no Quakers.  
They were congregations of believers  
    But no Congregationalists.  
**They met simply as Christians in the  
Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and  
were obedient to his word.**