

CALL TO DISICPLESHIP

(Studies in Christian Discipleship and Church Membership for Canadian Baptists)

Acknowledgements

An Inquirer's Book

This "Inquirer's Book" is based on "What We Baptists Stand For" written by the late Dr. Harold W. Lang and printed originally as the Intermediate-Senior Class Book in the Canadian Bible Lesson Series by the Baptist Publications Committee of Canada.

The late Dr. Murray J.S. Ford revised Dr. Lang's text extensively in order for it to be presented in this format for use in Inquirers' and church membership classes.

An accompanying "Leader's Resource Guide" of a similar title was originally prepared by Rev. Elmer G. Anderson. The Inquirer's Book and the Leader's Guide were first printed in 1976 by the then Department of Communications, Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec. Many years later, a number of pastors were still using them and finding them helpful, in spite of some shortcomings including information that was no longer accurate and suggested resources that were no longer available.

In 2002, the then Division of Congregational Life of the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec looked at these materials but decided that it had neither the personnel resources nor the mandate to do a major re-write of this material, especially when there are other more recent materials available for this purpose (see the [BCOQ website](#)).

Minor update revisions were made to the Inquirer's Book in 2004 by Rev. John A. Furry. Also prepared was a modified Leader's Resource Guide using some of the suggestions from the original Guide.

These materials can now be downloaded from the BCOQ web-site, or a copy can be purchased for photocopying through the R.E.A.D. On Bookstore.

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PREFACE

You are invited to consider the issues involved in Christian discipleship. The Christian Church believes that God has made Himself known in His Son, Jesus Christ, and holds that each person must place his or her life under His direction as Lord and Saviour.

Baptists believe that this authority is best understood and had its greatest scope as each person is enabled to respond to God in Christ in total freedom of conscience.

You are invited into a heritage of religious freedom which has been won at great personal cost by many men and women and who truly believed with their lives. This precious freedom can only be kept and exercised by those who understand and live by these principles.

It is our confident expectation that you will use your Bible as the primary resource for your inquiries. Obtain access to a Bible dictionary to explain the background of the passages and enable them to come to life for you. Discuss the issues with your leader and peers. May the Spirit of God grant you great joy in your quest for Christian discipleship.

A CALL TO DISCIPLESHIP:

Studies in Christian Discipleship and Church Membership

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1. OUR LORD AND SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST

Background in the Bible: Mark 8:27-37

One of the most common questions we hear is: “What is your name?” Names are important to us but we don’t attach as much significance to names as people did in Biblical times. Names were thought to be an expression of the essential nature of a person, a person’s name revealed his or her character. Now we are able to look at some of the names by which Jesus was called to learn who he was and why it is that we call him our Lord and Saviour.

“You Shall Call His Name Jesus?”

The traditional Christmas story roots the name of Jesus in the angelic announcement to Mary, *and you shall call his name Jesus*. It was not a new name for it is the same as Joshua, a common Old Testament name with which we are familiar. Like other boys and girls of his day, Jesus had a name, which indicated his relationship to his family, to the people of which he was a part and to the life he was to live. The birth of Jesus as described in both Matthew and Luke is, however, not like that of his contemporaries. Matthew 1:18-25 and Luke 1:26-35 speak of the favour of God resting on this child to be born. We must not forget, in spite of this, that he had much in common with the people of his time and of every time.

He was born into a middle-class home where other children played and worked. They attended both the synagogue and schools together. It was part of the up-bringing of Jewish boys to learn a trade and Jesus worked in Joseph’s carpenter shop. He was a keen observer of all that went on around him in the shop, in the market place and in nature. He loved to see what the farmer did and how the birds and animals fared. Luke 2:52 tells us that Jesus grew in body and mind, in his understanding of his fellows and of God’s will. He knew hunger, thirst, weariness and sleep. He laughed and cried. He felt the tug of temptation knowing what it was to have to choose between good and evil, the popular and the unpopular. He knew the need for courage, faithfulness, patience, toil and trust. In fact, all of the important experiences of life were his, even pain and death. It is true that, unlike us, he never displayed the Will of God, but that fact becomes even the more remarkable when we realize that he lived a life so similar to our own. He was tempted to do what people wanted and expected, and had to refuse because he chose to do God’s Will. He, too, was unjustly treated, but he never sought revenge. The writer of Hebrews sums it up: *He had to be made like his people in every respect one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sinning.* (Hebrews 3:17 & 4:15)

Jesus Is the Christ

While Jesus was a fairly common name, the addition of the word Christ was not at all common. In fact, it is not a proper name as such, either a given name or a surname. It was

bestowed upon Jesus as a religious title and the fact that it was given to him and is still used by Christians is very significant. The Christ – or the Messiah – is God’s anointed, the appointed deliverer, for whom the Jewish people of Jesus’ day were looking. These people found these promises clearly given in Isaiah 11:1-10 and in other Old Testament passages.

One day Jesus asked his disciples who men said he was. Many statements had been made but it was Peter who made the momentous declaration, *You are the Christ of God*. (Luke 9:20). In this sentence Peter spoke for all of the disciples as they declared their unwavering faith that Jesus is the one promised by the ancient Prophets, eagerly awaited for centuries, specially sent by God and the one on whom the hope of the nation and the world rested. Even Peter did not fully understand all that he said for when Jesus tried to tell him that, as the Christ, he must suffer and die, Peter protested and received the rebuke of Jesus (Matthew 16:21-23).

Jesus is the Christ, *God’s anointed one*, sent by God for God’s own special purposes. I John speaks of him as God’s Son, tells us God sent him (I John 4:9-10) and II Corinthians tells us God was in him (II Corinthians 5:19). All of this helps us to know that our relationship to Jesus Christ is more important to us than any other relationship in life.

The Saviour

Another of the names we use for Jesus goes back to very early days. Matthew speaks of Jesus who will save his people from their sins (Matthew 1:21). Jesus (Joshua) means “God will save”. The angel announcement in Luke said: *To you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour*. Jesus said of himself that he came to seek and to save (Luke 19:10) and in the later books of the New Testament he is called the Saviour.

The people who came to Jesus found salvation from many things from which they needed to be delivered and from which no one else could save them. By the graciousness of Jesus, a sinful woman was saved from her wasted and wicked life (Luke 7:36-50). He saved Zacchaeus from his love of money and his loneliness (Luke 19:1-9). A penitent criminal was saved from his fear of death (Luke 23:39-43). He saved Saul of Tarsus from his sense of failure and condemnation, so that he who once said: *I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do,*” (Romans 7:19) became able to say: *There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus* (Romans 8:1).

This last example of the power of Christ as Saviour is of very great importance for two reasons: (1) It shows that Christ’s saving work continued after his death, and (2) It reminds us that he is Saviour particularly because of his death. Paul was not one of the first followers of Jesus. We cannot even be sure he ever saw Jesus in his earthly life. It was the risen, ever-living Christ who became Paul’s Saviour, who has continued to save all through the centuries and still is doing so today. Trust in Jesus the crucified Saviour has brought countless persons into a genuine sense of God’s forgiveness, and a new experience of his power to overcome sin, fear and spiritual defeat. What is more important is that he is able to save us also and *bring us to God*. (I Peter 3:18).

The Lord

The title **Lord** is another very old name for Jesus. It is strikingly significant that this name was given to Jesus. For one thing it was used in the Old Testament as a title for God himself, which shows that the early Christians thought of Jesus as one worthy of titles and homage usually reserved for a divine being. Another reason is that Jesus had made God known to them as nobody had ever done before. More than they had ever learned about God from the wonders of the world, or even from the Old Testament they had learned from Jesus. His matchless stories, like *The Lost Sheep* and *The Prodigal Son*, had revealed God in a new way as a loving, seeking, forgiving Father. It is because of Jesus that we call God, *Our Father*.

It was Jesus' life and character, even more than his words which showed humans what God is like. His was an intimate relationship with God, because God was "in" him. John 1:14 tells us, *And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth, we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father.* We use the word "**incarnation**" to describe this understanding of God dwelling in his Son. Carnis in Latin means flesh. God's coming to dwell among humans in fleshly, human life is the claim of Christianity. In Jesus God was truly present among his children, sharing their life, saving them from sin, enabling them to know him and to know life, as he would have them live it. *The one who has seen me has seen the Father.*" (John 14:9)

Another reason for applying this lofty title to Jesus is found in the fact of the resurrection. More than anything else his victory over death convinced his followers of the divine nature and power of Jesus. In the resurrection they knew that God's approval and authority were upon him. Paul in Romans describes it in this way: *Designated Son of God in power according to the Spirit of Holiness by his resurrection from the dead.* (Romans 1:4)

To this one who had lived "the human life of God" in their midst and who had died to bring them to God, winning victory over death and finally is exalted to the right hand of God, to this one they gave the supreme title – **Lord**.

All of these names together, rightly understood, express the Christian faith concerning him who is at the centre of our religion, Jesus Christ, Saviour and Lord. As we stand face to face with these claims, like Peter we need to make a declaration of our allegiance to him - *What shall I do with Jesus, which is called Christ?* (Matthew 27:22). No more important question will ever command our attitudes or relationships. It is an inescapable question and you are invited to accept the living faith that Christ offers. It is in this relationship with him that fullness of life becomes a reality.

2. WHO IS A CHRISTIAN?

Background in the Bible: Luke 19:1-10

Tax collectors have never been popular. Zacchaeus was a tax collector for the despised Roman government so he was one of the most unpopular people in Jericho. Even worse he was a Jew acting for a foreign government and his fellow-citizens refused to have anything to do with him either socially or religiously. The tax collector or *Publican* was, in their eyes, no better than the *sinner*. No one would think of visiting his home, no one except Jesus who announced that he would visit Zacchaeus. How amazed and delighted the little man must have been.

What did Jesus and Zacchaeus talk about? We don't know except it is quite clear they were not discussing the weather. Luke does tell us that Zacchaeus made some of the most important decisions of his life that day. In fact he said: *...Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor, and if I have defrauded any one of anything, I will restore it four-fold.* (Luke 19:8). Nobody promises to give away half of his or her possessions and refund 400% to anyone he or she has cheated, just because he or she has a pleasant conversation. The fact is, however, that Zacchaeus saw in his encounter with Jesus a stark contrast to his own meanness and dishonesty. What he saw he knew to be despicable and he did not like what he saw.

What is Salvation?

Jesus had not invited himself to the home of Zacchaeus merely to rebuke him and point out a lot of his terrible mistakes. In his own words the purpose of the visit is clear: *The Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.* (Luke 19:10)

Zacchaeus found in Jesus not just one who made him regret the wrong he had done but one who also gave him a new desire to do right and the power to do it, when he said - *Today salvation has come to this house* (Luke 19:9).

Salvation is much more than just being sorry for one's sins. True salvation has two major characteristics:

- 1) Forgiveness – true fellowship is restored between the one who has done wrong and the person wronged, between the sinner and God. The fact of the wrong having been done cannot be altered and the wrong-doer's memory of it may never be lost; but if forgiveness is really experienced the “sting” is taken from that memory and there is a new sense of peace with God and one's fellow beings. Jesus brought and still brings to people the assurance of God's pardon.
- 2) Moral and spiritual power – this gift of God is ours because even when we have high ideals we are not always capable of achieving them. Old habits hold us and our desire for the better is not strong enough to overcome our spiritual inertia. Paul spoke of his own dilemma which is common to all of us – *For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh; for these are opposed to each other to prevent you from doing what you would.* (Colossians 5:17). Here Paul pointed to the one unquestioned source

of the Christian's power, *But we preach Christ crucified ...the power of God, and the wisdom of God* (I Corinthians 1:23-24).

What is Conversion?

You would be properly suspicious if someone came along and told you of a simple ceremony, which you could take part in and then sign a membership list which would guarantee your forgiveness. We all know that much more is needed to cleanse our heart and make us strong to live God's way. Similarly, we would be very wary of anyone who told us that all we had to do was do our duty and use our own strength to live according to the standards of Christ. God in his wisdom does not ask us to do such impossible things. Rather, he offers to us Jesus Christ as our Saviour, with the assurance that we will find in him a grace and power that will reach to the centre of our lives where our thoughts, desires, purposes and actions begin.

We should not look upon **conversion** or **being born again** as hard and strange requirements that stand in the way of those who would enter the Christian life. Rather, we ought to see them as gateways through which we are invited to pass to a fuller life. They remind us that God stands ready to give us what we cannot obtain for ourselves and to do for us what we cannot do by ourselves.

Someone has said, "It takes two to make a Christian." True, no one of us can make himself or herself a Christian alone, God is willing and eager to help us in this most glorious of all endeavours.

It does take two as Zacchaeus learned on that memorable day. He made real and memorable decisions – to give away half of his fortune and recompense four-fold those wronged. Even the influence of Jesus did not spare him the necessity of making up his own mind and deciding for himself. And everyone who has ever become a Christian has had to decide to do so.

Jesus was continually calling upon people to decide in this way *...the Kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel* (Mark 1:15).

There are at least two elements in deciding to become a Christian:

1) Repentance – literally means "thinking again" and so changing one's mind and course of action. You start for school and suddenly remember that you have forgotten your pen; you turn around and go back and get it. That is a kind of repentance. You realize that you have been acting in a selfish and wrong way; you decide to reverse your course and live according to God's way; that is a more important kind of repentance. It is the kind that Zacchaeus showed. It is more than feeling sorry about the wrong we have done. It is turning away from it to do what is right.

In the presence of Jesus all people are sinners; no real decision for him can exclude repentance for sins, both great and small.

2) Faith: Not a strange and mysterious thing either; something we all live by every day.

We have faith in our money, that it is good and will be accepted at stores and banks; faith in our school books that they will give us correct information; faith in people that they will keep their word. Faith in Jesus Christ is somewhat like these. It involves belief that he is a real person, who lived and still lives, who conquered the death of the cross, belief that he died for our sins and that in him we can find God's forgiveness; belief that he will help us live the Christian life. It also involves trust in Jesus, so real and strong that we place ourselves wholly in his keeping and surrender ourselves to be and to do what he desires. Faith is always a motive-power for action, so we speak of an "act of faith". So faith in Christ is not only simple trust in him, but also eagerness to live for the things for which he died and to serve his cause with all our strength.

Your Greatest Decision

Life is made up of decisions. Many of them are not very important: Shall I go to school this way or that, shall I have chocolate or strawberry? Many of them are important, however. Which collegiate or technical school shall I attend? What do I hope to be when I graduate? Decisions like these have far reaching consequences and are difficult to resolve, sometimes the whole direction of life is dependent upon them. And even if we obtain good advice the final decision is ours to make.

The decision for Christ is life's most important choice.

Almost all of our other decisions will be affected by it; our choice of vocation, friends and even of one's life partner. Once we give Christ the central place in our lives he controls our affections, ambitions and desires. That is another reason why an early decision to follow Christ is so important for our lives.

One does not drift into being a Christian. It is a matter of choice. This does not mean that all conversions are sudden and uprooting as was that of Saul of Tarsus. He had been the enemy of Christ and His Church and he became advocate and missionary.

Many a young person raised in a Christian home and Church has just as truly entered the Christian life in a quieter, more gradual way. More and more as they came to know Christ they felt a need of him and wanted to serve him. Finally, they yield their heart in trust and loyalty to him and know for all time that they were his. Whether suddenly or gradually it was a real decision and the conversion was real. Always remember that God does not expect us to copy the words and feelings of someone else. He wants the decision to be ours, and we may leave with him the matter of being born again. That is his work in us; our work is to commit ourselves wholly to him as Saviour and Lord. "It is He who saves and not we ourselves."

3. WHAT IS THE CHURCH?

Background in the Bible – Mark 1:16-20; 3:13-19; Acts 1:1-14

All too often we are tempted to think of the Church as a man-made organization. No church ought to be thought of as “Dr. Smith’s Church”. The Church is the Church of Jesus Christ and each individual Church belongs to him. Today let us look at the beginnings of the Church. Jesus invited certain men to follow him, to become his disciples, learners and helpers. Some of them had been previously directed by John the Baptist. Jesus chose twelve from among all of those who followed him for special training and it is to them that Jesus spoke after Peter’s confession, *Thou art the Christ* and said, *I will build my Church* (Matthew 16:18). After his resurrection Jesus commissioned them to be witnesses to him concerning his person and message and the promises yet to be fulfilled. They were to be empowered unto the uttermost part of the earth.

The Book of the Acts of the Apostles tells the thrilling story of the spread of the Church. From its beginnings with that small group meeting in an upper room in Jerusalem for prayer and expectation they moved through the experience of Pentecost into public proclamation. Thousands were won to the faith. In fact it was their success which brought them into conflict with the authorities and which caused them to be driven out of Jerusalem but nothing could kill Christ’s Church. Wherever the Gospel was preached new converts were won (Acts 8:4) and we are told that in Antioch a second headquarters was established. (Acts 11:19-21).

An Expanding Church

So powerful was the appeal of the Good News that some of the Church’s strongest persecutors were won over to Christ. The outstanding example is, of course, Saul of Tarsus who became Paul the Apostle, the great missionary figure (Acts 9:1-22). Paul moved westward from Antioch and became a missionary in Asia Minor and Europe. His exploits are varied and thrilling showing courage and deep faith. At Rome he became a prisoner for the Gospel (Acts 28:25-31) but already the Church had moved from Jerusalem to Rome and its expansion continued on. As new continents, countries and islands have been discovered, representatives of the Church have entered to preach the Gospel. In word and deed they have found a ready response so that now over 600 million persons are called Christian.

At different times in history, church growth has been more rapid in some parts of the world than others. Today as always, however, the church continues to grow.

A Fellowship of Believers

There is another sense in which the Church is a divine creation. Every person who is truly a member of the Church is himself or herself a work of Christ – *a new creature* (II Corinthians 5:17). The Christian, in a very real sense, is the creation of God in Christ. He or she has responded in repentance and faith to the call of the Saviour and has received the forgiveness of God and power to share the service of the Kingdom. Each has entered the fellowship of the followers of Jesus.

People do not become Christians just because they are born of Christian parents or because they were christened by a minister, or because they lived in a so-called Christian country, or because their names are on some church membership roll. They become Christians by voluntarily examining their faith in Christ and so allowing God's spirit to work in them unto salvation.

The Church is the entire company of those who have so believed and have been redeemed. We use the term, "the gathered Church", to stress the importance of this. The Church is the fellowship of those, who have had a personal experience of Christ as Saviour.

This is a very important emphasis for Baptists who differ in some points from other denominations in this regard. We choose not to baptize babies who cannot choose to believe and follow Christ. We practice believer's baptism, reserving the ordinance for those who are old enough to exercise faith and have a real religious experience of their own. This is our ideal for the Church – that it be composed of those, who in every sense, know themselves to be truly the creation of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Head of the Church

Baptists like to emphasize the distinction between the Church and a Church. Baptists do not look upon the Church as an organization but rather think of the Church as being composed of all true believers in Jesus Christ. He alone is the Head of the Church and all Christians must look directly to him for guidance in their spiritual life.

Baptists prefer to speak of Baptist churches, instead of "The Baptist Church". Each local congregation has an autonomy of its own and must also look directly to the Head of the Church, Jesus Christ, for its guidance. Baptist churches voluntarily associate themselves with other congregations for the spread of the gospel but they are ultimately responsible for their own government and conduct. All they do is done willingly for the sake of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Three Picture of The Church

In the Book of Ephesians Paul uses these striking titles for the Church:

- 1) The Body of Christ: Ephesians 1:23, I Corinthians 12:12-31, Romans 12:4-8; Colossians 1:18.

This is one of Paul's favourite figures of the Church and it is full of meaning. Just as our bodies are made up of many different parts, with different, but always important functions, so the Church is composed of a large number of persons with different gifts and abilities, all of which are necessary to the effective working of the Church. Just as the body is controlled by the head, so the Church is controlled by its Head, which is Christ. Just as the body is the place where you (your real self) live and is the means by which you move and act, so the Church, Christ's body, is a place where he himself dwells and is the agency for the accomplishment of many of his purposes.

- 2) The Household of God: Ephesians 2:19.

This title emphasizes the family concept. God is Father and the members of the Church are his children. Because of their common relationship to him through Faith in Jesus Christ, they are related also to one another as brothers and sisters. Just as the figure of the body stresses the purpose of the Church as a working community, so that of the household stresses the fellowship aspect. Family life at its best is seen in the true Church. There is an attitude of devotion and obedience on the part of the children to the Father and of loving service and loyalty to one another. In Jew and Gentile, master and servant, black, white, yellow, young and old, all are one created by God in Jesus Christ. (Galatians 3:28).

3) The Temple of the Lord: Ephesians 2:22.

The Jewish Temple at Jerusalem was the pride of every Jew and many of them who lived far away contributed to its upkeep and visited it from time to time. In a special sense it was dedicated to God, and in it was the Holy of Holies, into which the High Priest himself went only once a year. The Temple was the place of sacrifice, prayer and praise. In Jesus' day it had been under construction for more than forty years and was still unfinished.

As a Pharisee, Paul loved the Temple but now he is a Christian and knows a "Temple" which is far more impressive and much dearer to him. It was not in Jerusalem alone, but wherever a company of Christians large or small are to be found. It was a Temple, not of stones, but of persons.

The foundation was well laid. Jesus Christ is the chief-cornerstone and the original apostles and other Christian leaders make up the rest of the foundation. (Ephesians 2:20). Into this structure every believer is built and the edifice grows steadily. (Ephesians 2:21). It was not finished in Paul's day because he saw that many more persons would still be won to Christ and his Church before the capstone could be set. Nor is it completed yet.

I Must Belong

Dr. John Foster relates a fine story of a young Hindu who came to a Christian missionary seeking baptism and Church membership. He had been reading the Bible and had been greatly impressed by the story of Jesus. The account of the death of Jesus had moved him profoundly. As he read on in Acts he was amazed and delighted to see how the Church had carried on the work of Jesus. The Church continued where Jesus left off. "Therefore", he said, "I must belong to the Church that carries on the life of Christ." The lesson is clear - we are called to be a part of the Church of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

4. BELIEVER'S BAPTISM

Background in the Bible: Matthew 3:13-17; Acts 2:37-41; Romans 6:3-8

Baptism and the Lord's Supper are ordinances or sacraments. They are symbolic acts which make visual a very vital part of the life of the Christian Church. Baptism is administered only once to each believer but The Lord's Supper or Communion is observed regularly by the company of believers. Both of the ordinances are rich in meaning and their meaning should be understood by all Christians.

The Origin of Baptism

Jesus travelled a long way, on foot, from Galilee, where his home was, to the wilderness of Judea. It was here that John the Baptist was preaching and baptizing in the Jordan River. That fact itself shows how deliberate Jesus' intention to take this step and how strong was his conviction that he must do so. Although he had no sin to confess or have "worked away", yet he desired to acknowledge publicly that John was *a man sent from God* (John 1:6) and that his call to the nation was God's call. Moreover, he, too, wanted to dedicate himself to the great mission to which God had called him, to be the Saviour of the world. His baptism was symbolic of his self-dedication to God's will and to the needs of his fellows.

It is no surprise then that this symbolic act was continued by the Apostles (John 4:2) and other followers of Jesus as an entering ceremony for those who would join the Christian community by faith in Jesus.

Converts on the Day of Pentecost were baptized (Acts 2:41), the Ethiopian sought baptism (Acts 8:38) and Saul of Tarsus was baptized after his conversion (Acts 9:18). The New Testament seems to know nothing of an unbaptized Christian. It was the usual practice for those who became believers to bear public witness to their faith in this dramatic act, and thus to become members of the Church. *Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit* (Matthew 28:19).

The Meaning of Baptism

We will look at some of the symbolic meanings which the New Testament attaches to baptism:

- 1) Forgiveness and cleansing: Sin is a defiling thing. (Mark 7:14-23). It leaves its dirty mark on our memory and conscience. Do you remember Lady MacBeth and how she tried vainly to "wash her hands" of the guilt of murder? "All the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this hand." The trouble is that no one can successfully "cleanse" his or her own mind and heart from sin. Only God can do that and it is one of the oft-repeated promises of the Bible that he will do so for those who truly confess and repent. *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just, and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness* (I John 1:9). Note carefully it is not baptism that cleanses but God himself. No amount of water can ever wash away that inner sense of uncleanness. Baptism represents that

inward experience and was early thought of as doing so. *Rise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on his name* (Acts 22:16).

- 2) Faith in Jesus Christ and self surrender to him: Baptism is said to be *in the name of Jesus Christ* (Acts 2:38), and into Jesus Christ (Romans 6:3). These are ways of emphasizing that the most important thing in the life of the Christian – indeed, what makes him or her a Christian at all, is his or her relationship to the Saviour. Baptism both symbolizes and confesses that relationship – that Jesus Christ is the one in whom the person being baptized believes and the one whom he or she has promised to follow and serve. The act of baptism does not make one a Christian but it does testify to the fact of one’s faith.
- 3) The Death, Burial and Resurrection of Christ: Mark devotes over one-third of his Gospel in telling the culminating events in the life of Jesus. The New Testament writers help us to see that without these events Jesus would not be the Saviour and the Gospel message would not have come to us. It is not surprising that Baptism was looked upon as vividly portraying this part of the Gospel. As believers were “buried” in the water, and then “raised” again, they and the observers were inevitably reminded of the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus, those divine events, which are so central to the Christian faith. (Romans 6:4).

Our Baptist Emphasis

We Baptists, while respecting the convictions of our Christian friends in other denominations, have sought to maintain what we believe to be the New Testament view and practice of baptism. Therefore, we hold to:

- 1) Believer’s Baptism: We seek to limit Baptism to those who are old enough to profess faith in Christ for themselves and who have given some evidence of this belief and their commitment to it. The important thing, we hold, is the person’s faith. That is what links him or her to Christ and assures him or her of God’s favour and acceptance. It is not Baptism that does so, therefore, we do not baptize infants. Some Baptist churches do conduct services of dedication of parents and presentation of children at which time both parents and congregation acknowledge their responsibilities to raise their children in Christian love. This is not baptism, and it is believed that the child when old enough to understand, must accept Christ as Saviour and Lord and offer himself or herself for Baptism and church membership.
- 2) Baptism by Immersion: We hold, too, that this is undoubtedly the original form of baptism. This is not because we believe there is virtue in much water, but we do believe that baptism is a symbolic ordinance and any departure from immersion destroys much of the symbolism. As depicting moral and spiritual cleansing, the gospel of Christ’s death and resurrection, the Christian’s dying to sin and rising to live the Christian life, immersion is the most meaningful form of baptism.

It is undoubtedly difficult, demanding and humbling. Again, it symbolizes the entrance to the Christian life and community. It is no easy or light thing to become a follower of Christ. Mark 8:34 gives us Jesus’ own words as he warned his would-be followers that they must be willing to deny themselves, take up their cross and follow him. It is a

serious thing to become a follower of Jesus and become a part of his Church. It is still a minimal request when compared to the total self-giving of Christ, *The Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me* (Galatians 2:20).

Why Be Baptized?

Why should we be baptized at all? If decision for Christ, faith, self-surrender makes one a Christian what more is needed? The same question could be asked about a number of other ceremonies, which we participate in and find valuable. Graduation ceremonies, initiation ceremonies, marriage services – all of these recognize what has happened. The bride and groom don't fall in love because of a wedding service. So, by the same token baptism has great value for the believer, for the Church and for the commendation of the Christian gospel and life to the world.

The rite of baptism ought to confirm faith and strengthen conviction. To publicly profess faith to the world at large is to gain new conviction and enthusiasm for your Christian living. It also commends the Lord Jesus to friends and fellow members and is a strong witness to them to consider their own relationship to Christ. It is one more act of obedience to the desires of Christ for us. (Matthew 28:19).

5. THE LORD'S SUPPER

Background in the Bible: Matthew 26:26-30; I Corinthians 11:23-26; Acts 2:41-42

The Lord's Supper is also called the Last Supper to remind us that this memorable feast was like many such meals Jesus had eaten with the disciples. What a wonderful privilege it was for the disciples to be able to share the meal table with their Master, listening to his every word and asking about all of the uncertainties that had arisen in their minds. In this particular moment Jesus is taking the time to prepare them for the momentous but difficult days ahead. He tried to help them see that his coming death had the deepest meaning for the fulfillment of His mission. In these moments he is using not only words but the very significant symbols of bread and wine. An acted parable is unfolding before their very eyes so they could not fail to see what this night meant. It is even more significant that the early Church (Acts 2:42) kept this continuing observation of the *breaking of bread* uppermost in their worship.

In Remembrance of Me

Whenever we celebrate the Lord's Supper we are remembering – calling to mind that night, remembering Jesus Christ, his death and self-sacrifice for us.

Just as the bread was broken and is broken in our services, so Jesus suffered violence and death at the hands of his enemies. Likewise the wine is the symbol of his blood shed at Calvary. It is not possible to look at these symbols and not be reminded of the life, which was given *a ransom for many* (Mark 10:45). We need also to remember in looking at this supper that it took place at the time of Passover. A very important time commemorating the deliverance of the Jews from Egypt. God had taken them out of slavery and bondage. (Exodus 12 – 13).

Much of the significance of this feast is carried into the Lord's Supper. The Egyptian slavery is not the only bondage from which people need to be freed. The sins and selfishness of humans, their habits and actions, their guilt and failure all cry out to humanity helping us to know that we need deliverance. The Old Covenant (Jeremiah 31:34) spoke of deliverance and Jesus' death is intimately related to God's power to forgive sin and deliver people from bondage. So Paul speaks of *Christ our Passover* (I Corinthians 5:7) for he knows that Jesus, by his life and death has accomplished a far more wonderful deliverance than even the escape from Egypt, so we take the bread and the cup remembering that Christ has saved us from sin and in repentance and trust we come to proclaim his death. (I Corinthians 11:26).

The Bread of Life

Another meaning of the Lord's Supper is that it symbolizes our constant need of Christ and how he can sustain us.

A meal provides nourishment for our bodies but more than this is needed. Our minds and memories, our courage and endurance, our faith, hope and love all need to be renewed and refreshed. Jesus Christ is the great source of such spiritual life for the Christian. He spoke

of himself as the Bread of Life (John 6:47-58). Paul uses the phrase of Jesus becoming Christ in us. (Colossians 1;27). All of this is portrayed in the eating of the bread and the drinking of the wine. We “feed” on him and are reminded of the constant need for this close, living relationship if we are to be successful followers of the Christ.

Practice in Other Churches

As in the case of baptism there are many alternate forms, which have developed to commemorate the Lord’s Supper. The Roman Catholic Church has the Eucharist – meaning thanksgiving or the Mass. It is a quite elaborate ritual celebrated each week. In the Catholic view the bread and the wine become, by a miracle, the very body and blood of Christ. In them He is literally present and the communicant actually receives Him at the hands of the priest. Other Protestant groups reject this viewpoint, yet do regard the elements as means of imparting the grace of God to people in a manner which Baptists do not accept. Baptists hold that the bread and wine are elements or symbols of what God through Christ by the Spirit does for the believer.

Some denominations celebrate the Lord’s Supper once a quarter, Baptist usually once a month. Some have their members receive communion at the altar of the Church. We customarily have the deacons distribute the elements to the members as they sit in their pews.

Most Baptists believe that participation in the Lord’s Supper should be limited to those who are disciples of the Lord Jesus. In that sense it is not a public service. It is customary to welcome anyone who wishes to observe and those who are true believers are invited to partake on the same basis as members of the local church.

Some would go farther and list participation to those who are baptized believers. That would seem to be the logical order: faith, confession of faith, baptism, the renewal of faith in the Lord’s Supper. However, in actual practice many of our churches welcome to their Communion Services all Christians, whether or not they have been baptized by immersion.

The Importance of The Communion Service

All who are believers in Christ should recognize the importance of the Communion Service. We do not look upon it as having magical or superstitious powers but we do feel strongly that it is an act of obedience and we owe it to Christ and our fellows to meet them in this act of obedience.

If we come thoughtfully, reverently, humbly recognizing our failures and our need for dependence upon God and believing in the mercy of God and the saving power of Christ we cannot fail to receive strength from the service of remembrance.

6. THE CHRISTIAN'S GROWTH

Background in the Bible: Matthew 5:11; Ephesians 4:11-15

It is a serious mistake to think of conversion as the end of a process, rather it ought to be thought of as the beginning. Growth is one mark of the genuine Christian. ...*grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ* (II Peter 3:18). Just as growth following birth is the natural and expected condition of a child so the infant Christian should develop in his or her knowledge of truth, in Christ-like character, in his or her desire to worship and to engage with enthusiasm in the life of the Church and the work of the Kingdom.

The Christian's Goal

At the outset we need to recognize that the kind of growth we are talking of here is hard to measure and we need to ponder the standards given to us. In Matthew 5:1-11, Jesus gave us these words we call *The Beatitudes*. It is a listing of virtues which run counter to those things held important by society at large, both the society of Jesus' day and that of our own but when we accept Christ and his way, we set ourselves to seek for a way of life that is unique. We must also recognize that we cannot attain to its standards without the constant help of God. A quick glance at these virtues has us looking at humility, hope in the midst of sorrow, gentleness, a deep desire for righteousness, mercy, peace-making, courage and loyalty - all much needed qualities of life. Together they add up to what the Christian ought to be.

The whole of the New Testament can help us to discover the kind of person Christ wants us to be, but the most attractive and inspiring picture of all is the Lord Jesus Christ himself. As we are reminded in Ephesians 4:13, *the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ* is the goal for the Church as a whole and for every member. At first glance, a seemingly impossible goal, and as we have said, by our own strength it is. All the more reason to know all we can about our Lord and his Church.

The Test of Temptation

You must not be surprised to discover that temptation is still a real thing, even after one becomes a Christian. Sometimes people make the mistake of thinking that all will be easy sailing following one's conversion. Not so. The need to overcome selfishness and evil desires is always with us in some form and we know that Jesus himself suffered temptation (Hebrews 4:15). Sin is the result of yielding to temptation, allowing it to have its own way with us. This Jesus did not do; and by his help we can become victorious over temptation.

As we meet and overcome temptations we become stronger and more able to meet other obstacles as they appear before us. If properly understood and faced they can be opportunities to learn and grow and experience more of God's power in our lives. Paul wrote to the Church in Corinth on this same issue: *No temptation has overcome you that is not common to everyone. God is faithful and he will not let you be tempted beyond your strength, but with the temptation will always provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it* (I Corinthians 10:13).

The Holy Spirit

Sometimes we speak of God's presence with us, and his help to us, as the Holy Spirit. It is God the Holy Spirit who is ever near us and within us, helping us to know right from wrong, to resist temptation and to grow in understanding and character.

In John 14-16 we have the larger account of how Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit to be with this disciples after he had left them. The Holy Spirit comes as The Teacher (John 14:26), the Comforter or Counsellor (John 14:16), the Spirit of Truth (John 14:17). In Acts 2 at Pentecost we read how the first Christians were *filled with the Holy Spirit* and, in that power, began the great experience of the Church.

Promoting Growth

Our growth in the Christian life is not an automatic or inevitable series of events requiring no effort on our part. There are some definite steps we may take:

1) The Bible

In the next chapter we will deal at greater length with our use of the Scriptures. At this point we remind ourselves concerning the life, teaching and redeeming work of Jesus Christ. What Christ has done for us, what he expects us to do and be, what the Church exists to be – all of these are set down in the Bible. To be ignorant of its contents is to be like an explorer moving into strange territory without maps. Regular and systematic Bible study is a must for all Christians.

2) Prayer

One kind of prayer is asking and we should always make such requests leaving the final decision with God and willing to accept his wise answer. Jesus' own prayer – *not what I will but what you will* (Mark 14:36) is a fine example. Prayer is also conversation with God at the end of the day reflecting on the good and the not so good and seeking forgiveness for our sins. Prayer is also placing ourselves in God's care at the beginning of the day asking for strength and guidance to be faithful. There are informal prayers. We also use "set" prayers, such as *The Lord's Prayer*, as well as other great prayers of the Church.

To successfully participate in a life of prayer requires discipline – something of thought, perseverance, resolution, faith and the setting of priorities. One does not drift into a meaningful life of prayer. Have and keep regular times of prayer at all costs. *They who wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength* (Isaiah 40:31).

3) Association with Other Christians

Education is most effective not as a solitary undertaking but in school with other students, games are learned on the playground with others; recreation is more enjoyable in a group than by one's self; the Christian life is learned and lived best in the company of other Christians. This is why membership in the Church provides opportunities for growth in faith and character. To worship each week with other worshippers does something for us that private devotions cannot do. To study with others is to enlarge our vision and to belong to effective groups in the church is to engage in some of the

happiest and most helpful kinds of companionship available. The fellowship and activities of your church offer an invaluable means of continued Christian growth.

4) Active Christian Service

Being a Christian involves far more than study, listening to sermons, worshipping or going to Church School. It has to be also a matter of putting into practice the Christian convictions one has developed. It begins with many of the traditional tasks to be done in the Church, which include: singing, teaching, ushering, etc. As important as these are there are many ways in the community where we live, where we can tell our friends or associates that we are Christian and we stand ready to live as Christ wants us to live. As we respond to these opportunities we will need further study and strength and our spiritual life will grow as we serve.

The Christian Life Never Ends

The Christian life is not confined to what we do in Church or in Church groups, nor is it limited to the here and now. Paul and our Blessed Lord spoke often of the life that continues beyond this life (Romans 8:38-39) and assured us that nothing, no even death, can separate us from God's love. As young people we may not be primarily interested in life after death, but to believe that one's life does not end here is a great incentive to hope, toil, endurance and endeavour. Our horizon is not set by time but by eternity.

The words of Jesus as recorded in John 14:1-2 are a great comfort to us as we see the fleeting nature of time and the flimsiness of much that the world produces – *Let not your hearts be troubled, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?*

7. YOU AND YOUR BIBLE

Background in the Bible: Luke 4:16-21; John 20:30-31

The Bible is the “**book of books**” – but not only because of its unique message. The very name “**Bible**” comes from the Greek meaning the “**books**” and actually is not one book at all but rather a library of 66 books, written by many writers of different nationalities and two different languages. It was written over a time period of about 1,000 years. There is a great variety in the form, content and style of the books: history (Kings), poetry (Psalms), wise sayings (Proverbs), preaching (Amos), prophecy (Isaiah), drama (Job), law (Leviticus), biography (Luke), letters (Corinthians), apocalyptic or the revealing of hidden things (Revelation).

The Bible has two main divisions unequal in length - the Old Testament with 39 books and the New Testament with 27. When these books were written there were no printing presses as we know them today so their form was quite different. They were written on large scrolls or rolls, the writing was in parallel columns and the reader unwound the one roll with one hand and rolled it onto the other held in his other hand. All copies had to be handwritten.

The man who did more than any other to give us the Bible in the English language is William Tyndale, who lived over 400 years ago. Until then the Bible was only written in Latin and since most of the common people could not read at all copies were found in the church. It was then that the Bible became the possession of the people in their own language.

The Word of God

The Bible is often referred to as ***The Word of God***. What does that title mean? People of some faiths have claimed that their sacred books were dropped upon them straight from heaven, having been written by God himself. Christians make no such claim as this for the Bible, nor do they claim that God dictated every word to the authors as a business executive would dictate to a secretary. They do claim, however, that God had a most important part in the creation of the Bible. For one thing God was the author of the great events described in the Bible. He made the world and the universe (Genesis 1) and he called Abraham to a new land (Genesis 12:1-5). God revealed himself to Moses (Exodus 3:1-28), brought Israel out of Egypt (Exodus 13:17-22), made his will and laws known to his people (Exodus 20:1-17), spoke through the Prophets (Hebrews 1:1), sent his Son to be the Saviour of the World (I John 4:14) and spread abroad the knowledge of the Gospel through Paul and others (II Corinthians 5:18-20).

All of these were the acts of God, acting through people and events. Moreover, we believe that God was active in the case of those who produced these books because of such words as *then said the Lord to me* (Jeremiah 31:1), the oft-repeated word of the Prophets. They were profoundly conscious of the fact that they spoke and wrote, not by themselves alone, but at the impulse of God himself. Luke wrote in a similar vein when he wrote – *It seemed good to me ... to write ... for you* (Luke 1:3). Behind that seeming good lies the clear fact of God’s inspiration.

We speak of the inspiration of the Bible as in II Timothy 3:16, which makes it something, which is not mechanical or impersonal but definitely asserts our belief that the Bible is not just a human-made book. Behind it and its writers is God himself, who first of all caused the events the Bible records, who moved people to record their spiritual pilgrimage so that all generations would know him and his power (II Peter 1:30). This is the reason we speak of it as God's Word.

The Scriptures

We speak also of the Bible as the "Scriptures" and it is helpful to keep in mind the meaning of this term. It comes from the Latin "to write" and we must not forget the Biblical "writers" and the important part they played in making the Bible and how their human impress is upon it as well as that of God. This is seen in their use of the language of the day and their individual styles and vocabularies. God did not give these writers all knowledge nor did he turn them into twenty-first century scientists. They thought of the earth as flat and having corners (Revelation 7:1) and with a firmament over it (Genesis 1). We do not expect to find modern geographical or scientific knowledge in so old a book. Indeed, we should not expect such knowledge in a 19th or 20th century volume. Nor should we expect to find the same standards of conduct in the Old Testament as we find in the New Testament. Jesus did not hesitate to declare that he had come to bring a "better way" of life: *You have heard that it was said to the people of old...but I say to you* (Matthew 5:21-22). Even the best that Moses knew was to be surpassed by the new law of Christ.

We should not expect to find the Bible as a textbook on science or morals. Its great field is that of religion, of God's dealing with people and of their response to God. Even its view of God is a developing one, just because no one knew God as fully before Jesus came as afterwards. It was only after Jesus that we could hear: *He who has seen me has seen the Father* (John 1:49) and our knowledge of God grows. Nowhere else than the Bible can we see the holy and loving God revealed, the One who made the world and people, the One who redeemed us in Jesus Christ, who has promised us the Kingdom.

Reading the Bible

A certain wealthy man, who liked to impress others by the richness of his possessions, once said to his friend, "I have so many books, I really don't know what to do with them." Whereupon the friend, rather cuttingly remarked, "Why not read some of them?" That is one danger in all our discussions about the Bible, that we will not read it ourselves.

- 1) Get a Bible of your own, one in a modern English translation. We have used the Revised Standard Version in this book, which is one of the many translations now available.

- 2) Read it regularly. Try to read a section a day. It is often a good idea to use a set of readings, which you can get from the Canadian Bible Society or through your pastor.
- 3) Read with a variety of approaches. Some of the shorter books can be read in one sitting in about an hour. Mark is only 45 pages long.
- 4) Use a Bible dictionary or other helps to learn about the author of the book, date, the circumstances and purpose of the book. Your church library may have concordances; dictionaries or other Bible helps to assist you in your study.
- 5) If you interpret the Bible as the above steps indicate you will not be tempted to use sections in ways the writers did not intend. It is not helpful to lift verses out of context.
- 6) Don't expect the Bible to provide you with fine details or instructions for living. It is not a law-book in this sense. It does lay down broad principles for faith and duty and these throw light on particular situations. Become really acquainted with the teachings of Jesus and the Spirit of God will guide you in your application of them to your life issues.
- 7) Read with imagination. Try to picture your way into the biblical world and it will come alive for you.
- 8) Look for ways of applying the biblical truths to your living patterns. Biblical truth is not intended to be stored so much as used.
- 9) Read prayerfully, asking God's Spirit to keep revealing his truth to you so that your heart will be good soil in which the seed will grow. (Mark 4:20)

8. YOU AND YOUR CHURCH

Background in the Bible: Acts 2:41-47; Romans 12:4-8

And all who believed were together (Acts 2:44). Of course they were together and not just because they felt it was their duty to be so, but because they wanted to be. A Scottish minister, whose church is in a seaport to which come many foreign ships, relates how he saw a stranger in his church, and on speaking to him after the service, discovered they did not know a word of each other's language. Finally, however, the man spoke just two words that both recognized at once. These two were, "Jesus Christ". On that common ground they were friends at once.

One of the greatest things about the church is the breadth of its fellowship for it includes people of all backgrounds and types. As you enter the fellowship of your church you will discover how interesting and enriching it can be.

Worship in the Church

One of the first things the Christians wanted to do was to worship – to offer praise and thanksgiving to God (Acts 2:46-47). They knew that he was the author of all their joy and gratitude, for it was God who had sent Christ and given them the new life they had found in him. The Church has never ceased to worship; it is one of its noblest traditions and the very centre of its life. If the Church should cease to worship it would soon cease to be the Church. People who absent themselves from the public worship functions of their church are doing both the church and themselves a great spiritual disservice. We are urged that we be *not neglecting to meet together, as in the habit of some...* (Hebrews 10:25).

Study in the Church

A second characteristic of the early church was its strong emphasis on study – *and they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship* (Acts 2:42). These early Christians did not limit themselves to private study of the Scriptures but were quick to take advantage of the teaching of the elders in the faith who were willing to provide instruction. Many of us are in the position of the Ethiopian who was reading a passage of the Old Testament and to whom Philip said: *Do you understand what you are reading?* The Ethiopian's response to Philip then was *How can I understand unless someone guides me?* (Acts 8:30-31). The Church at many levels offers its members opportunities to study and know the Scriptures and the time spent in this fashion is a most vital part of the life in the Church.

Workers in the Church

So we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another (Romans 12:5). It seems too bad that we are not aware of the importance of our bodily members until we hurt a foot, bang a thumb or strain our back. Each part of the body is vital to the working of the whole and the Church is the same. Each of us have talents that need to be offered to God in service to be trained and used for the good of the whole body. Not only officers,

deacons, committee members and teachers are needed, all of us need to be employed in the work of the Church.

When we are asked to do something in the life of the Church we should respond positively and gratefully. We ought not to question our talents so much as accept them and offer them to God as our willing offering. Sometimes it is good to ask ourselves: “If every member of this church were just like me, what kind of church would we have?”

Steward in the Church

The New Testament is full of admonitions to the faithful to be good stewards of God’s gifts. We do not have our benefits by right of birth or creed, but by God’s good grace. Therefore, we are appointed stewards.

I Corinthians 16:2 - *On the first day of every week each of you is to put something aside and store it up as you may prosper. They were glad to give their money recognizing that freely you have received, freely give (Matthew 10:8) and that it is more blessed to give than to receive (Acts 20:35). These Christians were ever aware of the gift of their Lord who though he was rich, yet for our sakes, he became poor so that through his poverty you might become rich (II Corinthians 8:9). The Christian is a steward of time, talents and money. Faithful stewardship has always included the regular giving of one’s substance to God.*

The Jews used to set aside a tenth or a tithe, as an offering to God. Some Christians give that percentage of their income while others feel they cannot do so. However, whatever we decide to give ought to be a reflection of our feelings of gratitude to God for his goodness to us and our pledge of devotion to the cause of Christ. If we begin to give regularly and systematically when young, we will develop sound life-long habits. Never think of your gift as small or insignificant but rather think of what God can do with all our gifts united in his mission to the world.

Prayer for the Church

We are told that when the earliest Christians came together *they devoted themselves to prayer (Acts 2:42)*. These were not just prayers for themselves but for the Church, for new converts, for the world, indeed for all of the concerns they shared (Acts 4:23-30). In Lesson 6 we looked at the importance of prayer for the individual, here we see the importance of corporate prayer. *I pray for them*, said Jesus remembering his disciples before God. Many of Jesus’ prayers were of intercession (Luke 22:32; 23:34; John 17:15,20). Paul believed in intercessory prayer and he prayed for his fellow Christians (Ephesians 1:15-19, Philippians 1:9) and in return asked for their prayers (Philippians 1:19). We ought always to come together with other Christians to pray together that we know the will of God for all people everywhere.

What Makes a Church Great

Never was the Church more needed in the world than it is today. The Church is called primarily to be a servant, to be obedient to the Word of God as it is revealed to it. When the Church is obedient and faithful God will use it and empower it and make it great. We, in Canada, are united with millions of churches around the world, each one of them has a mission to fulfill.

9. YOU AND YOUR COMMUNITY

Background in the Bible: Matthew 5:13-16; I Thessalonians 4:9-12; I Corinthians 10:31-11:1

At Home

One of the finest places where our Christianity should show itself day by day is in our home. We spend a large amount of time at home, there we are known better than anywhere else. We ought to be able to be more Christian there. And yet such is not always the case. Sometimes we tend to let down and our true natures are revealed, those characteristics we hide at work or play or school come out and we are seen as we truly are. Why is this? It is partly because we think we have a right to be so at home. However, we ought to recognize that a truly Christian home is one of the greatest possessions any family can have. A home will only become Christian as its members honour Christ in word and deed and seek to be loving and kind.

At School

For some young Christians the hardest test of their Christian commitment comes at school and with school friends. Many of these people do not share church loyalties and will have little use for your standards. They will express themselves frankly and sometimes will ridicule some of the things you do or will not do. Jesus told his disciples *Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness sake* (Matthew 5:10). One needs to be most discreet regarding the kinds of conversations and associations one becomes involved in while at school, college or university.

It ought to be clear to our fellow students that we are seeking to live our lives by the standards of the Gospel. It is unworthy of the Christian that he or she cheat to achieve a mark or engage in unfair play in order to beat an opponent. We will never be perfect in all our conduct but we ought to seek diligently to be as faithful to our standards as human frailty allows. The use of alcohol, drugs and tobacco are obvious points of conflict with much of the society of Canada. We need, as Christians, to govern our attitudes to these substances by our considered standards and not allow ourselves to be caught up in social trends or fads. The Church ought to give direction to all its members as to conduct considered acceptable by Christian standards.

A Christian student should be depended upon to be faithful in study and commitments. As Christians we are called to a sense of vocation, which requires our best efforts.

At Work

When we graduate from school we need to consider our place in the market place:

- 1) We should choose the vocation where God wants us to serve. Not everyone can become a minister but many can serve as Christians in medicine, agriculture, building, law, politics or wherever.
- 2) There ought to be a Christian motive behind all that we do by way of vocation or occupation. The standards of business and industry sometime make it difficult to square them with Christian standards. We need to know how we ought to treat an employee, a competitor or a customer. Christians in business need to be the most diligent to keep their standards clear and effective in all they do.

For a few years Jesus was a carpenter in the town of Nazareth. We may be sure that he was a faithful and good one, never despising his occupation and looking upon it as a mere stepping stone to something greater. He was the living embodiment of St. Paul's words, *Whatever you do, do all to the glory of God* (I Corinthians 1:31).

At Play

One of the surest tests of character is the way one spends his or her leisure time. There one reveals interests, desires and tastes.

Most young people get enough physical exercise to keep themselves healthy and their bodies in good shape. There are a variety of ways in which this may be done – hiking, biking, walking, games, skating, skiing, etc. We need to avail ourselves of some of the most vigorous of these. Medical advisors tell us that the continuance of good body health is an important aspect of total well-being and it certainly is good stewardship to take good care of ourselves.

There is a constant danger for some persons that they become so interested in more sedentary pastimes – listening to radio or stereo, watching TV, reading – that they become lethargic and physically lazy. We need to guard against such things.

Wholesome and pleasurable leisure events do not have to be terribly expensive. Church groups ought to provide ways and means for young people to enjoy their leisure in health-fostering ways.

Christianity's Strongest Argument

He was only a boy in his early teens but a businessman paid him one of the finest compliments. He said concerning him: "That boy is a good influence in this whole neighbourhood." We all, young and old, exercise some influences for Christ. There are places of authority and prestige in every community from which great influence emanates, but each of us does have an influence.

In every community there are those who are building up the welfare of their community. Unfortunately, there are those who seem bent on its destruction. Even youth can support the former and oppose the latter. Some activities and organizations are deserving of our support. Thousands of young people have walked millions of miles to raise money for good causes both in the local community and overseas.

The Apostle Paul was always anxious that his young Christian converts in Corinth and Thessalonica set a good example to the world at large, giving no occasion for non-Christians to find fault with their everyday living. They were always to commend the gospel by the uprightness of their lives. The most powerful argument for the Christian faith is still to be a loyal follower of Christ, whose life reflects this relationship.

Living for God

Each one of us is called to be a minister of the gospel. We cannot all be engaged in full-time Christian service but we can all dedicate our lives to live as in response to our faith. Our stewardship of life claims us totally so that no part of our lives ought to be lived outside the influences of the gospel message, which has claimed us. Romans 12:6-8 speaks of special kinds of ministry. Colossians 3:23 tells us that all of us need to be aware that: *Whatever your task, work heartily as serving the Lord...*

10. **BAPTIST BEGINNINGS AND BELIEFS**

Background in the Bible: Galatians 3:6-11; 5:13-14; I Corinthians 8:5-6

A Strange Development

By the end of the New Testament period (roughly the end of the First Century), the Church, which began as a small company of Jesus' disciples in Jerusalem, had spread into many of the important centres of the Mediterranean and was well established even in the capital city of Rome. Its story, through the next 14 centuries, is one of remarkable growth in numbers, wealth, organizations and power. During this period the Bishop of Rome had become the Pope, the head of the Church, and a large hierarchy of priests and clergy developed which governed the Church. The teaching of the Church tended to make people more dependent upon the Church, both through the priesthood and the sacraments, which became important for salvation itself. Only through such rites as baptism and the mass, and by confession to and pardon from a priest of the Church could one become and remain a Christian.

The Reformers

Throughout the latter period of this time people began to follow their deep conviction that the claims and dictates of the Church were not inerrant, especially those views which held that salvation was only to be won by those who faithfully followed the practices that were demanded. The "sale" of indulgences was one such practice, which aroused particular opposition. A purchase of such an indulgence could free one from the punishment of one's sin. Many felt this to be a form of "bribery of God" and scarcely in keeping with the Scriptures or moral teaching. The strongest opposition came from within the Church itself and eventually ended in the Reformation of the 16th Century onward. Martin Luther, a monk of the Church, was the most prominent leader of this reforming movement.

The English Protestants

In England, the Reformation spread until in the 16th Century a complete break was made with the Roman church and the authority of the Pope. The Church of England, as a self-governing church, came into being. The Church of England was no longer subject to direct papal control but it had as its head the King or Queen of the Realm. The day-to-day affairs of the Church were still in the hands of the clergy, its worship was still highly ordered and the Book of Common Prayer came to be used in all of the churches. A reaction against this established church also began to develop. Many held the practices to be against the supreme Lordship of Christ over the Church. Such groups as emerged from this movement are the Presbyterians, Puritans, Independents and Congregationalists. From the Independents the Baptists eventually emerged.

Baptists in England, Scotland and America

The first church of English Baptists came into existence curiously enough, not in England but in Holland. John Smyth, formerly a minister of the Church of England, came to Amsterdam with a group of Independents seeking to escape persecution at home. In 1608 they formed a church, which rejected baptism of infants and stood for the baptism of believers alone. Thomas Helwys in 1611 brought part of this congregation back to London where it was the first church in England to advocate complete religious freedom of all. Between 1633 and 1640 a number of other congregations were established which practiced not only this baptism of believers but also baptism by immersion. Parallel with this period Baptist congregations were being established in America with leaders like Roger Williams and John Clarke. A century later Baptist life and work began in Scotland. It is from these beginnings that most of the Baptist life in Canada emerged.

Baptist Principles

1) The Lordship of Christ

Baptists hold that the clear teaching of the New Testament is that the supreme head of the Church is Jesus Christ (Colossians 1:18). There is not much disagreement with these statements in discussion but in actual fact Baptists see considerable deviation from them in practice. The Roman Catholic Church stresses Papal authority, the Church of England, Regal authority and the Russian Church Governmental authority. There are forms of human control that limit the Church from unallayed following of the will of Christ. Baptists repudiate all such forms of control and declare their conviction that Christ himself can and does make his will known to his Church through the Scriptures, the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the wisdom of devoted leaders and the assemblies of church members.

2) The Authority of the Scriptures for Faith and Practices

Some church bodies lay great stress upon certain statements of faith, or creeds, which they require their members to accept for themselves and which occupy an important part of their services of worship. One of the oldest and best known of these is the Apostles' Creed. Baptists have no creed such as this, not because their beliefs are not definite or clear, but because they hold that the Scriptures are a sufficient guide in the matters of faith and conduct. It is also a firm conviction that each individual member is permitted and encouraged to study and interpret his or her own "creed" which becomes an expression of each one's personal faith but is not a test that a person feels that he or she may judge others by.

3) Personal Faith as the Means Toward Salvation

Apart from a person's faith in Christ nothing can be a means of salvation, not even Baptism or the Lord's Supper – *For by grace you have been saved through faith...* (Ephesians 2:8).

We believe in the "priesthood of all believers" (Revelation 1:6), which means that any believing person may have direct fellowship with God, through Christ, with any dependence upon any human mediator – *For there is one God and there is one mediator between God and humanity, the man Christ Jesus* (I Timothy 2:5). This belief leads naturally to what is

called **Regenerate Church Membership**. This means that only persons of the faith, who have opened their hearts to the renewing work of the Holy Spirit, are eligible to be members of the Church. Baptists hold that the Church is a “gathered” community composed of those who have chosen of their own free will to believe in Christ and enter his Church.

4) Believer’s Baptism by Immersion

We dealt with this in Chapter 4. Let us merely repeat one or two essentials at this point. The person who is baptized is one old enough to be able to exercise faith in Christ and give evidence of that fact. One confesses one’s faith in Baptism. The mode of the baptism provides a symbolism that best depicts the death and resurrection of Christ and the *dying and rising again of the believer* (Romans 6).

5) The Autonomy (Self-government) of the Local Church

In the Roman Catholic Church certain words spoken by the Pope are binding on all members. In the Anglican Church the clergy exercise strong control over local pastors. In Presbyterian and United Churches, presbyteries, conferences and councils exercise strong responsibility over local congregations. The Baptist “congregational” belief holds that the local church determines its own affairs – the calling of a minister, the nature of its worship, the type and functions of its organization. It acknowledges the Lordship of Christ and even seeks to be guided by his mind and will, as the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit make these known.

Baptist Churches voluntarily associate themselves with other churches, its associations, conventions, federations and alliances for mutual support and counsel. These co-operative groupings enable them to engage in mission enterprises and projects they could not do alone.

6) Religion and Civil Liberty

Baptists hold that each church ought to be free to manage its own affairs without pressure or interference from the State. Money raised by taxation for public purposes should not be used for any particular religious group. Of course, “separation between church and state” does not mean that Baptists withdraw themselves from civic or social or political responsibilities. On the contrary many have given distinguished service at all levels of governmental life (Galatians 5:13).

11. OUR CANADIAN BAPTIST HISTORY

Background in the Bible: Acts 11:19-26; 13:1-3

The Maritimes

In 1790 Ebenezer Moulton came to Nova Scotia from Massachusetts. He was a Baptist pastor who left New England for a number of reasons, one of which seems to have been his concern for religious freedom, which had not always been enjoyed by Baptists in that region. He remained in Nova Scotia about eleven years only; but, during that time he made a number of converts and a small church was formally organized in 1763. This church in time became the Wolfville Church. Another figure of great importance in Maritime Baptist history is Henry Alline, although he himself was never a Baptist, but a Congregationalist or a “New Light”. As a boy he came with his parents in 1760 to Falmouth, NS, from Rhode Island. His conversion was most real and was quickly followed by a sense of call to preach the gospel. “When I gave up all to him, to do with me as he pleased, and was willing that God should reign in me and rule over me at his pleasure, redeeming love broke into my soul...with such power that my whole soul seemed to be melted down with love. In the midst of all my joys... the Lord discovered to me my labour in the ministry and call to preach the gospel.”

His ministry in the Maritime Provinces lasted from 1776-1783, during which he travelled by horseback, on snowshoes and by costal steamer to innumerable places in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. He stressed conversion, regenerate church membership, the autonomy of the local church and liberty of conscience. Indeed he actively assisted in the re-establishing of the Baptist church at Horton (Wolfville) in 1778. One of Henry Alline’s converts was T. H. Chipman, who became pastor of the Church at Annapolis, and was ordained in 1782. He was one of the first Baptist ministers ordained in the Maritimes.

By the close of the eighteenth century there was a desire for closer fellowship among these young churches and in 1800 the Nova Scotia Baptist Association was formed. In 1846 the Baptist Convention of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island was formed.

In the meantime, another group of churches, whose members came to be known as the “Free Baptists”, had come into being, again largely due to New England influences. By 1834 these had come together in a Conference. Gradually the Free Baptists and those in the Convention drew together and by 1884 conversations looking towards union were under way. Progress was slow but in 1906 The United Baptist Convention of the Maritime Provinces was created.

Ontario and Quebec

After the American Revolution thousands of United Empire Loyalists came north across the Canadian border, anxious to continue living under the British flag. There was a church at Caldwell’s Manor in Quebec as early as 1796, and here William Marsh, a Loyalist from Vermont, was ordained. He was instrumental in starting other causes. In 1803 a missionary from the U.S.A. by the name of Joseph Cornell began a church at Harlan near Brockville.

Another Loyalist, Reuben Crandall, commenced a work at Haldimand in Northumberland County, and the Beamsville Church in the Niagara Peninsula was begun in 1796.

A few years later another centre of Baptist life and work came into being in the Ottawa Valley. Its sources were not American but Scottish. Names mentioned in these early records are Fraser, Edwards, Anderson, McPhail, Gilmour and Fyfe. One of the most colourful of these pioneers was Daniel McPhail. At the age of twenty, through the death of his father, he came to have charge of both a farm and a church. He very much needed the former because he received no salary for being pastor of the latter! A friend helped him to secure some training in the USA and he came back to be pastor of the Osgoode church for twenty-six years. Much of that time he was a travelling and fervent evangelist, preaching in churches, barns or out-of-doors summoning people to repent and turn to God. "The Elijah of the Ottawa Valley" was what he came to be called. He was greatly respected, even by some who did not share his religion. One man who would never enter a church and had a bad reputation in the community used to feed the minister's horse while he was conducting the service. In the end Daniel McPhail's influence told even on him, and years later he became a Christian and a church member.

In Upper and Lower Canada, too, the churches early desired to be linked together for fellowship and work. Associations began to come into being from 1819 on. Organizations for missionary endeavour at home and abroad also sprang up and the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec was created in 1889.

The West

The movement of population in Canada was still strongly westward and, as early as 1869, representatives were sent by the Baptists of Ontario to look into the possibilities of missionary work there. Alexander McDonald was sent as the first missionary and he organized a church at Fort Garry (Winnipeg) in 1875. He had been won to Christ by Daniel McPhail and shared much of his devotion and pioneering spirit.

The first Baptist church west of the Rockies was established in Victoria in 1876. The Baptist Union of Western Canada was formed in 1907 and links together the churches of British Columbia and the three Prairie Provinces.

French Work

Baptist work among French-speaking Canadians began with the arrival in 1835 of Henrietta Feller, a young widow from Switzerland. The Grande Ligne Mission carried on work with French-speaking people mostly in the province of Quebec. In September 1969 The Union of French Baptist Churches of Canada was officially formed and in 1972 had 10 churches with approximately 400 members. Today there are about 30 churches with about 1,000 members.

In very brief outline that is the story of the beginnings of Baptist life and work in Canada. Today there are about 1200 churches in four Conventions and Unions, with about 140,000, and many more adherents, both adults and children.

The Local Church

The ministers (pastors) are chosen by the church and they assume their office by the church's invitation and their acceptance of it. They are the church's leaders in public worship, in pastoral care, in religious instruction, and their counsel in all matters pertaining to the life and work of the church is valued because of their special training and experience. They do not, however, possess any peculiar authority over the church. In the congregational meeting they each have one vote, the same as other members.

There are a variety of organizational patterns in local Baptist churches. All of them appoint officers, boards and committees to provide smooth operation of the organizational life of the people. Most churches have a board of deacons, which is essentially responsible for worship and the pastoral care of the church, a board of finance responsible for the upkeep of buildings and property, the stewardship of the congregation and budgeting, a Christian education committee and a committee on Mission and outreach.

Some congregations use a Council system, designating the above functions to committees of the Council. All have their own constitution and by-laws and all have a board of trustees who are the legally appointed holders of properties. If the church has become incorporated the Board of Directors are the people who look after the legal aspects of the congregation and the property.

The Associations

Local churches bond themselves into voluntary groupings with other churches of an area for mutual support and to coordinate their efforts. In this way camping projects become possible, persons are engaged to give leadership for special purposes such as Christian education or social service. The establishment of new congregations and the support of new churches can all be more effectively accomplished by the co-operative working of the churches through an association.

The Conventions/Unions

The four Conventions/Unions (Baptist Union of Western Canada, Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec, Convention of Atlantic Baptist Churches and the French Union of Baptist Churches) are essentially democratic bodies also. The number of churches in each one is, of course, larger than in the case of the Associations and the aims and activities of the Conventions/Unions are broader and more numerous. The Convention/Union holds its annual Assembly to which each church sends delegates, the number depending upon the active membership of the church. These meetings are for worship, fellowship, the reporting of work done, planning for future work and the election of officers, boards and committees to carry on such work. It is easily understood that such projects as pastoral benefits, lay training, church planting, refugee support cannot be carried out by one church alone or even by a group of independent churches that remain out of touch with each other. Cooperation in some body such as a Convention/Union becomes absolutely essential and some "committee structure" within the Convention/Union is the most effective means for carrying on these projects between the annual Assemblies. Persons in office within the

Conventions/Union are elected by and responsible to the Assembly that is made up of representatives from the churches. Again, then, the local church's authority and independence are preserved.

Canadian Baptist Ministries

For many years there was a steadily growing desire for a national organization that would include the churches of all four Conventions/Unions. Various steps that perhaps indicated this desire were the creation of the Canadian Baptist Foreign Mission Board in 1911; the setting up of the Women's Dominion Committee in 1935; the issuing of the Hymnary in 1936; the formation of The Baptist Publications Committee of Canada in 1937 for the production of Sunday School papers and lesson helps. Finally in 1944 in St. John, NB there came into being the Baptist Federation of Canada. In 1994 the Canadian Baptist Federation, as it was later known, and Canadian Baptist International Ministries united into one organization, which is called Canadian Baptist Ministries.

Canadian Baptist Ministries seeks to offer ways and means for our larger fellowship of Baptists in all of Canada, to enable our more effective working in such fields as youth training, institutional chaplaincy, relief and development ministries and international missions, and to provide a voice by which we may speak on public and national issues.

Baptist World Alliance

Our Canadian Baptist churches do not confine their interests and relationships to either their own country or own denomination. The Baptist World Alliance is an international body, which holds meetings every five years, to which Baptists from many nations come. The Baptists constitute the largest "free church" body in the world, number about 30,000,000 in membership.

The Alliance has no legislative function in reference to churches or conventions but enlarges the area of Baptist fellowship and seeks to assist churches in difficult situations in many countries. Canadian Baptists have held high offices in the Alliance and its meetings in 1928 and 1980 were held in Toronto, ON.

Interdenominational

Canadian Baptists have played important parts in interdenominational work such as the Canadian Council of Churches and the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada.

12. OUR CANADIAN BAPTIST ENTERPRISES

Background in the Bible: Acts 1:8; 3:1-11; 4:1-4; 8:5-13; 13:44-57

Expansion at Home

From the beginning our people were interested in “home missions”. The earliest churches were not content to live unto themselves alone, but had a deep concern to evangelize the people of neighbouring communities. Many of the first pastors went far afield and new churches sprang up. This kind of individual effort was not enough, and the churches soon began to plan and organize for joint endeavours in preaching the gospel far and near in our own land. As early as 1814 the Association of Chester, NS, appointed Joseph Crandall and Samuel Bancroft to preach the gospel in a particular part of the province. In 1851 at Hamilton “The Regular Baptist Missionary Convention of Canada West” was created to carry on missionary work in Upper and Lower Canada. The Western Mission Board in the Maritime Convention and the Ontario and Quebec Convention sent aid to the Baptists in the west for many years.

Racial Expansion

By no means all of our Baptist work in Canada has been among Anglo-Saxon peoples. For example, in the 1860’s sections of our country became a refuge for black slaves fleeing from the southern USA. Many of their descendants are still with us and a number of churches, some quite old, are in existence and actively preaching the gospel. In the Maritime Provinces there is an “African Baptist Association” comprised entirely of black churches. The Amherstburg Association in Ontario is also composed of black churches.

Large numbers of immigrants have come to Canada from Europe, Asia, Africa, the Caribbean Islands and South America. The story of Baptist work among them is a most interesting one. Many ethnic churches have been organized in the last fifty to sixty years and so there are people of many languages worshipping and working together in Baptist churches across Canada.

Expansion Abroad

The first foreign missionary sent out by a Canadian denomination was a Baptist. His name was Richard Burpee and he was a member of the church in Fredericton, NB. He was a young businessman who came to have a great concern for the winning of the world for Christ and an increasing sense of personal responsibility. Finally he gave up his business, became a minister, received special training and eventually went, with his wife, to Burma in 1845. This he did with the support of the Baptists of the Maritime Provinces.

In 1873 a service of dedication was held at Windsor, NS for “The Serving Seven”, who sailed soon afterwards for Burma. They were Mr. & Mrs. Rufus Sanford, Mr. & Mrs. George Churchill, Mr. W. F. Armstrong, Miss Flora Eaton and Miss Maria Armstrong.

Later they removed to Kakinada in India where Canadian Baptist work was quickly established.

Meanwhile, the Rev. & Mrs. A. V. Timpany had been sent to India by the Baptists of Central Canada in 1867. They were followed in 1869 by the Rev. & Mrs. John McLarin. These four carried on work among the Telegus, but in association with Baptist missionaries from the United States. However, in 1873 it was decided to establish an independent Canadian mission, and this was done with headquarters at Kakinada, a city of 20,000 inhabitants at that time. It was here that they were joined by the missionaries from the Maritimes in 1875. This was the way the foundation was laid for our great Indian mission, which is still being served by Canadian Baptists.

In 1895 a young student pastor, the Rev. Archibald Reekie, born in Ontario but serving in Manitoba, felt called to preach the gospel in Bolivia. In spite of hardships and many discouragements he made his way to that land to investigate the possibilities of mission work there. Soon he was home again, more enthusiastic than ever, to plead the cause of the Bolivians; and in 1897 the Baptists of Ontario and Quebec authorized the beginnings of the new mission. By the following year, Mr. Reekie was again in Bolivia and our mission there was under way.

A major forward step was taken in 1911, when all the Baptist Foreign Mission Boards and Societies were united in The Canadian Baptist Foreign Mission Board, which later became named more appropriately, the Canadian Baptist Overseas Mission Board, which in turn became Canadian Baptist International Ministries. Still later, this organization was integrated into the new Canadian Baptist Ministries (CBMin) that which now carried out this most successful work in our mission fields. Invaluable assistance is provided by the Baptist Women's Missionary organizations.

One of the aims of our leaders has been that our mission churches should gradually but certainly become self-governing and self-supporting and that the national Christians should increasingly take over the direction of the work into their own hands. Slowly this has transpired and today "missionaries" go to serve at the invitation of the churches overseas. As the result of this type of mission work Canadian Baptist missionaries are serving in many more countries. There is work being done by Canadian Baptist missionaries in countries in Europe, Asia, Africa as well as in Central and South America. Volunteers are able to go as short-term workers and in that way assist the missionaries. This is a valuable experience for each one who serves in this way.

Our Colleges and Universities

In the early 19th century educational opportunities in Canada were far from what they are today. Our present public and secondary school system did not exist. Baptist leaders therefore felt an obligation to assist in the development of schools, not only for the training of their own ministers but also for the general education of children and young people.

In the Maritimes, Horton Academy was founded in 1882, as a preparatory school. Acadia University was established as a College in what is now Wolfville, NS, in 1838. In 1968 Acadia Divinity College was formed under the auspices and direction of the Atlantic United

Baptist Convention of the Atlantic Provinces. In Ontario enthusiasts for Christian education founded the Canadian Literary Institute at Woodstock, ON in 1857. Theological instruction was transferred from Woodstock to Toronto Baptist College in 1881. McMaster University was established in 1887. Now located in Hamilton it has grown to be a strong University composed of a number of colleges of which McMaster Divinity College is one, and the only one supported by the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec. Brandon College, Brandon, MB was established in affiliation with McMaster University and courses in Arts and Theology were offered. This college became absorbed into the University of Manitoba in 1940.

Big Business

Enough has been said in this lesson to show that Canadian Baptist work is “big business” for the King of Kings. We have great reason to be proud of our history and achievements of the pioneers who blazed the trails and the servants of today who continue to carry on the work that was started so many years ago. Most of all we are grateful to God, who has led us from strength to strength.

There is also another side to the matter. None of this would have been accomplished if individual men and women, some of them quite young, had not felt personal responsibility, heard a call of God to do this or that, go here or there, and responded generously and courageously. That kind of response still is needed and without it, often repeated, our work will vanish away. What is your part in this on going enterprise at home or abroad?