

Home Page

Bible Study

The Watchtower Reprints, October 1, 1909, p. 4482

“They point out that they themselves and their forefathers for generations had Bible classes and Bible studies all to no purpose until the Lord, in due time, sent them the ‘Bible Keys,’ through the Society.”

The Watchtower Reprints, September 15, 1910, p. 4685

“Furthermore, not only do we find that people cannot see the divine plan in studying the Bible by itself, but we see, also, that if anyone lays the SCRIPTURE STUDIES aside, even after he has used them, after he has become familiar with them after he has read them for ten years – if he then lays them aside and ignores them and goes to the Bible alone, though he has understood his Bible for ten years, our experience shows that within two years he goes into darkness. On the other hand, if he had merely read the SCRIPTURE STUDIES with their references, and had not read a page of the Bible, as such, he would be in the light at the end of the two years, because he would have the light of the Scriptures.”

(continued)

**The Watchtower Reprints, September 15, 1911,
p. 4885**

“No very clear understanding of the Bible was reached during all these centuries”

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"Rather we should seek for dependent Bible study, rather than for independent Bible study"

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"Any class leader who would make objection to a reference being made to THE WATCH TOWER or to STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES in connection with the discussion of any topic should properly be viewed with suspicion as a teacher.”

The Watchtower, July 1, 1943, p. 201

“The religious hierarchy of the Vatican, being unable to prevent the proclamation of God’s Word, further belittles Bible Study by the common people by ascribing to itself infallibility and by claiming that it is the only organization authorized and qualified to interpret the Bible.”

The Watchtower, May 1, 1957, p. 274

“The world is full of Bibles, which Book contains the commandments of God. Why, then, do the people not know which way to go? Because they do not also have the teaching or law of the mother, which is the light.”

(continued)

The Watchtower, August 15, 1981, p. 28-29

“They say that it is sufficient to read the Bible exclusively, either alone or in small groups at home. But, strangely, through such ‘Bible reading,’ they have reverted right back to the apostate doctrines that commentaries by Christendom’s clergy were teaching 100 years ago...”

The Watchtower, December 1, 1981, p. 27

“Unless we are in touch with this channel of communication that God is using, we will not progress along the road to life, no matter how much Bible reading we do...”

The Watchtower, March 1, 1983, p. 25

“They will declare that all one needs to do is to read the Bible. But Christendom has been reading the Bible for centuries. And look at the indistinct trumpet call coming from Christendom today! See the confusion and misunderstanding as to the true message contained in God’s Word!”

(done)

BLUE PRINT CHART ON SOFT CLOTH

We have the Blue-print Chart of the Ages, 36 inches by 60 inches, on soft cloth, which can be folded without breaking and which can be carried conveniently in the pocket—\$1 postpaid.

Likewise the Chronological Chart, 42 inches by 92 inches, also on soft cloth, at \$1.50 each, postpaid. This chart also can be folded without breaking and carried in the pocket.

"THAT SERVANT" AND "FELLOW-SERVANTS"

MATTHEW 24:45.

The application to us of the above text some fourteen years ago, styling us "that servant," came not from us, but from one who is now our bitter enemy and who claims that while we did occupy such position we have forfeited it, lost it, to a successor. We have taken no part in the discussion which followed. The bruited of the matter amongst our readers came from our opponents. We have refrained from any allusion to that particular Scripture, except upon two occasions when it seemed necessary: (1) In our general treatise of the entire twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew in "Dawn-Studies," Vol. IV., Chapter XII.; and (2) when this passage occurred in one of the International Sunday School Lessons. Of late, however, the violent opposition of our enemies has aroused many of our friends to an examination of the subject. As a result, the question has become an important one in the church. Our friends insist that this Scripture indicates that in the end of this Gospel age the Lord would use not many channels for the dissemination of the truth, but one channel, and that it would be the privilege of others of the Lord's faithful ones to be "fellow-servants" (co-laborers). They insist that the facts connected with this harvest time abundantly substantiate this interpretation. They hold that all of them received their knowledge of present truth directly from the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society's publications, or indirectly through those who have received their enlightenment through this channel. They are glad correspondingly to co-operate as "fellow-servants" with the Society's work, believing that thereby they are following the leadings of the divine providence, as well as the instructions of the divine Word. They believe that such as do otherwise, oppose the divine word, antagonize the harvest work, and will bring injury upon themselves.

Our opponents are often bitter and sarcastic after taking the antagonistic position. They retort that the expression "that servant" should be understood to mean all the members of the church of Christ, and that the expression, "his fellow-servants," is meaningless, because it refers to the same class. They declare that although it is true that they got their first enlightenment respecting the value of Christ's death as a "ransom for all," and their first knowledge of the "times of restitution of all things," and their first appreciation of the "high calling," and their first knowledge of the parousia and the harvest time of this age, and their first knowledge of the fulfilment of prophecies in connection with this harvest time, and their first understanding of the nature of man and the work of redemption, atonement and regeneration from this Society's publications, nevertheless they are of the opinion that all of these things were previously published by others, and they are seeking to find the books. They claim further that to apply this Scripture to us would signify that we are infallible.

Our friends reply that the Society has never made any claim to infallibility; that its publications are not written in that style; that they merely lay before their readers the Scriptures and show their meaning from the Scriptures, and leave the lesson or conclusion with each reader's own judgment. Further, they declare that if any book or set of books presents the divine plan of the ages and the Scriptural interpretation set forth in the "Dawn-Studies" and other publications of the Society, they have never seen them, never heard of them, and do not believe that they exist, but would pay a handsome price for the loan of a copy. They point out that "The Watch Tower" never claimed to have originated the doctrines of election and free grace, justification and sanctification, restitution, baptism, etc. They point out, indeed, that it is well known to everybody that thousands of books have been published on these subjects, some of them centuries ago; but they also point out that none of these subjects was ever presented as now in the Society's publications; that these presentations of the past, instead of being enlightening, darken the understanding and confuse the head and heart and contradict each other, and that, on the contrary, all of these subjects in the Society's publications, are harmonized and unified as none would ever have supposed to be possible.

They point out that to attribute this harmony to human wisdom or to accident would be absurd; that it would be giving too much honor to any human being to suppose that after eighteen centuries of Christian conflict, passion and persecution because of inharmonies of understanding, any human being without special divine aid should now arise who could at one moving of the wand, as it were, bring harmony and reason, beauty and light out of and into every part of God's Word. They declare that such a view would be much more difficult to take than that

which they have adopted, based upon their understanding of Matthew 24:45 and co-related events of this harvest time. They declare that, to their judgments, there is no other interpretation of the facts before us than that presented in our Lord's promise; that at the appropriate time in the end of the age, in the time of his presence, he would bring forth from the storehouse of Grace, Wisdom and Truth things "new and old," and that he would select at that time one special channel through which those blessings would be called to the attention of the household of faith—indicating also that a privilege would be granted to others who might join the service as "fellow-servants." They point out that such as have thus become "fellow-servants" have been blest and used in the harvest work, whilst others opposing have gone into the "outer-darkness" of nominalism as respects "harvest" truth and its service.

They point to the fact that many ministers and Bible students repudiate and condemn the Society's publications on the very score that it is absurd to expect at this day a complete harmony of the teachings of the Bible, which have been fought over by the learned of the church for centuries, and refuse, therefore, to examine the divine plan of the ages, preferring to turn to the Evolution theory and Higher Criticism views of the Bible, saying that it consists of a parcel of "old wives' fables," which cannot be harmonized with themselves nor with reason.

Our opponents, unable to answer, are made correspondingly angry. Some of them fight the Society's publications publicly, while they study them privately for Scriptural interpretations which they can parade as their own and as proof that the Lord is not using one channel only, "that servant," for the bringing forth of the meat in due season to the household of faith. Others, more crafty, indirectly discourage the use of the Society's publications while, in a sense, praising them, and, if questioned, are obliged to acknowledge that the Society's literature was the channel through which the Lord sent them practically all that they know about the Bible and the divine purposes. They seek to turn the minds of the enlightened ones in another direction by telling them that "each should dig" the jewels of divine truth for himself; that the Society's publications merely gave them the start on which now they should improve, so that eventually its teachings would be far in the background. These disloyal "fellow-servants" suggest further that there is danger of worshipping the Society and that to avoid so doing it is practically necessary to give it a kick or to turn their backs upon it. They say, Let us have a Bible study, but let us exclude the Society's publications! Let us give the impression that we are great Bible students and teachers who dug these Truths for ourselves. But let us put the matter more plausibly and more humbly by claiming that our only desire is to exalt God's Word and to study it alone!

Our friends reply that they are in no danger of worshipping the Society or anybody else; that their experience in man-worship and sect-worship are things of the past. They declare that they were led out of those forms of idolatry and into the proper reverence and worship of God and his Word by the Society's publications and no others, and that they have never heard of any teachings which, in so clear and unmistakable language, guard the Lord's people against every form of man-worship, sect-worship, etc., and that no others so fully and thoroughly set forth the rights and liberties of the Lord's people as against the enslaving tendencies of the great Adversary and bishops, ministers and elders. They hold that Vol. VI. of "Dawn-Studies" is disliked on this very account by some who are desirous of "lording it over God's heritage." They point out that they themselves and their forefathers for generations had Bible classes and Bible studies all to no purpose until the Lord, in due time, sent them the "Bible Keys," through the Society. They point out that to ignore this leading of the Lord and to exclude from their study of the Bible the teacher sent of the Lord would be to dishonor the Lord who sent the same and to reject His helping hand; and that the only result that could be expected of such a course would be a gradual loss of light—a proportionate loss of the holy Spirit, the Spirit of the truth, and eventually to reach the "outer darkness" of the world and the nominal-church, from which they were rescued by the truth. They declare that this would correspond to a sow returning to her wallowing in the mire and the dog to his vomit, as the Apostle declares. They declare that to take such a course, to them would mean a lack of appreciation of having been called out of darkness into this marvelous light, a lack of appreciation of the light of "the day star" promised by the Lord as a precursory of

time, in the ending of this age, that we are favored with such a clear unfolding of spiritual things. It is also our thought that present blessings of a temporal kind, such as the electric light, are due for similar reasons. We believe that any other explanation would confer too great honor upon the individual connected with the production. The very ablest minds in the world have examined these subjects, but now, by God's grace, we have come to the place where the veil is taken away and where we can see the real meaning of God's Word—not merely one person can see it, but hundreds, thousands, see it.

We think that we get the right conception to thus view it rather than to think that we had some great power which enabled us to put together a great system of theology, more wonderful than all other systems of theology put together—a thousand times more wonderful. Therefore, the simplest way to explain the matter is to acknowledge that the Lord's due time has come and that he has guided to the right understanding.

If, then, the Lord has provided us with something in our day that other days than those of the Apostles knew nothing about, no matter how good nor how wise they were—for us to ignore the line of teaching which has been thus developed would be, in our judgment, to ignore the Lord's providences. It is for each one to think for himself, however, and to guide his conduct in every way accordingly.

If the six volumes of SCRIPTURE STUDIES are practically the Bible topically arranged, with Bible proof-texts given, we might not improperly name the volumes—the Bible in an arranged form. That is to say, they are not merely comments on the Bible, but they are practically the Bible itself, since there is no desire to build any doctrine or thought on any individual preference or on any individual wisdom, but to present the entire matter on the lines of the Word of God. We therefore think it safe to follow this kind of reading, this kind of instruction, this kind of Bible study.

Furthermore, not only do we find that people cannot see the divine plan in studying the Bible by itself, but we see, also, that if anyone lays the SCRIPTURE STUDIES aside, even after he has used them, after he has become familiar with them, after he has read them for ten years—if he then lays them aside and ignores them and goes to the Bible alone, though he has understood his Bible for ten years, our experience shows that within two years he goes into darkness. On the other hand, if he had merely read the SCRIPTURE STUDIES with their references, and had not read a page of the Bible, as such, he would be in the light at the end of the two years, because he would have the light of the Scriptures.

Our thought, therefore, is that these SCRIPTURE STUDIES are a great assistance, a very valuable help, in the understanding of God's Word. If these books are to be of any value to us it must be because we see in them loyalty to the Word of God, and as far as our judgment goes, see them to be in full harmony with the Word and not antagonistic to it. Therefore, in reading them the first time, and perhaps the second time, and before we would accept anything as being our own personal faith and conviction, we should say, "I will not take it because these studies say so; I wish to see what the Bible says." And so we would study the Scriptures in the light of these SCRIPTURE STUDIES; we would prove every point, or disprove it, as the case might be. We would be satisfied with nothing less than a thorough investigation of the Bible from this standpoint.

If, after doing that, we should find the books to be in accord with the Bible, then we would think we were logical in saying, "I will not need to go through that process now every time that I read the SCRIPTURE STUDIES, for I have looked up those texts of Scripture and know certainly that the New Testament proves all those points." If, at the same time, in any future reading, we should come to a place where something did not seem clear to us and we thought of some Scripture which seemed not as harmonious with it as we had previously thought, we would think it our duty to refer at once to the Scriptures, because the Scriptures are the standard, and in that reference to the Scripture it would be with a view to discerning whether or not we had been mistaken in our previous examinations.

"THEY SHALL BE ALL TAUGHT OF GOD"

We would conclude, practically, that we could not understand anything about the Bible except as it was revealed. We would, therefore, not waste a great deal of time doing what we know some people do, reading chapter after chapter, to no profit. We would not think of doing it. We would not think we were studying the Scriptures at all. We would think we were following the course that had been anything but profitable to ourselves and many others in the past—merely reading over the Scriptures. We would say that the same Heavenly

Father who had guided us to this truth, to this understanding of the Scriptures as his children, if he had some further information for us he would bring it to our attention in some manner; and therefore we would not see the necessity of reading the New Testament every day or every year; we would not consider that necessary. We would consider that the Scripture which says, "They shall be all taught of God," would imply that in his own appointed way God would bring to our attention whatever feature of divine truth would be "meat in due season for the household of faith."

Further, we would say that now, having satisfied ourselves respecting what the Divine Plan is, we would understand that we had reached the place that the Apostle speaks of as being a qualified ambassador of God, a qualified minister of the New Covenant, and that, as a servant or minister of the New Covenant, we now had a responsibility in making known these things that we had learned; that we were not put here primarily to read the Bible, but primarily to serve the Lord and his Truth. It was quite proper, however, that before we came to a knowledge of the Truth, and when we were in measurable discontent of mind as to what was the Truth, that we should refrain from telling anybody else.

We remember very well in our own personal experience that after we had tried some street preaching, etc., we came to the conclusion that there was something wrong; that we did not understand what we were trying to tell to others; that we did not understand with sufficient clearness to properly present it and make sure that we were representing the Lord and his message aright, and we said to ourself, "I will stop any endeavor to teach others until I know what I believe."

We think that should be the attitude of every one of us. Why should we attempt to preach or teach anything that we do not understand? So, after God favors us in this time with an understanding of Present Truth, he has given us a knowledge of more truth than we could have gained in a thousand years if we had read and studied unaided; and now we can attempt to present it to others. Why has he given us a knowledge of this Truth? He wishes us to be "thoroughly furnished unto every good word and work." Therefore, we should study that we may be able to speak the word of the Lord freely and know that we are not misrepresenting the divine purpose and plan and character; and we ought therefore to give the more earnest heed to the opportunities for service and consider that the information which has been given us has been given for the very purpose that we may impart it to others—to those brethren and sisters of the Lord's family, some of whom are in Babylon yet, honest at heart, perhaps, and very desirous of knowing the truth, though perhaps very much blinded as we once were.

"SCRIPTURE STUDIES" NOT A SUBSTITUTE FOR THE BIBLE

This is not, therefore, putting the SCRIPTURE STUDIES as a substitute for the Bible, because so far as substituting for the Bible, the STUDIES, on the contrary, continually refer to the Bible; and if one has any doubt as to a reference or if one's recollection should lapse in any degree, one should refresh his memory, and, in fact, should see that his every thought is in harmony with the Bible—not merely in accord with the SCRIPTURE STUDIES, but in accord with the Bible.

We might remark that quite a number of the friends in the Truth are making it a rule to read twelve pages of the SCRIPTURE STUDIES a day, and that we do not know one who has been following this course and making use of the various means of grace the Lord has provided (Dawn and testimony meetings and Sunday meetings and Pilgrim meetings and the Berean lessons, Manna text, etc.), who has gone out of the truth. We know a great many who, on the contrary, have been of the opinion that they knew these things long ago, while in fact they do not know half of what they did know—they have forgotten more than half of what they read and they are those who are now stumbling—going into outer darkness.

We are not wishing in this to say anything against one's poring over chapters that he does not understand and others do not understand, hoping that he might light on some truth. We have no objection to this. He has a perfect right to do so if he wishes. He has a right to spend weeks and years in this way if he chooses, but the chances even then are that when he does light on something he will have it all wrong.

Furthermore, we would suggest that merely reading twelve pages of the SCRIPTURE STUDIES would not be studying in the proper sense of the word—neither studying the Bible nor studying the SCRIPTURE STUDIES. A proper study would be to think of the meaning of every word and every sentence. The thought is, it is not to see how much one can read, but to make sure that one goes no further than he comprehends or understands, whether that means one page or twenty pages. We should not

(3) An expectation of divine guidance in the understanding of the Scriptures, even as God has promised, and, expecting this, they may seek for it in prayer.

(4) An exercise of their reasoning faculties that, while expecting and seeking, and looking in the direction of their expectations, they may thereby approve or disapprove what is presented to them.

(5) Great care as to how they neglect these favors of God. They should beware of headiness and high-mindedness, lest, having enjoyed the light and the blessing, these should slip from them and leave them again in the outer darkness in which we see the whole world of mankind groping.

To continue in the light and truth and blessing necessitates character-development, for the privilege of the light of knowledge is God's reward for purity of heart, of intention, of en-

deavor. So may we come into Christ and abide in him and bring forth much fruit.

HEROES OF ALL TIME BUILT THEREOF

"It takes great love to stir a human heart
To live beyond the others, and apart;
A love that is not shallow—is not small;
Is not for one or two, but for them all.
Love that can wound love, for its highest need;
Love that can leave love, though the heart may bleed;
Love that can lose love, family and friend,
Yet steadfastly live, loving to the end.
A love that asks no answer, that can live,
Moved by one burning, deathless force—to give!
Love, strength and courage; courage, strength and love—
The heroes of all time are built thereof."

INDEPENDENT BIBLE STUDY

A brother writes for our opinion respecting the wisdom and propriety of the different classes having "independent Bible study."

We cannot be sure just what force or significance the brother gives to the word independent. Just so sure as each individual has a full right to study the Bible without hindrance from anybody, so has every class this right or liberty. But in using our liberties it behooves us to exercise as much "wisdom from above" as possible. For four centuries Protestantism has been contending the right of private judgment for interpretation of God's Word and has exercised this right, and we would be the last to dispute it. At the same time two things are worthy of remembrance:—

(1) There has been very little independent Bible study all this time.

(2) No very clear understanding of the Bible was reached during all these centuries. We account for this by supposing that the Lord's due time for opening His Word to our understanding has only now come. If now the Lord has blessed us with clearer views of his Word, it behooves us to remember that we did not get it because of the four hundred years of independent Bible study, but by his specially calling it to our attention in his own peculiar way in recent years. Wisdom no less than humility should teach us to be neither too boastful nor too reckless in our use of the word independent in connection with this question. While we have the same right to independence that our forefathers had it might do us no more good than it did them. Rather we should seek for dependent Bible study, rather than for independent Bible

study. Our dependence should not be upon man, but upon the Lord; yet we should expect the Lord to use human instrumentality in the present, as in the past.

The matter is for each individual Christian and each class of students to decide. The Lord has laid down no law on the subject. His children are to use the "wisdom which comes from above" in respect to these and all matters.

The questioner may mean to distinguish between the use of Berean Studies or topics from the topical index of our new Bibles and the taking up of a chapter or an Epistle without any guide or help, except such as would be given by the leader of the class and its members. If so, much would depend on the personnel of the class and their development in the knowledge of the truth. It is for the class to decide for itself every particular respecting its meetings. And should a class so decide they would have a perfect right to try different methods and to judge which proved the most helpful.

In any event those possessed of the new Bible study helps could follow nearly any lesson in the New Testament by noting the references and studying them and, if desirable, bringing them into the class. Any class leader who would make objection to a reference being made to THE WATCH TOWER or to STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES in connection with the discussion of any topic should properly be viewed with suspicion as a teacher. Why should he be afraid of any comment, from any quarter? And, especially, why should he fear or avoid or desire others to avoid any reference to the writings which God has used in giving him and the others instruction in the Scriptures?

BROTHER RUSSELL IN GREAT BRITAIN

Thursday,	Oct.	12	.....	London Albert Hall.
Sunday,	Oct.	15	.....	London Tabernacle.
Tuesday,	Oct.	17	.....	Brighton.
Wednesday,	Oct.	18	.....	Portsmouth.
Thursday,	Oct.	19	.....	Southampton.
Friday,	Oct.	20	.....	Bournemouth.
Sunday,	Oct.	22	.....	London Tabernacle.
Tuesday,	Oct.	24	.....	Perth.
Wednesday,	Oct.	25	.....	Dundee.
Thursday,	Oct.	26	.....	Paisley.
Friday,	Oct.	27	.....	Greenock.
Saturday,	Oct.	28	.....	Glasgow.
Sunday,	Oct.	29	.....	Glasgow.
Monday,	Oct.	30	.....	Motherwell.
Tuesday,	Oct.	31	.....	Belfast.

Wednesday,	Nov.	1	.....	Londonderry.
Thursday,	Nov.	2	.....	Portadown.
Friday,	Nov.	3	.....	Dublin.
Sunday,	Nov.	5	.....	London Tabernacle.
Monday,	Nov.	6	.....	Cambridge.
Tuesday,	Nov.	7	.....	Oxford.
Wednesday,	Nov.	8	.....	Newport.
Thursday,	Nov.	9	.....	Cardiff.
Friday,	Nov.	10	.....	Swansea.
Sunday,	Nov.	12	.....	London Tabernacle.
Monday,	Nov.	13	.....	Northampton.
Tuesday,	Nov.	14	.....	Leicester.
Wednesday,	Nov.	15	.....	Nottingham.
Thursday,	Nov.	16	.....	Sheffield.
Friday,	Nov.	17	.....	London Tabernacle.

SOME INTERESTING LETTERS

Dear Brother Russell:—

It is with joy and thanksgiving that we report the first public meeting at this place.

There were forty-one present. Brother Sturgeon's discourse on "Where Are the Dead?" was heard with excellent attention. One lady has since attended several meetings.

During the army maneuvers last week the leader of our class gave shelter to many of the soldiers who were drenched with rain, and almost exhausted from a forced march. The family remained up all night, serving hot coffee and a lunch, the soldiers having been without food about twenty hours. The men slept on the floors while their clothing was dried by the fire. Their offer to pay was declined, as the family considered it a privilege as Christians to do these things.

When they marched away to the town the brother went with them. The sight of a church drew forth from an officer

a slighting remark. The brother said he was an ambassador for Christ and could also serve them in that way. The officer called the men to "attention," and on the street the brother gave them a talk on "Restitution," which was very well received by the men.
AMY M. CLOTHEY.—Mass.

TESTIMONY MEETINGS—VOLUNTEER WORK

Dearest Brother Russell:—

Inclosed find report for the first half of June. Praise the Lord! The work goes forward with great force. To say marvelous results are being accomplished now would be to put it mildly. Oh, how thankful we are and should be, and how diligent we all should be during these closing moments that no stone be left unturned by us to forward our own part of this glorious work! Surely everyone of the Lord's dear ones has a part, if it is only to patiently endure the weakness of

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Wednesday, Oct. 18.....	Portsmouth.	Sunday, Nov. 5.....	London Tabernacle.
Thursday, Oct. 19.....	Southampton.	Monday, Nov. 6.....	Cambridge.
Friday, Oct. 20.....	Bournemouth.	Tuesday, Nov. 7.....	Oxford.
Sunday, Oct. 22.....	London Tabernacle.	Wednesday, Nov. 8.....	Newport.
Tuesday, Oct. 24.....	Perth.	Thursday, Nov. 9.....	Cardiff.
Wednesday, Oct. 25.....	Dundee.	Friday, Nov. 10.....	Swansea.
Thursday, Oct. 26.....	Paisley.	Sunday, Nov. 12.....	London Tabernacle.
Friday, Oct. 27.....	Greenock.	Monday, Nov. 13.....	Northampton.
Saturday, Oct. 28.....	Glasgow.	Tuesday, Nov. 14.....	Leicester.
Sunday, Oct. 29.....	Glasgow.	Wednesday, Nov. 15.....	Nottingham.
Monday, Oct. 30.....	Motherwell.	Thursday, Nov. 16.....	Sheffield.
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TESTIMONY MEETINGS—VOLUNTEER WORK

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Inclosed find report for the first half of June. Praise the Lord! The work goes forward with great force. To say marvelous results are being accomplished now would be to put it mildly. Oh, how thankful we are and should be, and how diligent we all should be during these closing moments that no stone be left unturned by us to forward our own part of this glorious work! Surely everyone of the Lord's dear ones has a part, if it is only to patiently endure the weakness of

(3) An expectation of divine guidance in the understanding of the Scriptures, even as God has promised, and, expecting this, they may seek for it in prayer.

(4) An exercise of their reasoning faculties that, while expecting and seeking, and looking in the direction of their expectations, they may thereby approve or disapprove what is presented to them.

(5) Great care as to how they neglect these favors of God. They should beware of headiness and high-mindedness, lest, having enjoyed the light and the blessing, these should slip from them and leave them again in the outer darkness in which we see the whole world of mankind groping.

To continue in the light and truth and blessing necessitates character-development, for the privilege of the light of knowledge is God's reward for purity of heart, of intention, of en-

deavor. So may we come into Christ and abide in him and bring forth much fruit.

HEROES OF ALL TIME BUILT THEREOF

"It takes great love to stir a human heart
To live beyond the others, and apart;
A love that is not shallow—is not small;
Is not for one or two, but for them all.
Love that can wound love, for its highest need;
Love that can leave love, though the heart may bleed;
Love that can lose love, family and friend,
Yet steadfastly live, loving to the end.
A love that asks no answer, that can live,
Moved by one burning, deathless force—to give!
Love, strength and courage; courage, strength and love—
The heroes of all time are built thereof."

INDEPENDENT BIBLE STUDY

A brother writes for our opinion respecting the wisdom and propriety of the different classes having "independent Bible study."

We cannot be sure just what force or significance the brother gives to the word independent. Just so sure as each individual has a full right to study the Bible without hindrance from anybody, so has every class this right or liberty. But in using our liberties it behooves us to exercise as much "wisdom from above" as possible. For four centuries Protestantism has been contending the right of private judgment for interpretation of God's Word and has exercised this right, and we would be the last to dispute it. At the same time two things are worthy of remembrance:—

(1) There has been very little independent Bible study all this time.

(2) No very clear understanding of the Bible was reached during all these centuries. We account for this by supposing that the Lord's due time for opening His Word to our understanding has only now come. If now the Lord has blessed us with clearer views of His Word, it behooves us to remember that we did not get it because of the four hundred years of independent Bible study, but by his specially calling it to our attention in his own peculiar way in recent years. Wisdom no less than humility should teach us to be neither too boastful nor too reckless in our use of the word independent in connection with this question. While we have the same right to independence that our forefathers had it might do us no more good than it did them. Rather we should seek for dependent Bible study, rather than for independent Bible

study. Our dependance should not be upon man, but upon the Lord; yet we should expect the Lord to use human instrumentality in the present, as in the past.

The matter is for each individual Christian and each class of students to decide. The Lord has laid down no law on the subject. His children are to use the "wisdom which comes from above" in respect to these and all matters.

The questioner may mean to distinguish between the use of Berean Studies or topics from the topical index of our new Bibles and the taking up of a chapter or an Epistle without any guide or help, except such as would be given by the leader of the class and its members. If so, much would depend on the personnel of the class and their development in the knowledge of the truth. It is for the class to decide for itself every particular respecting its meetings. And should a class so decide they would have a perfect right to try different methods and to judge which proved the most helpful.

In any event those possessed of the new Bible study helps could follow nearly any lesson in the New Testament by noting the references and studying them and, if desirable, bringing them into the class. Any class leader who would make objection to a reference being made to THE WATCH TOWER or to STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES in connection with the discussion of any topic should properly be viewed with suspicion as a teacher. Why should he be afraid of any comment, from any quarter? And, especially, why should he fear or avoid or desire others to avoid any reference to the writings which God has used in giving him and the others instruction in the Scriptures?

BROTHER RUSSELL IN GREAT BRITAIN

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Sunday,	Oct.	15	London Tabernacle.
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Thursday,	Oct.	19	Southampton.
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HIGHEST TRIBUNAL OF INTERPRETATION

²⁷ Since the invention of printing from movable type in the fifteenth century, and since the rise of Bible publishing and distributing societies from and after the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Bible has been circulated in more than a thousand popular languages all over the earth by the hundreds of millions of copies. Particularly from and after A.D. 1918 Jehovah's witnesses, by the use of the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society as their publishing agency, have spread the printed explanations of the Bible throughout the earth in over eighty different languages by the hundreds of millions of copies of books, booklets, magazines and tracts, and by use of scores of radio transmitters and also phonographically recorded Bible lectures. The religious hierarchy of the Vatican, being unable to prevent the proclamation of God's Word, further belittles Bible study by the common people by ascribing to itself infallibility and by claiming that it is the only organization authorized and qualified to interpret the Bible. In support of such religious assumption the late Cardinal Gibbons, in his widely circulated book *The Faith of Our Fathers*, writes, in Chapter XI, entitled "Infallibility of the Popes", the following:

"In a word, the Sovereign Pontiff is to the Church, though in a more eminent degree, what the Supreme Court is to the United States. We have an instrument called the Constitution of the United States, which is the charter of our civil rights and liberties. If a controversy arise regarding a constitutional clause, the question is referred in the last resort, to the Supreme Court at Washington. The Chief Justice, with his associate judges, examines into the case and then pronounces judgment upon it; and this decision is final, irrevocable and practically infallible. If there were no such court to settle constitutional questions, the Constitution itself would soon become a dead letter. Every litigant would conscientiously decide the dispute in his own favor and anarchy, separation and civil war would soon follow. But by means of this Supreme Court disputes are ended, and the political union of the States is perpetuated. . . . The revealed Word of God is the constitution of the Church. This is the Magna Charta of our Christian liberties. The Pope is the official guardian of our religious constitution, as the Chief Justice is the guardian of our civil constitution."—Pages 124, 125, Eighty-third Edition.

²⁸ The above comparison of the religious hierarchy with the Supreme Court of the American democracy does not hold true. Also the Hierarchy's reference

27. (a) From and after the invention of printing from type, what work has been accomplished with God's message in print? (b) In view of the foregoing, how does the Hierarchy try to belittle private Bible study, and what comparison with itself does the Hierarchy make in this behalf? 28. What are three important points on which the Hierarchy's comparison does not hold true?

to itself as the "divinely-established supreme tribunal" in the matter of interpretation of the Bible is unscriptural. On this issue be these points observed: (1) The Supreme Court is a creature of the Constitution of the United States, by the Article III, Section I, thereof. In contrast with that, the religious hierarchy of Vatican City is not a creature of God's revealed Word, the Bible; for the Bible condemns religion and is the foe of any hierarchy of religious leaders. (1 Pet. 5:1-4) The Bible existed before Christ's church, and existed still longer before the religious hierarchy, whereas the Hierarchy claims it existed before the Bible. (2) The Supreme Court does not take larger powers than the Constitution allows it. The Hierarchy, however, assumes to itself powers in heaven, earth and hell, including a so-called "Purgatory", which powers are unscriptural, being based on the wresting of some scriptures and upon the unfounded traditions of religious fathers of the Hierarchy. (3) The Supreme Court magnifies the Constitution, contends for its preservation, clarifies its meaning, and encourages a study of it by all the citizenry of the nation. The Hierarchy, though, weakens the authority and unique position of the Bible. It declares that the Bible is not sufficient and contains only the partial truth, and that it must be filled out by ecclesiastical traditions, and that hence Scripture and tradition jointly constitute the rule of faith; also that the decisions of the pope from his seat of authority in matters of faith and morals are of equal authority with the Bible and are infallible.

²⁹ No religious or other organization has tried harder than the Hierarchy to keep the Bible from the people and to prevent or discourage Bible study. Countless burnings both of Bibles and of students of the Bible are listed in the criminal record of the Hierarchy. As late as A.D. 1940 the Nazi-Fascist-religious dictator of Spain did, with the Hierarchy's approval, cause 110,000 copies of the Bible, which were sent to Spain for distribution, to be destroyed and ground to pulp. (N.Y. *Times*, October 6, 1940)

³⁰ Finally, (4) the Supreme Court is obligated to abide by the Constitution and to rule against any and all violations of it; and it cannot abrogate, annul, abolish or repeal that document. On the other hand, the Hierarchy does not abide by the Bible, but makes it null and void by adopting traditions of man and also the rites, ceremonies and paraphernalia of demonism. It opposes and seeks to destroy all those who faithfully obey and publish the truths and commandments of the Bible. Certainly, then, no such religious system could reasonably be infallible like

29. What record, even till as late as 1940, shows up the effort of the Hierarchy to keep out the Bible and its study? 30. On what fourth point does comparison of the Hierarchy with the Supreme Court not hold true?

picture of the old world's children in Christendom.—2 Cor. 3:15; 4:4, 6.

² What a contrast when we look at the children of the New World society of Jehovah's witnesses! They carry a lamp too, the same lamp in fact, God's written Word. But as it is written in Psalm 119:105 (AS): "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and light unto my path." Why is it they have light whereas the children of Christendom do not? Both have the same lamp, God's Word, the Bible. Where is the difference? The answer is that they looked with unveiled faces at the gleaming Word of the heavenly Father and they also accepted enlightening instruction through his motherly organization. As it is written at Proverbs 6:20, 23 (RS): "My son, keep your father's commandment, and forsake not your mother's teaching. For the commandment is a lamp and the teaching a light, and the reproofs of discipline are the way of life."

³ Consider that for a moment. Two things are mentioned: the commandment of the father and the teaching or law of the mother. Then the proverb explains that the commandment of the father is a burning lamp but that there is light also from the teaching or law of the mother. The world is full of Bibles, which Book contains the commandments of God. Why, then, do the people not know which way to go? Because they do not also have the teaching or law of the mother, which is light. Jehovah God has provided his holy written Word for all mankind and it contains all the information that is needed for men in taking a course leading to life. But God has not arranged for that Word to speak independently or to shine forth life-giving truths by itself. His Word says: "Light is sown for the righteous." (Ps. 97:11) It is

2. In what significant way do the New World society's children differ from Christendom's?
3. What is required of those who would have light from the Bible?

through his organization that God provides this light that the proverb says is the teaching or law of the mother. If we are to walk in the light of truth we must recognize not only Jehovah God as our Father but his organization as our mother.

⁴ Some who call themselves Christians and who claim God as their Father boast that they walk with God alone, that he directs their steps personally. Such persons not only forsake the teaching or law of the mother, but they literally throw God's woman out into the streets. The light of God's truth is not for them. In the nation of Israel Jehovah made obedience to parents mandatory. "Honor your father and your mother" was the fifth commandment of the Ten. (Ex. 20:2-17; Deut. 5:16, NW) The reward for obedience was long life; for disobedience, death. "In case a man should happen to have a son who is stubborn and rebellious, he not listening to the voice of his father or the voice of his mother, and they have corrected him but he will not listen to them, then . . . all the men of his city must stone him with stones and he must die." (Deut. 21:18-21, NW) Such honor and obedience was required not only as due the immediate parents in the flesh but also as rightfully belonging to the older men of influence in Israel. Failure to render such proper respect to Elisha, the prophet of Jehovah, brought upon a gang of juvenile delinquents the just sentence of speedy execution. (2 Ki. 2:24) Today, also, God requires and exacts from his children obedience, honor and respect. These must be rendered not only to the living God himself, but to his wifely organization as well.

IDENTIFYING THE MOTHER ORGANIZATION

⁵ The real mother of Christians is not

4. To what extent were the Israelites required to honor father and mother? and to what extent are Christians today?
5. How does Paul identify the true mother of Christians?

¹¹ What, then, is this change to a "pure language"? It is a turning to the message of truth, the refreshing "good news," the "pattern of healthful words," that speaks in praise of Jehovah and his righteous purposes by Christ Jesus. (2 Tim. 1:13) This "pure language" unifies them. And it testifies that, in the epoch-marking year 1914, "the kingdom of the world did become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will rule as king forever and ever." (Rev. 11:15) Taking this message upon their lips, true Christians worldwide "call upon the name of Jehovah" in dedication, harmoniously rendering him "sacred service." As the only truly united people on earth, they go to the homes of the people, heralding forth the "good news" of Jehovah's established kingdom. Thus they serve Jehovah "shoulder to shoulder." (Matt. 24:14; Rom. 12:1) Are you one who has thus separated yourself from the world, to serve God zealously in dedication to Him? It is by thus working along with Jehovah's organized people that you may "get away safe."—Joel 2:32; see also Hosea 14:1, 2; Hebrews 13:15.

¹² The "change to a pure language" has been hard for some to make. It is not easy to come out of the world, with its easy-going, permissive ways, and to make the sacrifices necessary for 'calling upon the name of Jehovah.' It has required our getting rid of wrong thoughts, bad habits and self-seeking, loose ways of life, in order to conform to the clean, worthwhile standards of God's own people. (Eph. 4:17, 18, 29; 1 Pet. 4:3) It has required our giving proper recognition to the one organization that Jehovah is using in the earth today, and this by our associating

11. (a) What "pure language" is heard today? (b) How extensively is this "language" being spoken? (c) How do those speaking it "call upon the name of Jehovah," and with what result?

12, 13. (a) What problems may be involved in learning this "language"? (b) Why is meekness required in serving "shoulder to shoulder"? (c) How may we cultivate the quality of meekness?

with the "faithful and discreet slave." It has required meekness, in our "carefully examining" God's Word with the aid of that 'slave's' publications, in order to fortify our faith.—Matt. 24:45; Acts 17:11.

¹³ In serving Jehovah "shoulder to shoulder," we need, as Zephaniah so often emphasizes, to cultivate the quality of meekness. When we make mistakes, as all imperfect humans do, let us be ready to acknowledge them, even as the "faithful and discreet slave," made up of imperfect fleshly men, has had to make corrections. However, let us never be critical of the grand body of truth that Jehovah has built up among his united people over the past 100 years, and which, by correction and adjustment, has come to shine ever more brightly on "the path of the righteous ones."—Prov. 4:18.

¹⁴ From time to time, there have arisen from among the ranks of Jehovah's people those who, like the original Satan, have adopted an independent, faultfinding attitude. They do not want to serve "shoulder to shoulder" with the worldwide brotherhood. (Compare Ephesians 2:19-22.) Rather, they present a "stubborn shoulder" to Jehovah's words. (Zech. 7:11, 12) Reviling the pattern of the "pure language" that Jehovah has so graciously taught his people over the past century, these haughty ones try to draw the "sheep" away from the one international "flock" that Jesus has gathered in the earth. (John 10:7-10, 16) They try to sow doubts and to separate unsuspecting ones from the bounteous "table" of spiritual food spread at the Kingdom Halls of Jehovah's Witnesses, where truly there is 'nothing lacking.' (Ps. 23:1-6) They say that it is sufficient to read the Bible exclusively, either alone or in small groups at home. But,

14. (a) What attitude is the opposite of meekness, and how is it displayed? (b) How do such haughty ones proceed, and what warnings should we heed? (c) Where will we find 'nothing lacking'?

strangely, through such 'Bible reading,' they have reverted right back to the apostate doctrines that commentaries by Christendom's clergy were teaching 100 years ago, and some have even returned to celebrating Christendom's festivals again, such as the Roman Saturnalia of December 25! Jesus and his apostles warned against such lawless ones.—Matt. 24:11-13; Acts 20:28-30; 2 Pet. 2:1, 22.

¹⁵ Through his prophet Zephaniah, Jehovah tells His people how He will dispose of those who shamelessly try to sow discord in His earthly organization, saying:

"I shall remove from the midst of you your haughtily exultant ones; and you will never again be haughty in my holy mountain."

In happy contrast, Jehovah says:

"I shall certainly let remain in the midst of you a people humble and lowly, and they will actually take refuge in the name of Jehovah." (Zeph. 3:11, 12)

Yes, these are the meek ones, who work "shoulder to shoulder" as they engage in "the holy work of the good news." (Rom. 15:15, 16) They are not too proud to do the lowly work of calling from house to house after the pattern that Jesus' disciples learned from the Master. (Matt. 10:5-13; Luke 9:2-6; Acts 5:42) Taking refuge in Jehovah's name, they proclaim that glorious name and his purpose to vindicate it by the triumphant kingdom of his Christ. (Ezek. 38:23; Dan. 2:44) As Jehovah's people serve and live according to his righteousness, they are confident that "there will be no one making them tremble." (Zeph. 3:13) They enjoy true peace of mind!

A TIME FOR JOYFUL ACTIVITY

¹⁶ Zephaniah himself is made glad by

15. (a) How does Jehovah act with regard to "haughty" ones? (b) How are the "people humble and lowly" identified? (c) What assurance does Jehovah give these?
16. (a) How does Zephaniah express his own gladness? (b) What prophetic call has been answered today, and by whom?



such assurance from Jehovah, so that he calls on God's people, saying:

"Joyfully cry out, O daughter of Zion! Break out in cheers, O Israel! Rejoice and exult with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem! Jehovah has removed the judgments upon you. He has turned away your enemy. The king of Israel, Jehovah, is in the midst of you. You will fear calamity no more." (Zeph. 3:14, 15)

Since 1919, when they were released from spiritual captivity to Babylon the Great, the anointed witnesses of Jehovah have served him "shoulder to shoulder" in giving joyful public testimony. Jehovah has judged and approved these children of the heavenly Jerusalem. (Gal. 4:26; 1 Pet. 4:

the pathway that Jehovah's servants must tread.—2 Sam. 23:3, 4.

² However, it may have seemed to some as though that path has not always gone straight forward. At times explanations given by Jehovah's visible organization have shown adjustments, seemingly to previous points of view. But this has not actually been the case. This might be compared to what is known in navigational circles as "tacking." By maneuvering the sails the sailors can cause a ship to go from right to left, back and forth, but all the time making progress toward their destination in spite of contrary winds. And that goal in view for Jehovah's servants is the "new heavens and a new earth" of God's promise.—2 Pet. 3:13.

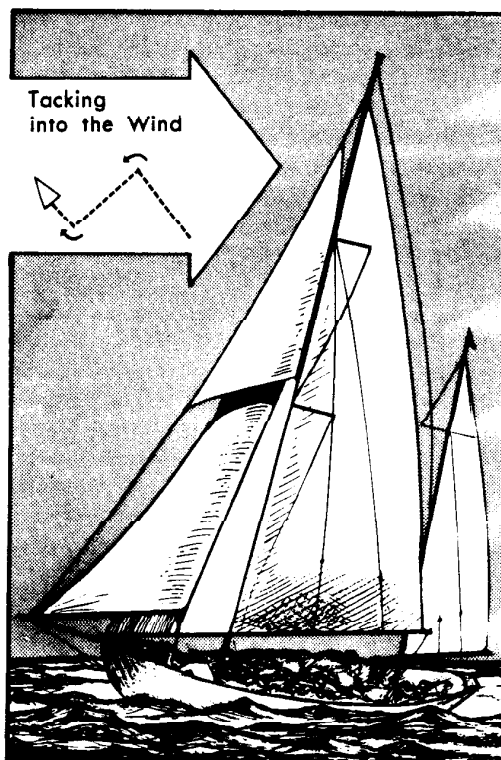
³ There is no question that Jehovah God is continuing to bless the global activity of his witnesses, as directed by the "faithful and discreet slave." This can be seen by the fruits. Remember, Jesus said: "Every good tree produces fine fruit." And such righteous fruits are to be seen internationally today in one people only—the united, global society of Jehovah's Witnesses.—Matt. 7:17.

⁴ No matter where we may live on earth, God's Word continues to serve as a light to our path and a lamp to our roadway as to our conduct and beliefs. (Ps. 119:105) But Jehovah God has also provided his visible organization, his "faithful and discreet slave," made up of spirit-anointed ones, to help Christians in all nations to understand and apply properly the Bible in their lives. Unless we are in touch with this channel of communication that God is using, we will not progress along the road to life, no matter how much Bible reading we do.—Compare Acts 8:30-40.

2. How may we regard periodic adjustments in viewpoint?

3. What evidence is there that Jehovah is continuing to bless his witnesses?

4. 5. In addition to his inspired Word, what other instrument has Jehovah God used to guide his people?



⁵ Regarding God's channel of communication, Jesus said that the "faithful and discreet slave" would provide spiritual nourishment at the right time for all his followers and that he would set this "slave" over all his belongings. (Matt. 24:45-47) It is also noteworthy that the apostle Paul, at Ephesians 4:11-16, indicated that the Christian congregation needed not only such inspired instruments as apostles and prophets but also evangelizers, shepherds and teachers to help Christians to arrive at the oneness in the faith and the accurate knowledge of the Son of God, and to gain full spiritual maturity.—See also 1 Corinthians 1:10; Philippians 1:9-11.

⁶ This "faithful and discreet slave,"

6. Because of what factors has it been necessary at times to reevaluate viewpoints?

their dedication to Jehovah. The thought is conveyed that since Jehovah is such a loving God, he surely would not require all those wanting to please him to engage in such a difficult work as preaching from house to house and having to endure the persecution from opposers of the truth. No, they may argue, all that God wants us to do is to be good persons, care for others in a physical way and love our neighbors.

¹⁵ This subtle approach can be difficult for some to cope with. It is true that Jehovah is loving and that he wants us to be good persons. He certainly wants Christians to demonstrate love for their neighbors by treating others in a kind way and by caring for their physical needs when that is necessary. (Luke 6: 35, 36) But that is not all! Those who oppose often forget that our Father Jehovah has also said—principally through his Son, Jesus Christ—that we should be disciple makers, teaching people, preaching the “good news of the kingdom” in all the world for a witness.—Matthew 24:14; John 15:17-27.

¹⁶ Consider some of the other “twisted things” used to mislead God’s people today. On occasion opposers will question the various teachings that Jehovah’s people hold in common. Often this becomes a debate about words, just as it was in the first century. (1 Timothy 6:3, 4) They may also question the need for an organization to direct the minds of God’s people. Their view is, God’s spirit can direct individuals without some central, organized body of men giving direction. They will declare that all one needs to do is to read the Bible. But Christendom has been reading the Bible for centuries. And look at the indistinct trumpet call coming from Christendom today! See the

16. By means of what other “twisted things” do opposers today try to mislead Jehovah’s people?



Never weaken in your resolve
to bear witness to the truth

confusion and misunderstanding as to the true message contained in God’s Word!

What a contrast this is to the foretold peace and unity among true Christians who not only read the Bible but search out and zealously apply its teachings! —Ephesians 4:3-6.

Opposers Cannot Succeed

¹⁷ What, then, is our position toward those who oppose and seek to undermine the faith we have received through Jehovah’s Witnesses and the Christian organization Jehovah is using? Jesus’ counsel regarding opposers is: “Let them be. Blind guides is what they are.” (Matthew 15:14) To quarrel with such ones, to debate and argue, is futile and really not the Christian course. No one is forced

17. What, then, is our position toward opposers of the truth?