

28 JOHN METCALFE TYLER'S GREEN CHAPEL

(Taken from, "Converted On LSD Trip, by David Clarke)

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Whilst speaking to Dr. John Verna he informed me he and his wife had met with John Metcalf of Penn, near High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire and that some of the people there often had a stall on the Market Square in Aylesbury selling Christian literature and the bibles they sold were only the Authorized King James version.

I was interested and because I had recently picked up a small tract written by John Metcalf called "The Gospel of God", which was about the claims of the Papacy and John Paul the second. I wished to meet John Metcalf because I recalled our visitor to the Bierton Church James who had attended Mr Metcalf's ministry and I understood and agreed with his writings in the tract. This had been most helpful and encouraging to me.

John Verna and Richard Bolt left and I felt encouraged by our meeting and I decided to go and visit the Church at Penn so as to meet Mr. John Metcalfe.

One Sunday evening I decided to go and I took my daughter Esther, she must have been about 3 or 4 years old and we drove to Penn and found the old chapel called Tyler's Green Chapel, Bethlehem Meeting Hall. Old-fashioned metal railings enclosed it and the gate was locked with no way in to the front door. It felt strange because the people were inside and a meeting was being held. I thought to my self had this door been locked deliberately to give a psychological shock to late comers and the feeling of being locked out as would be the case of the 5 foolish virgins mentioned by Jesus in Matth 25 verse 2)¹.

It was damp outside and getting dark but I was determined to meet Mr. Metcalf so Esther and I waited outside, in the road, until the meeting had finished. Eventually the meeting ended and the people filled out sedately and quietly. I took courage and walked up to the man I believed to be John Metcalfe. Not too tall, well dressed, with a cream or white raincoat and white or grey hair. He was very courteous and when I introduced my self and explained my intent. I asked him about the chapel gates being locked gates he smiled when I explained my thoughts about the 5 foolish virgins. He then explained they locked the gates to prevent vandalism during the meetings, as they had, had trouble in the past.

¹ I have since learned a Full Preterist view of Eschatology views this correctly.

See Our further publications The Parousia by James Stuart Russel for clarity.

He informed his daughter and noted my persistence in waiting and that I had read his tract on John Paul the II, which seemed to encourage him. He then invited me back to his home for supper.

Esther and I were received graciously and we exchanged much conversation. Mr. Metcalfe's daughters made a fuss of Esther and gave her chocolate biscuits. I was invited to share my testimony of how I became a Christian and I deliberately decided to tell all that took place the night of my conversion holding nothing back.

(See full account of my conversion²). All was very quite and nothing was said that I remember. I explained my present situation at Bierton Strict Baptist Church and the issues I had encountered regarding Particular Redemption, Law and Gospel, Added articles and finally Holy Tables. I was asked about my work and family and I explained I was a Lecturer at Luton College and a minister of the gospel in membership of a Strict Baptist church.

I felt greatly encouraged and noticed how nicely the house was kept. All in a lovely garden, spacious and it was beautiful. It was old and charming just as a Royal house and John Metcalfe kept an Alsatian as a guard dog.

John Metcalfe was a charming person a man of conviction, decisive and uncompromising. He seemed determined to follow God. I liked him and admired these qualities. I felt I could learn many things from this man. He had dealings with the Rev Ian Paisley but opposed him for unknown reasons. He despised the title Dr. and Dr. John Gill for accepting such titles. Also he had known Dr. Martin Lloyd Jones and eminent Christian ministers but opposed many things.

After that evening I returned another time with my wife and we were invited to attend the meeting at Tyler's Green Chapel one Sunday morning when Mr. Metcalfe would be preaching. It was arranged that one of the members of the church would look after our four children whilst we attended that morning meeting. This we did. This was a remarkable sermon and I had never heard such powerful preaching. I was greatly encouraged and I realized later to substance of his sermon was that contained in his publication "Messiah". The sermon was eloquent, powerful and I believed very faithful to the word of God. I was greatly encouraged and admired the man and wanted to support his work.

After the meeting I was asked by Mr. Metcalfe how I had got on and he seemed to be looking for feedback. I had become unaccustomed to give any kind of feedback, which could give rise to puff the old man up (rightly or wrongly), so I found this situation awkward. I kept quiet even though I was moved with excitement and wanted to express how well I had got on

2 As told in this book Conversion from crime to Christ.

with the message spoken. It was so encouraging that I wanted to tell all my friends in excitement come and here a man speak the things of God.

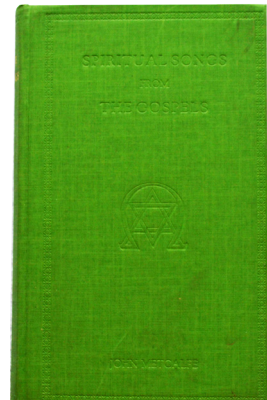
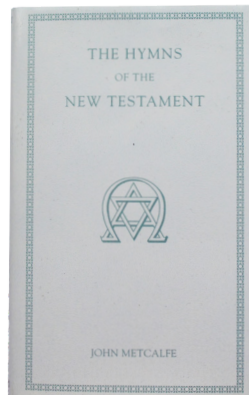
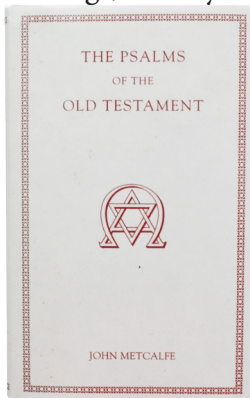
Paul Rowland And I Visit John Metcalf

It was shortly after this that Paul Rowland's, a minister in the Strict Baptist Church, who also worked for the Trinitarian Bible Society, came to preach at Bierton Church. He was a great advocate of the Free Scottish Presbyterian Church system and by conviction would only sing Psalms in Christian meetings. I spoke to Paul about John Metcalfe and invited him to meet him. Mr. Metcalfe seemed interested to meet Paul and I together, so we were invited across to his home at Penn one evening together.

The Shot Gun And Our Pockets Searched

Paul and I went one evening to John Metcalfe's home and we were received well and our coats taken to be hung up. We were invited to sit in a large lounge rather like a large study and library. It was beautiful decorated and very eloquent. John Metcalfe was dressed in a smart suit and tie.

John Metcalfe spoke about his work and recent publications the Psalms, Spiritual Songs, and Hymns of the New Testament.



The Beautifully produced song books

Paul Rowland got involved in talk regarding the Presbyterian Church and the Scottish Psalm Book. They soon spoke on doctrinal issues regarding the Law of Moses and legal Righteousness.

Christ Righteousness Imputed

John Metcalfe maintained that he opposed the views put forward by the Calvinistic Presbyterians who maintained the righteousness of Christ (that which he wrought out by obedience to The Law) was our justifying righteousness before God. He said he had, had a lot of opposition from the Scottish Churches because he maintained the righteousness of Christ is not mentioned once in the New Testament only the Righteousness of God. This

righteousness being distinct from Law.

I was not full well aware at the time of the significance to this distinction and at first did not understand the issue. How ever the evening went well and was very stimulating and not without surprise. John Metcalfe posed us with a question as though it was a riddle asking was the fruit that Adam ate good or bad. It was as though he did not expect us to answer because he reminded us God had said his work was very good. I knew the answer straight away I did not need to think but thinking there must be some reason behind the question I awaited and Paul answered. This answer was not satisfactory to Mr. Metcalfe and the issue was discussed. I did not answer because shortly after this John Metcalfe reached behind a curtain and brought out a shotgun in a dramatic gesture and preceded to take out the cartridges. John Metcalfe was not amused when I laughed in amusement he said he was suspicious of our visit that the IRA had threatened him and had to be very careful. He also had just been informed that our pockets had been searched to check up on us and that tobacco had been found in one of the pockets. Mr. John Metcalfe later used this against the person in derogatory comments.

Our visit to Mr. Metcalfe was one not to be forgotten and was quite Remarkable.

This cause me to consider many things and I tried to understand and unfathomed the discussion regarding Justification. I had at that time been considering the view of eternal justification of Gods elect. I knew of the controversy of Antinomian and the legalists. I had shared with John Metcalfe a love of the writings of William Huntington and about Martin Luther's issue of Justification by faith.

It was the misunderstanding of the conversation that he had with Paul Rowland regarding Justification that made me consider the issues that I thought they raised and understood the truth to be. These were:

Justification

1 Gods act of Justification, when viewed from the point before the world existed, was from all eternity. In one sense the elect were justified in Christ from all eternity (in the mind of God). However the work and merits of a justifying righteousness was to be performed in time by none other than our Lord Jesus Christ.

2 He was righteous by virtue of his person and spotless humanity. He did not become righteous by any works of the Law to Moses. He fulfilled the law and walked according to it.

The gentiles were never under the Law of Moses but rather by it excluded from the benefits that the Jews were promised to those who kept it. The Law never promised spiritual blessings only natural ones. All spiritual blessings,

such as regeneration, adoption and the gift of faith, came only through the Lord Jesus Christ.

Also the Law of Moses was not, like the Presbyterian's Calvinist's say given to Adam as a rule to be kept and that eternal life promised to those who kept it. It was not.

I understood that in the Lord Jesus's righteousness sinners are clothed and accepted as righteous before God. This being the righteousness of God imputed to all that believe. This being the source and merits of a believer's justification.

3 In actual experience how ever, in time, the sentence of Justification takes place upon the person believing God, as Abraham believed God. It is received by faith and takes place in the conscience, when first we believe and receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our saviour. This is justification by faith. (Rom. 5 verse 1). From this springs the joy of salvation, which of course involves the senses of the soul. This experience is justification by faith.

Justification by Blood

It could only be brought about by blood and made effectual by blood. Jesus himself being made a vicarious sacrifice. That being by the death of Jesus in the cross. By His death our sins are removed and we be made clean from all our sins. (Rom 5 verse 9). Justification being the declaration by God that we, being clothed in the righteousness of Christ, we are counted righteous for Jesus sake.

This was not the issue

I learned later how after this was not the issue with Paul Roland and John Metcalfe.

The follow Saturday morning I had a telephone call from John Metcalfe, I did not realize it was him at first thinking it was Dr. John Verna and I addressed him as John. This did not go down well he said I was being too familiar and I must address him as Mr. Metcalfe. Needless to say I felt awkward and that this man was being unnecessarily rude. We got on to speak about the feedback he wanted and I said I had things to say but would rather wait until I saw him face to face rather than on the telephone. He became very impatient and demanded I say there and then on the telephone what I had to say. I felt threatened and awkward and was not at ease at all. So I decided I would say about the things I found awkward and unacceptable first explaining that the tract he had written was in fact in error.

His reply was, "look mate I have more theology than I would ever have in 1000 years. That my testimony of what Jesus had done for me was disgusting and that I was in the same danger as the Pharisees, which blasphemed the Holy Ghost during the ministry of Jesus. There the conversation ended.

During all this time my wife had been concerned about me becoming involved with the man as she had notice how much and effect he had on me.

That following week I was away on a week's study at Durham University as I was a student with the Open University. Here I wrote to Mr. John Metcalfe.

My response to John Metcalfe

Dear Mr. Metcalfe

26th July 1984

Further to our telephone conversation I have decided against meeting with you when I return from Durham for the following reasons:

You allow not the children of God to do as the apostle exhorts: "despise not prophesying. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil" 1 Thes 5 verse 20 - 22.

My words to you on the telephone were that on the one hand I could rejoice with you thanking God for "here was a man I respected and trust in the things of God (for various reasons) whilst on the other hand I got cross with you and could take extreme dislike to you for what appeared to be a sinister way, This I took exception too.

Now you did not inquire as to what I meant but rather justified all your ways, methods and actions by stating your beliefs, saying that for the first time I had come under the preaching of the word of God in the unction of the Holy Ghost. That as the opponents of Christ questioned the spirit by which the Lord Jesus performed his mighty works, so too I come very close to their fearful condition.

You then stated your beliefs in respect of my own testimony; either you rejected what I said as true or was in doubt as to its reality and substance (correct me if I am wrong).

I am sorry if I offended you and your family when I gave my testimony, please forgive me. How ever I am not the only believer to speak of vile things. Deut 28 verses 53. Lam 2 verse 26 and Hos 1 verse 2 and many more. Do you impute guilt to these also as you do me? Never the less what I spoke was true and an actual account and not as you seem to imply an opportunity to speak of self. For that true account I offer no apology.

If you reject what I said as truth I protest I am no liar. And if you are in doubts as to the reality well I cannot add to or diminish what the Lord Jesus works or works not. You are entitled to your opinion but pray give me the same liberty to judge you, your preaching, writings and assertions.

I still do not understand your impatience with me questioning you regarding the statement in the tract, "The Gospel of God".

You say the issue at the Reformation was: Given the merits of Christ person, how are they imputed and his person imparted. Page 33. I said to you. I could understand the statement of "the merits of Christ's person

being imputed but not his person imparted.

I gave you room to explain, owned an ignorance and awaited further light and even said I would reconsider the statement. Here however you said you knew more theology in your little finger than I ever would ever know in a 1000 years, given it were possible I should be granted such time; called me mate and kept me at a formal distance.

Well be that as it may I still await a theological precise statement, whether it be in realms of high and heavenly things or in terrestrial ones.

I say persons are communed with and not, with natures, imparted. Neither persons nor natures imputed. I would suggest your tract should read: Given the merits of Christ's person, how are these imputed and His nature imparted. I say I was not seeking to find faults; it stuck out like a sore thumb, just as my incorrect spelling may do.

Here again I beg your pardon and apologize for any seeming impertinence. I say to you this behaviour of yours displays no humility, of which you say is lacking in me. Also according to your judgment I am not low enough yet before God. You judge by appearances; so do I but are you right? Only God knows the agonies, the heart searching and tears shed since our conversation and that is no pretence.

On these points I have mentioned I beg your reply and answers. For how can two walk together if these differences divide? I certainly have no intention of being your enemy.

You said at one stage you wondered if I be teachable. Well I am allowing my feelings and reason to act in judgment over these issues. This I do as you set the example and encourage, or have I got this wrong as well?

I get excited for you, over the production of the Psalms and hymn-book and would like to have seen them in use. I hope my letter to you now will not cause that breach to prevent it.

I have read your tract 2 and have found both 1 and 2 very relevant, pertinent and well written. They search me. Particularly tract 2 and I find I have walked the path of your tract. May they be blessed of God for the furtherance of the Gospel and the purpose for which they were written?

I could comment on the tract 3 about Taylor Brethren but not unless you wish

Yours very Sincerely,

David Clarke.

Following this letter in hot pursuit I wrote the next letter this would have arrived the next day.

Dear Mr. Metcalfe,

I also think it wrong to speak of the merits of the person of Christ.

The merits of Christ yes! But not the merits of his person. The reason for this is:

As the Son of God he is a divine person. By nature He is God. Essentially God by nature but personally the Son of the Father. To speak then of the merits of a divine person is abhorrent to the delicate and gracious soul for one cannot admit any imperfections in God nor demerit as to perfection's, councils, actions or purposes. God is by definition essentially righteous. Perfectly just and right in all and in everything. Whether this glory be revealed or veiled always was and ever shall be.

The scripture speaks of the Lord Jesus Christ being the express image of the Fathers person.

I admit a complexity; in that the Lord Jesus Christ is bi natural, that is to say he has two natures. Yet he is but one person, co.-equal with the Father and Holy Ghost. By nature eternally God taking unto into union with himself, at the incarnation, our humanity, that which he was not, becoming truly man. There is now then a union of divine and human natures (never to be dissolved) in the person of the Son of God, hence Christ Jesus the Lord is a glorious complex person.

We may speak of the merits of Christ Jesus for he is truly a human being, having a real soul created when made man; this man may accrue merit by virtue of living in this world being not only made under the Law of Moses but under every divine rule, him being subject unto his God and Father. The divine servant.

The expression then, "how can the merits of Christ's person be imputed?" I say is too loose and really the whole quotation should read: given the merits of the Lord Jesus Christ how are they imputed and His nature imparted? This being the question at the Reformation.

If you think I am being nit picking then what kind of 1000-year theological course do you advocate as being worthwhile.

I write this way because I trust it will be of help to you. You certainly have helped me in causing me to consider many things. I also add I stand to be corrected and ask you to do so.

I expect I have touched on your doctrine of justification and perhaps you have deliberately phrased your statement in the tract the way you have because they reflect your views of justification. Am I right?

Please excuse this hurried note but I must write, as I am able. Yours
Sincerely

David Clarke

Durham. 25th July 1984.

My two letters were returned with no comments. I took it that, that was meant to express he rejected my observations or council, against himself.