

Editorial / Focus - May 1977

Have you ever walked into a church and found no one to greet you,, present you with a hymn book or even show you to a seat? Or been puzzled in a meeting by the apparent free-for-all that was taking place, with all and sundry jumping up to make contributions, seemingly unrelated to anything that had gone before? Or been absent from the meetings for two or three weeks and found no one interested enough to find out where you were or why you hadn't attended? Perhaps because of illness, moving home or away on holiday. Have you ever been in a church for six months and hardly know the names of others that are there at the end of that time? Or experienced an emptiness after a service that was so over organised that every move was so utterly predictable, and the favourite hymn seems to be 'nothing changes here'! Or wondered at the endless stream of confident prophesies of enormous blessing, only to find the church is never beyond the twenty-five people that meet regularly. Or in a congregation that had so much ill feeling, backbiting, preacher criticising going on that you felt utterly dejected through it all. Or where the Elders put the brakes on any move of God that showed promise. Unfortunately, many of these facts are true of a large number of churches in our country today. Dare we ask the questions : Is such a company really the church of the New Testament? Is this what church life is all about? Is this the way the church functions and lives? Is this the true pattern for the community of the redeemed? The new society of God. You will have guessed by now that the implication of this editorial is to suggest that by no means is this a true picture of the church as God intends it to be. In this issue of 'Restoration' we seek to present a picture of church life as we believe God would desire it to be expressed in our day and generation. You will recognize that although possibly society in its pattern of life may have changed, the principles of the New Testament church hold true even in this generation as in the first. What should be the life of the church? How should the meetings be run? What place of responsibility has a Christian towards his brother? How should we treat the ministries that God has placed in the Church? How should the ministries care for the flock? These and many other facets of church life are covered in this issue of the magazine. We trust that it will prove a rich blessing to you as you read.

The Bite of Inflation

United Kingdom readers will notice that this issue has increased in price to 30p a copy. For over twelve months now we have managed to hold down the price of 'Restoration'. This has been by trimming our costs in every possible way. However, with twelve months of inflation unabated, with postage rising and all other factors included, we find it essential for the viability of the magazine to increase it by 5p per copy. However, even in doing this you will note that the magazine itself is now larger in size than ever before, and we trust that the extra material will prove to you an increased blessing as you receive it.