

3rd January

Memory verse:

Therefore

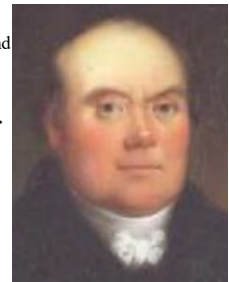
**if any man be in Christ,
he is a new creature.**

2 Corinthians 5:17.

This is an easy text to learn. After the “therefore” it falls into two neat halves that will help you practice it. Remember that “man” in the Bible is a generic word that means any human being. We also usually use the word “creature” in a more restricted way to mean an animal. However when the Bible says “creature” it means any created thing – including people. The text describes the radical change that takes place when anyone becomes a Christian.

Something to read – and something to sing¹

William Gadsby (1773-1844) was born on **3rd January**. If you did the lessons for 2nd July and 16th August last year you will have already met him in connection with the Corn Laws and the Peterloo Massacre. If you did not do those lessons last year look out for Gadsby in this summer's lessons.



William Gadsby was the pastor of St George's Road Baptist Chapel, Manchester. His chapel was in a poor district of the city and his very large congregation contained a high percentage of hand-loom weavers. Gadsby himself had started work at 13 as an apprentice ribbon weaver and worked so hard in poor conditions that his health suffered. Gadsby was a preacher who held his hearers' attention. During his time as pastor the chapel congregation grew, averaging about 1000 according to the best estimates. There were no gimmicks at the chapel, which was a very plain building and where the congregational singing was totally unaccompanied, yet the poor people flocked to hear the Gospel preached there. Years later an old man who, when he was young, had heard Gadsby preach explained:

Ah, if you had but heard that voice of his rolling like peals of thunder, and seen those eyes of his like balls of fire piercing through the congregation, you would never have forgotten it as long as you lived.

Gadsby did not hesitate to confront the evils that beset the society of his day. With so many poor hand-loom weavers in his congregation he daily witnessed with the difficulties these people faced. Hand-loom weaving was a dying trade and his congregation was poor. He was particularly distressed by the high price of bread that meant poor people often went hungry. He gave his support to those who wanted to abolish the laws that restricted the import of corn (the Corn Laws) in order to protect rural landowners.

The Anti-Corn-Law League was formed in the belief that it was the Corn Laws that were responsible for keeping the price of bread high. Highly priced bread hit poor families hard, especially when harvests were bad. There was a world shortage of wheat at this time that meant that prices would have been high even if grain had been imported. It was not only the poor themselves who had an interest in lower bread prices. Manufacturers also saw that if bread prices were lower, demand for higher wages would be less. Workers would also be left with more money to spare to spend on manufactured goods. This in turn would benefit manufacturers. The manufacturers of Manchester were a powerful force and they supported the League. In 1841 Gadsby preached an

1 Information from Ramsbottom, Paul, “A Chiliasm of Despair? The community worshipping at St George's Road Baptist Chapel, Manchester!” *The Baptist Quarterly: Journal of the Baptist Historical Society*, 1998 p.227, Ramsbottom, B. A., *William Gadsby* (Harpندن, 004) *The Story of God's Dealings with our Nation Vol. 2* (available from <https://www.creationresearchstore.com/s/search?q=The%20Story%20of%20Gods%20Dealings%20with%20our%20Nation>) and <https://www.sbhs.org.uk/articles/wgadsby/>.

specific anti-Corn Law sermon and the St George's Road Anti-Corn Law Association, was founded. Its documents describe the Corn Law as “unjust and unscriptural, demoralizing and inhumane”.

The unaccompanied congregational singing at St George's Road Baptist Chapel with its congregation a thousand strong must have been a wonderful experience. “No one who has [n]ever heard a northern congregation unite in singing a well-known hymn to a well-known tune can form the slightest idea of the sublimity...” wrote John Gadsby, William's son. Certainly nothing like it can be heard today. Gadsby wrote some of the hymns they sang himself and some are still sung today. I have included “Immortal honours rest on Jesus' head” in today's Optional Resources files so that you can learn it if you do not already know it. Gadsby's hymns are of variable quality but this is perhaps the very best. It was sung at the conclusion of Gadsby's own funeral service. Gadsby's friend John Kershaw who took the funeral service commented, “this hymn contains a true portrait of the ministry of William Gadsby; and the last verse contained the feelings of his whole heart...”

The music and words are printed in the Optional Resources files and there is a piano version of the tune to help you learn it if you do not know it already.

Something to make

Many of the congregation that Gadsby ministered to in Manchester were hand loom weavers.² In his time hand loom weaving was being superseded by power loom weaving which took place in factories. The hand loom weavers were skilled people but their skill was in less and less demand. The result was poverty in the hand loom weaving districts. The most basic principles of weaving can be demonstrated by simple paper weaving. You can learn simple weaving terms too, such as **weft** and **warp**, through weaving in paper.³

You will need:

A4 sheets of paper in different colours, a pencil, scissors and a ruler

To make the **warp**, take a sheet of paper and fold it in half widthways.

Next, use a pencil and ruler to draw evenly spaced lines from the folded side of the paper up towards the opposite edge. Do not go right to the edge. Space your lines about 3cm apart and leave the same sized spacing as a border from the edge. Cut along the lines you have drawn. Remember to stop cutting before you reach the edge. Unfold your paper. This is your warp.

Next, cut long narrow strips of paper, different in colour to the warp. These are the **weft**. They should be the same length as the width of the warp. Using one of the strips of narrow paper (weft), begin to weave it into the warp using an ‘over, under, over, under’ pattern. Slide the weft up to the edge of one side of the warp so that it fits tightly. Take another strip of paper and repeat the process, but this time use an ‘under, over, under, over’ pattern. Slide them up to the first strip of paper so that they fit tightly together. For the third strip of paper, use the same weaving pattern as the first, ‘over, under, over, under.’ Continue this weaving process, following the same alternating pattern until you cannot fit any more of the weft into the warp.

I have also included in today's Optional Resources files instructions for making a peg loom.⁴ This is a longer project for older children although quite young children can use the loom when it is finished. A large quantity of knitting yarn is needed to make a rug. You can buy yarn quite cheaply from charity shops. You can also use the loom to weave strips of rag to make a rag rug.

² You can see a demonstration of the kind of loom they used here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bLAUqpEi3kA>

³ See this done here: <https://www.madewithhappy.com/paper-weaving/>

⁴ Instructions come from the Mothers' Companion flashdrive available from <https://motherscompanion.weebly.com/>