

THE
HARDING COLLEGE
LECTURES

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LECTURES

VOLUME TWO

General Theme: "Foundations of Faith"
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ABOUT THE LECTURERS

Dr. James D. Bates is head of the Bible department at Harding College.

R. C. Bell is professor of Bible at Abilene Christian College.

G. C. Brewer is minister of the Jackson Avenue Church of Christ, Memphis, Tennessee.

George DeHoff is publisher of the *Christian Magazine* and minister of the Church of Christ in Murfreesboro, Tennessee.

A. R. Holton is minister of the Central Church of Christ, Nashville, Tennessee.

E. W. McMillan is president of Southwestern Christian College, Terrell, Texas.

Dr. F. W. Mattox is dean of men and professor of Bible at Harding College.

L. O. Sanderson is editor of the *Christian Worker*, Wichita, Kansas.

Dr. L. C. Sears is dean of Harding College and head of the English department.

Melvin J. Wise is minister of the Union Avenue Church of Christ, Memphis, Tennessee.

PREFACE

The conflict between belief and unbelief is the major conflict of every generation. It may even be said that the vast majority of the other conflicts of this world are related, directly or indirectly, to the battle between belief and unbelief. A lack of faith in God, or a false conception of God, leads man to have the wrong conception born of himself and of his fellowman. It is quite easy for those who do not regard God to take one more step and fail to respect man. On the other hand, the Scriptures teach that we cannot actually hold to the right attitude toward God and hate our fellowman. Scriptural love for God is incompatible with hatred for mankind. Thus the effort to lead men to God as revealed in Christ is also an effort to lead man to peace within himself and to peace with his fellowcreatures.

However, we cannot expect to lead people to God as revealed in Christ without the presentation of some evidence that God is actually revealed in Christ. This is not to say that the only thing which is necessary to conversion to Christ is the presentation of the credentials of Christ. It takes more than evidence, more than truth, to create conviction. The mind is not an impersonal, delicately-balanced machine which moves in one direction, or in another, according to the amount of evidence which is piled before it. There must be a willingness to do the will of God (John 7:17), whenever one finds that will. One must love the truth, one must be honest with the evidence, one must desire the good, or evidence may not have much influence on his life. The parable of the sower is an example of why some accept the message of truth, why some start and fail to finish, and why some do not accept it at all. The condition of the soil—the heart—as well as the presence of the seed—the truth—is a decisive factor.

Although evidence alone cannot lead to conviction, evidence should be present so that good and honest hearts may have the opportunity to hear and believe. Thus we find a goodly portion of the New Testament is concerned with the presentation of evidence to establish the central theme of the entire Bible, i. e. *that Jesus Christ is God's Son and Man's Savior*. The writers of the Gospels constantly appeal, especially in the book of Matthew is this appeal found, to the fulfillment in Christ of various prophecies of the Old Testament. Jesus appealed to such witnesses as that of John the Baptist, His own works, the Father's witness, and the testimony of the prophecies of the Scripture. He attributed the unbelief of His opponents to such as the following: the fact that they did not have the love of God in their

hearts, because God's word did not abide in them, and because they sought honor from man instead of seeking the only true honor which comes from God.

The sermons in the book of Acts were in part taken up with the presentation of the evidence which shows that Jesus is the Christ. In Acts 2, for example, four lines of evidence were presented. *First*, the evidence of the miracles of Christ. "Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know." (Acts 2:22). *Second*, the apostles appealed to the testimony of prophecy. The prophecy of Joel concerning the last days (Acts 2:16-17), as well as David's prophecies concerning Christ (Acts 2:25-35). *Third*, the testimony of the miracles which took place on Pentecost, and which had had a part in bringing the people together (Acts 2:1-4). "Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed from this, which ye now see and hear." (Acts 2:33). *Fourth*, the testimony of the resurrection of Christ. This was established by two lines of evidence, (a) The prophecy of David concerning Christ's resurrection (Acts 2:27-31). (b) The witness of the apostles to the resurrected Christ. "This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses." (Acts 2:32). It was on the basis of such evidence that they called on the people to believe in Christ.

Other sermons in the book of Acts could be analyzed from the standpoint of the evidence which they contain for the Messiahship of Jesus, but this one example is sufficient for our purposes.

This does not mean all sermons must contain a direct appeal to the evidence of the truth of the Christian faith. It does mean, however, that when we are dealing with unbelievers, as well as preparing immature believers to give reason for the hope which is within them, that there must be a presentation of the credentials of Christ.

This series of lectures is not only concerned with a direct presentation of a few of the things about some of the evidences of Christianity, but it also contains some messages which present some of the lofty teachings of Christianity without any direct appeal to their evidential value. And yet, they have such a value, for the loftiness and inspiring nature of the entire gospel is one of the evidences of its truth.

These lectures are sent forth with the prayer that they will serve to help many, directly or indirectly, see the truth and beauty of the Christian faith.

August 3, 1950
Harding College

James D. Bales

Thanksgiving Address

by

G. C. Brewer

Brethren and Friends:

We rejoice today because we have the health and strength to come to Harding College and to see the improvements that are being made in the college equipment and in the homes for the teachers and in all the aspects of the physical plant. We rejoice to meet friends from distant places and to assemble with the student body and give thanks to God for his bountiful benefactions.

This is to be a Thanksgiving address, and there is no better subject to discuss than thanksgiving, or the beautiful grace of gratitude. The Bible Teaches Us Both by Precept and Example to Give Thanks:

"I exhort therefore, first of all, that supplications, prayers, intercessions, thanksgivings, be made for all men; for kings and all that are in high place; that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and gravity. This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour." (I Timothy 2:1-3.)

"In nothing be anxious; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God." (Philippians 4:6.)

For though the fig-tree shall not flourish,
Neither shall fruit be in the vines;
The labor of the olive shall fail,
And the fields shall yield no food;
The flock shall be cut off from the fold,
And there shall be no herd in the stalls:
Yet I will rejoice in Jehovah,
I will joy in the God of my salvation.
Jehovah, the Lord, is my strength;
And he maketh my feet like hinds' *feet*,
And will make me to walk upon my high places.

(Habakkuk 3:17-19.)

AH the servants of God from Abel's day down have left us an example of giving thanks to Jehovah for his blessings. When men call

upon Jehovah, it is evidence that they feel their dependence upon him and believe that he will reward those who diligently seek him. If we call upon him to bless us, we would be foolish indeed if we did not then acknowledge him as the source of our blessings: and, when we do this, we will instinctively give him thanks for the things we receive.

It is worthy of note that in times of prosperity and of peace, men have always neglected God and often forgotten him. Then, in times of deliverance from trouble and relief from suffering, men gave thanks unto God. When the children of Israel had long been in captivity and had at last been delivered and returned to their native land, they rejoiced and gave thanks to God: they composed psalms that told of their joy, and these psalms are today appropriate for any heart that is filled with gratitude to our God for his goodness to us. After these returned captives had rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem, they then set in order the priests and the forms of worship; and, just as they armed and organized their forces for protection against the enemy, they also organized and equipped their people for worship and praise of Jehovah. Zerubbabel tells us that he appointed two companies for the specific purpose of giving thanks. These companies marched one to the left and the other to the right, and they performed their function of giving thanks, expressing the joy and the gratitude of all the host of Israel. (Nehemiah 12:31.)

When the people later lost the spirit of humility and gratitude and felt satisfied with the ceremony and outward forms of religion, the prophets and the psalmists expressed in very picturesque language God's disapproval and even his disgust at such empty services. The Psalmist represents God as refusing to accept of their sacrifices by asking them if they thought that Jehovah could eat the flesh of bulls or drink the blood of goats. He then called upon the people to offer unto God a sacrifice of thanksgiving. This he would accept; but the heartless forms and ceremonies of their sacrifices and altars were an abomination unto him. (Psalms 50.) David expressed a similar sentiment in his penitential psalm (Psalms 51), when he said if burnt offerings and sacrifices could atone for his sin he would offer them in great abundance. But these were vain when the enormity of his guilt was considered. He knew that only a broken and a contrite heart would avail in such a situation. When such humility and penitence are found in the heart of man, then there is no surprise that his gratitude would know no bounds when he came to the consciousness of sins forgiven. It was in this spirit of rejoicing that David wrote:

Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven,
And whose sins are covered.

(Romans 4:7-8.)

One must experience humility before one feels his need of God; and, when one throws himself helplessly upon the mercies of God, he will then experience the emotion of gratitude and joy when he comes to a realization of God's goodness to him and his mercy that takes his guilt away and gives him a clean heart.

The prophet Isaiah gives us a pathetic picture of God as a father who had nurtured and brought up children, only to see them rebel against him. His heart was grieved because of their ingratitude and his soul yearned for their return from their wanderings. No more poignant representation of this relationship between God and his people could be made. One of the greatest tragedies that life ever holds is to see aged parents weeping over their wayward children. These children of God were both thankless and thoughtless. God said they did not consider. Shakespeare describes ingratitude and expresses the feeling of a father whose love and parental care have not been requited by his children:

Blow, blow, thou winter wind;
 Thou art not so unkind
 As man's ingratitude.
 Thy tooth is not so keen
 Because thou art not seen,
 Although thy breath be rude.

Ingratitude! thou marble-hearted fiend,
 More hideous when thou showest thee in a child
 Than the sea monster.
 How sharper than a serpent's tooth is
 To have a thankless child.

But God, through Isaiah, expressed in a plaintive cry his grief over the folly of such children. He said, "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider." (Isaiah 1:3.) This is equal to saying that Israel had not shown as much judgment or as much gratitude as an ox or an ass. These dumb brutes recognize the fact that their feed comes from their master's crib and that they are cared for by his hand, but the people of God did not realize that their blessings had come from our heavenly Father and did not, therefore, give him thanks. They did not respect his will or walk according to his word.

But, throughout the first sixteen chapters of Isaiah, God tells his People of their sins, of their ingratitude and of their rebellion. But he

always closes each denunciation with a tender appeal for them to return to their Father's love. Over and over again, he says, "Yet is my hand outstretched to you, sayeth Jehovah." And it is in the first chapter of Isaiah that that beautiful expression is found which has given rise to one of our sacred hymns: "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." (Isaiah 1:18.)

Paul tells us that whatsoever was written aforetime was written for our learning that we, through patience and comfort of the scriptures, might have hope. (Romans 15:4.) He also tells us that the sins of the people of old were examples for us that we should not fall after the same manner of unbelief. We should, therefore, be admonished in a time of prosperity lest we too may forget that our blessings come from God and may fail to give him thanks that are so justly due him. Our sacrifice today should be a sacrifice of thanksgiving and not of boasting and gormandizing.

Unbelief and Ingratitude are Companion Sins. When men cease to believe in God, of course, they cannot be expected to give him thanks. And when men cease to give thanks to God, they take credit to themselves for all their achievements and their blessings. And when men are lovers of self, they will not only fail to love God, they will refuse to sympathize with their fellowmen. When men know that they are offspring of God and that in him they live and move and have their being, they recognize their fellowmen as brothers, because we have all come from one common Father. When we love God and love our neighbor, we will thank God for our benefits and share them with our neighbor. Gratitude means giving; sympathy means sharing. But it has ever been true that when men boast of their enlightenment and glory in their discoveries, they use these achievements as a reason for forgetting God and as a means of oppressing their fellowmen. Paul describes the men who had once known God but who had become vain in their own reasoning and forgot God. He said then they did not give thanks.

"Because that, knowing God, they glorified him not as God, neither gave thanks; but became vain in their reasonings, and their senseless heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God for the likeness of an image of corruptible man, and of birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things." (Romans 1:21-23.)

This was the state into which men fell when they ceased to give God thanks because they had ceased to believe that they were depen-

dent upon him; in fact, they had decided to shut him out of their knowledge, changed the truth of God for a lie, and endeavored to erase the thought of God from the minds of their children. They eliminated God from their thinking, and as a result came degradation and ruin. All that black category of crimes given by Paul is the disgraceful story of men without God. And it should not be overlooked that these were not ignorant and stupid men who were just emerging from the brute state; these were the enlightened, the educated, the wise men and the scientists of that day. It was pride in their own reasoning that caused them to reject God and to defy man.

Turning from this historic picture painted for us by the Apostle, we may look with him to a time that was in his day future, in which men again bring on perilous times through their sins; and, as he describes the characteristics of that age, he says, among other things, that men will be unthankful, unholy. (II Timothy 3:1-6.)

Thanksgiving Day Is Man's appointment. While we are taught in the scriptures to give thanks to God every day that we live and for every blessing that we enjoy, and as we have seen the sacrifice that is always acceptable to God is the sacrifice of a humble heart, a sacrifice of thanksgiving, yet Thanksgiving Day, as we are today celebrating it, is a day appointed by men—it is a tradition with the people of America. The day has been legalized and it is brought to our attention each year by a proclamation from the President and from the governors of the several states. We should be thankful that our government and our people still recognize God and remember that it was through his providence that our nation was born.

There is danger, however, that we keep up the tradition and forget the meaning. It is a far cry from the thanksgiving that was first celebrated in 1621 by the Pilgrim Fathers to the extravaganza of a modern fourth Thursday of November. Those pioneers had but little for which to be thankful, when we compare their lot with our present-day blessings. But the gratitude of their souls was genuine and the pretensions of our celebration are too apparent.

Those pioneers had come across the wild waste of waters in a craft that we would not trust today to bear us upon one of our rivers. They had landed upon the shores of an uncharted wilderness and had begun the task of carving a civilization out of the wilds of the virgin forests. They braved dangers to us unknown and suffered hardships that we could not comprehend. Without any of our modern inventions to lighten their labors, and without any of our scientific discoveries to prevent diseases and to relieve their sufferings, they faced life. Their homes were the rudest huts constructed by their own hands

from the logs of the forest. Their agricultural implements were sawed out with hand tools and hammered out upon their anvils. Yet these pilgrims read their Bibles by the light of tallow candles and taught their children to tremble at the word of God. They fell upon their knees and gave thanks to the heavenly Father for the harvest that the earth had yielded and for the protection of his providence. They constructed houses of worship and carried their flint-rock rifles as they went to the place of prayer. Ours is a noble heritage, and from such a beginning our country has grown to be the most rich and powerful country upon the face of the earth.

In contrast with the poverty of the pilgrims, we are today a rich nation; and, in contrast with their rude homes, our homes are mansions. We ride in automobiles, read by the electric lights, cook with the current, and are entertained by radio and television. Just the mention of the difference between that day and this is to awaken thoughts that might be run out into a volume of encyclopedic proportions. In 1621, the whole earth supported a population of only about three hundred million; today we have half that many people in this country alone, and the whole earth has some two billion inhabitants.

In this land, we are protected in our personal and property rights by the laws that we have made ourselves. We are guaranteed freedoms that other countries do not enjoy. We have opportunities that older lands cannot offer. What we have achieved has never been equaled by any other nation in all of history, and the blessings that we have, have all come from God.

And, not only did the Pilgrim Fathers acknowledge him and give him thanks, but as the country grew, and after the colonies realized the need for a central government, our founding fathers not only declared their independence of any foreign power but formed a document to govern themselves and their offspring in all the relationships of life. These men, in their deliberative body, called upon God for guidance and recognized him as their only king. We would not have much faith in his promises, and certainly would not believe in his providences, if we did not acknowledge the fact that his wisdom guided our pioneers and caused them to give us the rules and traditions that have made America great. He guided a man of destiny to discover this continent, and he raised up men of wisdom and sagacity to build our Ship of State. The success of our government, the achievements of our way of life and the fabulous wealth of our nation have all come as a result of the principles of justice and right and fair dealing upon which our nation has been built.

Yet we who today enjoy these bountiful blessings have forgotten the source of these blessings, and we have forgotten the sacrifices that were made in order to give them to us. We see a tendency among our people not only to forget God, but also to abandon the principles that have preserved us and made us great. There will be more money squandered today upon football games than was in existence on the American continent three hundred years ago. This contrast would not necessarily be a condemnation of us if our gratitude to God and our gifts to him and his cause were in proportion to the amount we spend upon folly. But, when we give more money to pleasure than we give to God, it is time for us to repent and to turn back to the basic principles of life and of Christianity. When men are lovers of self and oppressors of their fellowman, we may again look for ruin and revolution.

In our country, we are free because we have no government except that which we ourselves make and perpetuate. Every official of the United States draws his authority to govern from the consent of those governed. We should have no laws except those which are made by the people's elected representatives; and, if these representatives deal unfairly with the people, or if they err in their judgment, we can take them out of office, elect others in their places, repeal the laws they made, and adjust our affairs for the benefit of the whole people. This is our American heritage. This is the system that our founding fathers gave us, and these freedoms and privileges of choice are secured to us by the Constitution of the United States.

We must point out, however, that many of us are losing sight of the ideal that was bequeathed to us by the founders. We are digressing from the principles and abandoning the rules that have made us great.

During the years of our growth, we have welcomed to our shores millions of the oppressed peoples of other lands. It has become a tradition that America is a haven for pilgrims and a refuge for the homeless. In our land of opportunity, immigrant boys have grown to be captains of industry, masters of finance—multimillionaires; others have climbed to the highest positions in governmental affairs; and all have been allowed to "breathe free" and live in peace. And every man, guided by his individual conscience, worships God under his own vine and his own fig tree. And yet there has ever been one common end toward which we have moved in solid phalanx: *The upholding and the perpetuating of our form of government and our American way of life.*

Within the memory of some hoary heads here today, every public prayer contained the stereotyped pean of thanksgiving: "We thank

Thee, Lord, that we are permitted to meet here in this appointed place to worship Thee, while none dare to molest or to make us afraid." This was an inherited sentiment. It came from men who remembered a land where they were not free in their own way. Our pioneers were near enough to the "dark ages" to know the meaning of religious persecution and political tyranny.

We have glorified in our blessings, have proclaimed them to the world and have gladly shouted an invitation to the oppressed peoples of other lands to share these blessings with us. The Statue of Liberty that stands in the New York Harbor is a symbol of the freedoms we enjoy and of the light that we hold high for those who sit in darkness. The words inscribed upon that monument, written by the American Jewish essayist and poet, Emma Lazarus, intone our song of sympathy and welcome to the downtrodden:

Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore,
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me:
I lift my lamp beside the golden door.

But now we have come to the turning point in our history. We are standing at the crossroads. In fact, we are already moving out on the wrong road. This is alarmingly evident when we see that some of the sons of those who have been delivered from countries that were crowded to suffocation and from the iron heel of tyranny, and who work on a wage scale of more per hour than their brothers in some other lands make in a month, are now agitating for the overthrow of the government that guarantees their opportunity, and are organizing for the destruction of the capital that gives them this great advantage. This is a sorry situation, indeed! But what is even more distressing, not to say disgusting, we have men who are blind to this danger and who stoutly deny that this spirit stalks through our fair land. What is more shameful still, is that we have men who will, for political advantage, take this monster into the very bosom of our body politic.

Public men today are too often not the servants of the public, but are the agents of special privilege seeking to advance the interest of one section or one group of our people. We have recently had an election, and all the people were given an opportunity to express themselves as to the laws that we have, as to those that we need, and as to the operations and activities of our government, not only in its relation to our people, but in relationship to the other peoples of the world. Other nations are looking to us for food and clothing and for help and

protection. Many of them are bankrupt as a nation, and they are starving by the thousands and freezing, without protection from the weather's Masts.

Yet, in this critical hour, what do we see in our election? We have something like ninety-five million potential voters in the United States, yet only about half that number expressed themselves by the ballot. The name of the man who was elected President of this great country was not even on the ballot in some of our states. The men, therefore, who represent us today and who administer our affairs, were elected by a small majority of those who cast their votes. And, if the entire number of qualified voters had expressed themselves at the polls, we might not have the men that are now in Congress, and in the Cabinet, and in the President's chair. If this is the case, then the men who are acting for us today do not, in reality, represent the people of the United States. This is no fault of their own, and they are, therefore, legally empowered to act and we are bound to submit to whatever they do until we again have an opportunity to express ourselves at the polls. This is according to the Constitution of our United States and, in this arrangement, we must all agree.

But is it a point to be ignored that nearly half of our voting population failed to vote? Was this because of indifference? Was it because of a lack of faith in our form of government? Was it because of over confidence? If not, what is the answer? Is it a wholesome sign that so large a number of our people are not sensible of the fact that the preservation of the United States Government and a continuation of the blessings we enjoy depend upon their attitude and behavior? If we are going to allow a small percentage of the people of the United States to govern us, men we have sacrificed the right to govern ourselves. And what is the difference in having a dictatorship of a small group of men and a dictatorship of one man, especially when we know that that one man always represents the sentiment of a group of men?

Whatever may be the answer to the failure of the people to express themselves at the polls, it is certain that it is not because they do not believe in our form of government, although their action would indicate that very thing. The reason, however, we know that they are not dissatisfied and looking for a change is that all those who are seeking to bring about a change definitely expressed themselves at the polls. Not only that, they are propagandists and agitators, and they are seeking to stir up sentiment in their favor and to lead to the polls everyone whom they can influence to vote their way. When selfish and subversive elements are acting in this way, and when people who love America and the blessings of religious freedom are too indifferent to

express themselves, then we may look to a time when we lose our freedom, and that in no distant day.

In former days, all the people who voted simply expressed their preference of a policy or a party. They were all agreed in the basic principles of our government and were in favor of perpetuating our way of life. They voted then because they believed that certain men or certain principles would be to the best interest of all the people. Today there is a different picture. Many of those today who vote are not considering what will be to the interest of the whole people, they are seeking the interest of a group, an organization or of an ideology, and perhaps they are seeking the interest of a foreign power. And people who are motivated in this way never fail to express their votes and to take advantage of every opportunity to advance the thing they are seeking to serve.

These sentiments may seem a little out of place in Harding College, for no one knows any better than does your speaker that Brother J. N. Armstrong who was the founder of the college, and Brother J. A. Harding for whom the school was named, believed that Christians should only submit to the powers that be and should not even exercise the privilege of voting. Brother David Lipscomb held this idea and advocated it; he was the chief exponent of this idea among our people. Your speaker of the day was reared under the teaching of David Lipscomb and sat at his feet for many years. For this, he devoutly gives thanks and honors the memory of these men as few others do in this age.

In a general way he is still in complete harmony with the teaching of these men of blessed memory. He has come to think, however, that they went too far when they taught that Christians should not exercise the right of suffrage. When we submit to the powers that be in our country, we are not submitting to a man or a group of men for no man and no group of men are permanently in power. We are submitting to a principle and in submitting we are required to uphold and support that principle.

In the day of our fathers, as we have said, all the people of America were thoroughly agreed in their attitude toward our government and were all heart and soul in favor of upholding and supporting it. Then it was not so necessary that men vote upon the policies of the day. Furthermore, it must be remembered that when Paul taught us to submit to the powers that be, there was nothing else that Christians could do then except to be rebels and to suffer death. They had no choice in putting the men into power who then ruled, nor did they have any choice in taking a man out of power when he

misruled. The governments of that day were not governments of the people, by the people, and for the people; and there was nothing, therefore, for men to do but to submit and obey the laws, except when a law interfered with the will of God.

Surely we can see that there is a vast difference in that system and in the system that we have where we ourselves can change the law if it interferes with the will of God, and we do not have to submit or die. It is because we have the right to make our laws and to put men into power who will rule in a way that is favorable for our homes, our schools and our churches, that we should preserve these great blessings for our children. That is why we should arouse ourselves to the tendencies of our time and gird ourselves for the battle against the isms and the subversive activities in our midst that would rob us of our heritage and enslave our people. We submit to those in power only until we can remove them from their positions, when they are not representing our people and acting for all the nation.

These are our blessings and for these we thank God devoutly, and we sound a warning to the Christians of this day to arouse them from their lethargy and indifference and to make them stand up and be counted for the right. If we will only consider what is happening today in other parts of the world, we will surely be more appreciative of the blessings we have here, and will bestir ourselves to persevere and to perpetuate the government that has vouchsafed to us these boundless benefits. Today we are sending missionaries to Africa, to Holland, to Germany, to Japan, to China, and to many other countries. But you have not heard of any messenger of the gospel going behind the Iron Curtain. You have not sent any herald of Salvation into any country that has fallen a victim to Russian despotism. Even now our government has called all our nationals, which will include our missionaries, out of poor, bleeding China, a country against which our nation has sinned more than it ever sinned against any other people. For nearly ten years, we supplied Japan with munitions and material with which to murder China. Then, after we had destroyed the war government of Japan, we gave honor and position and emoluments to Russia which she should never have had; while we looked upon China's helpless state and passed by on the other side. Now we are calling Christians out of China to keep them from being murdered by the ruthless Reds.

We should confess our sins today as we give thanks; and we should pray earnestly for those who are in a measure victims of our blunderings. This will include many of the Soviet satellite nations as well as Germany and China.

Especially should we pray that our people should awake out of their sleep before we lose our heritage and become ourselves the victims of a spirit of atheistic brutality, spawned in Russia but bred and fostered in our own land.

Our fathers' God to Thee,
Author of liberty,
To Thee, we sing.
Long may our land be bright
With freedom's holy light;
Protect us by Thy might,
Great God, our King.

The Eternal God

by

Melvin Wise

*"The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms."
(Deuteronomy 33:27.)*

Belief in the eternal God is the primary foundation of Christian faith. The writer of the Hebrew letter said, "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." (Hebrews 11:6.) Hence we should earnestly seek to know God as he is revealed in the Bible. God is gradually made known to us in the holy scriptures. From the first verse to the last one, there is revealed step by step, a gradual unfolding of the nature, power, wisdom and mercy of God.

GOD IS SELF-EXISTENT

The child's question, "Who made God?", is a perfectly natural and proper question, but the true answer is perhaps not such as the child would expect. Jesus said, "The Father hath life in himself." (John 5:26.) Therefore God is Creator, and is not a created being; he owes his life to no other being or cause; he is not dependent on anything outside himself for his own existence. God is uncreated, unoriginated, having no beginning nor ending. He is the great Original with an existence all his own. Hence God has said, "If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine, and the fullness thereof." (Psalms 50:12.)

God is the source of all that lives; he is the fountain of all life. "He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things." (Acts 17:25.) To his brethren at Rome, Paul said, "For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever." (Romans 11:36.)

Just as the sun is the source of all true light, so God is the source of all good gifts. Every grateful person knows that "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." (James 1:17.)

Our impulse to assign to everything a cause is so strong and so necessary to our ordinary thinking that it is accounted impossible among some people for our minds to hold to the idea of independent and uncaused existence. If we do not entertain the idea of a cause for the existence of God, we shall find ourselves entertaining it concerning the universe. We cannot conceive the idea of a self-existent universe. God we do not see, but we do see the world about us. The universe was here before we came, before our fathers and grandfathers lived. No sign of its origin is apparent as we look, and the more we know of it, although we may trace many things to their beginning, yet the less does a date of absolute origination appear.

We may refer the existence of the universe back to God and say that it owes itself to a power and will that lie back of it, and then we may say that this power is God. Or we may profess agnosticism on the subject and declare that we do not know from whence the universe came; but this is only another way of saying that so far as we can see, the universe exists independently of any causation, which is practically to call it self-existent. Hence we are forced to believe either in a self-existing God, adequate to the causing of the universe, or in a universe apparently existing of itself.

That which an unbiased mind can most easily believe is that the only self-existence which is consistent with reason is the self-existence of a sufficient God. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth," is the most logical and sound reason we can accept for the creation of the universe.

GOD IS ETERNAL

Since God's existence had no beginning it will have no ending. He always was, always is, and always will be. By the eternal God is meant in common speech that the God whose existence has neither beginning nor ending, is a God, who by his nature, has ever been and must forever be.

To be self-existent is to be eternal. To be self-existent is to be without beginning, and by natural implication it is to be without end. Self-existence is simply existence wholly independent. As nothing initiated it, so nothing can terminate it. It is essentially eternal without limits upon its duration.

It is not possible for us to properly portray the eternity of God. As Paul said, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" (Romans 11:33.) It is not possible for us to grasp it in our thoughts. It is so vast that the narrow mind of man is

utterly unable to comprehend it. But that is no reason against our affirming it. Existence without a beginning or an ending is beyond our power to comprehend, but notwithstanding this it stands as a necessary element in our faith. Even though eternity of being is beyond our range of thought, it contains no element of absurdity. It is rational to believe in the eternal God.

One reason that we cannot comprehend the eternity of God is because our minds are controlled and limited by time. Time influences us to set one thing before and another after. We speak of yesterday, today and tomorrow. We live exclusively in the duration of time, with the past behind us, the present with us and the future ahead of us; but "one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." (II Peter 3:8.) God created time, but we cannot say that he created eternity any more than he created himself.

What is time? The common definition is that it is duration measured by succession. Webster says that it is "that in which events are distinguished with reference to before and after." Ingersoll said that time is "The short barren space between two cold bleak points of eternity." In speaking of time as something distinct and different from eternity, it seems best to say that time is only a mode in which God has caused finite beings to exist, and eternity is the unlimited mode in which he himself exists. When God shall cause embodied spirits to cease to exist in this present mode, and to exist under another, men with them "time shall be no more."

The scriptures often refer to God as eternal. Moses said, "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms." (Deuteronomy 33:27.) Elihu, Job's friend, magnified the eternal God in these words, "Behold, God is great, and we know him not, neither can the number of his years be searched out." (Job 36:26.) David praised God with these words, "But the Lord shall endure for ever: he hath prepared his throne for judgment." (Psalms 9:7.) The Psalmist again lauded the eternity of God in these immortal words, "Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God." (Psalms 90:1-2.) Isaiah declared that God "inhabited eternity." (Isaiah 57:15.) Jeremiah said, "But the Lord is the true God, he is the living God, and an everlasting king." (Jeremiah 10:10.) Again the weeping prophet said, "Thou, O Lord, remainest for ever; my throne from generation to generation." (Lamentations 5:19.) Daniel said of the eternity of God, "For he is the living God, and steadfast for ever, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." (Daniel

Since God is eternal and since all life comes from him, it follows that he is the author of eternal life. Throughout the Old Testament, Jehovah is spoken of as the eternal God. Hence in the New Testament the expression "eternal life" is often used and becomes the standing expression for the highest good that the religion of Jesus Christ can bring to the world. The "eternal life" promised by the Lord is an unending life that partakes of the eternity of God above time and changes; life whose everlastingness is precious by reason of the fellowship it affords us with the eternal God.

GOD IS INFINITE

The word "infinite" has long been a familiar and favorite word in the Christian doctrine of God. The word itself simply means without bounds, or unlimited. When God is called the Infinite Being, it is meant that upon his powers and qualities there are no limitations. The true Christian religion impels the soul to stand in awe before a being who impresses it as infinite. Doubtless the thought of God has done far more to enrich the word "infinite" than the word has done to define or exalt the thought of God.

God is infinite in his presence—he is omnipresent. As eternity affirms that God is not limited to time, so omnipresence affirms that God is not limited to space. Furthermore, as God is not temporal, so also he is not local in the sense of being confined to any particular place. His activity extends to every point of space just as he spans all time. Inasmuch as he can and does put himself into relation with all space, which he created himself, we may also say of him that he is here, there, everywhere, simultaneously. This is what is meant by his omnipresence.

"Though God extends beyond creation's rim;
The smallest atom holds the whole of Him."

The scriptures abound in proof of the omnipresence of God. Solomon said, "But who is able to build him an house, seeing the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain him? who am I then, that I should build him an house, save only to bum sacrifice before him?" (II Chronicles 2:6.) David praised God for his all-seeing providence in these words, "Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." (Psalms 139:7-10.) Again Israel's sweet singer said, "The Lord looketh down from heaven; he beholdeth all the sons of men." (Psalms 33:13.)

Solomon said, "The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good." (Proverbs 13:3.) The Lord said through one of his prophets, "Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the Lord. Do not I fill heaven and earth?" (Jeremiah 23:24.) In Stephen's memorable speech which he made just before he was martyred for Christ, he said, "Howbeit the most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands; as saith the prophet, Heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool: what house will ye build me? said the Lord: or what is the place of my rest?" (Acts 7:48-49.) The meaning here is that the ancient temple of Solomon, as grand and exquisite as it was, was infinitely too small to contain and conceal the living God. In Paul's great speech that he made on Mars' Hill, he said, "God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is worshiped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; And hath made the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation." (Acts 17:24-26.) Hence, instead of God being the god of some single nation over which he presides and defends against all others, actually he created every nation of people, made them all from one man, to dwell on the face of the whole earth.

God is infinite in his knowledge—he is omniscient. By the omniscience of God is meant his perfect knowledge. God knows everything that is an object of knowledge. His knowledge is eternal. There never was a period of time when God knew more or less than he knows now, nor will there ever be such a period. He never learns; he never forgets. The expression "I will remember their sin no more," is used metaphorically. God will remember a forgiven sin no more in that he will not hold the forgiven sinner accountable for it.

Since God is eternal he shall, therefore, forever exist to possess his perfect knowledge; his knowledge is not limited by time. Also since God is omnipresent, he is, therefore, everywhere present with all his power of knowing; his knowledge is not limited by space. Inasmuch as God made all things, he knows all about all that he has made. God needs to know all that is involved in the task of caring for his creatures, hence Jesus said, "But the very hairs of your head are all numbered." (Matthew 10:30.) God needs to know all men, good and evil, that he may judge them aright. Therefore "The Lord looketh down from heaven; he beholdeth all the sons of men." (Psalms 33:13.) Paul also said, "Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do." (Hebrews 4:13.)

God foreknows the free acts of men, for Solomon said to the Lord, "For thou, even thou only, knowest the hearts of all the children of men." (I Kings 8:39.) But we cannot conceive that knowledge of events has any power to determine those events. Not even God's knowledge has that effect. The inspired writers of the Bible everywhere assumed that an event can be foreknown and be free.

Many scriptures emphasize the omniscience of God. We read in the Old Testament that "The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him." (II Chronicles 16:9.) David bore testimony to the infinite knowledge of God in these words, "O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off." (Psalms 139:1-2.) Daniel affirmed that God's knowledge is infinite, for said he: "He revealeth the deep and secret things: he knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him." (Daniel 2:22.) James said, "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world." (Acts 15:18.) John declared that God "knoweth all things." (I John 3:20.)

God is infinite in his power—he is omnipotent. A companion to the omnipresence and omniscience of God is his omnipotence. Since God is eternal, not limited to time; since he is omnipresent, not limited in space; since he is omniscient, not limited in knowledge; it naturally follows that he is omnipotent, not limited in power. Furthermore, inasmuch as God is self-existent, he is able to maintain his own existence.

Throughout the Old Testament scriptures there is emphasized the omnipotence of God. The Hebrew word for God, *El* or *Elohim*, was probably derived from the root word meaning, "to be strong," and according to a popular etymology current in ancient Israel, the name "Jehovah," or "Yahweh," expressed originally the idea of independent power, or self-existence. "I AM THAT I AM," is the idea.

This idea of the divine omnipotence of God was carried over into the New Testament, and forms the background of its teaching. It was faith, not mere reason, that led Jesus to say, "With God all things are possible" (Matthew 19:26), and that led Paul to say, "Now unto him that is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us." (Ephesians 3:20.)

What exactly is implied in the idea of omnipotence? Are there limits to God's divine power? If so what are they? Some have con-

tended that he must be able to draw a triangular which has but two angles; that he must be able to make two plus two equal five; that he must be able to make a straight stick with only one end; and that if he is not able to do such irrational and self-contradictory things as these, then he is not omnipotent. Certainly there are limitations to God's moral omnipotence. All that sane advocates of divine omnipotence have ever meant is that God can do all things that he wills to do. To say that God, if omnipotent, must be able to do everything, whether conceivable or inconceivable, is not only to go beyond the demands of faith and reason, but to contradict them both. Reason and faith both imply that God has a nature, and without it his will would have no content or direction; without it his activity would be like the fable of the man that leaped upon a horse and rode off in all directions. Hence by the omnipotence of God we do not mean that he can do just anything, but that he can do anything that he wills to do, anything and everything that his own nature and character dictate should be done. Omnipotence can do anything that ought and needs to be done.

Let us note some passages of Holy Writ that emphasize God's omnipotence. Elihu, Job's friend, testified of the infinite power of the Lord when he said, "Behold, God is mighty, and despiseth not any: he is mighty in strength and wisdom." (Job 36:5.) Job said to the Lord, "I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee." (Job 42:2.) Concerning God's infinite power, David said, "Great is our Lord, and of great power: his understanding is infinite." (Psalms 147:5.) Jeremiah prayed these words unto Jehovah, "Ah Lord God! behold, thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee." (Jeremiah 32:17.) Daniel very appropriately said, "And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" (Daniel 4:35.)

GOD IS IMMUTABLE

The immutability of God certainly needs no proof after we recognize his self-existence, infinity and eternity. The One who is self-existent, infinite and eternal, cannot change; neither can he err, but eternally he is the same. The universe in itself is mutable, for it has no independent existence, but hangs upon a will that is not its own. But God is independent and self-existent, and is beyond the reach of alteration, and from eternity to eternity he is the same.

God cannot change and cannot err because of his moral attributes. He has always been and always will be the holy, righteous,

gracious and infallible God that he now is, who is absolutely worthy of all confidence and love. His goodness has not been developed and will never be altered; hence from everlasting to everlasting he remains the same with character infallible and immutable.

The scriptures abound in testimony to God's immutability. Balaam said, "God is not a man, that should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall not make it good?" (Numbers 23:19.) In praise to God for his immutability, David said, "The counsel of the Lord standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations." (Psalms 33:11.) To Jehovah, David said, "Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed." (Psalms 102:25-26.) Again the Psalmist said, "For ever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven." (Psalms 119:89.) In defense of his own immutability, the Lord said, "For I am the Lord, I change not." (Malachi 3:6.) In exhorting his brethren to be steadfast in the faith, Paul said, "That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to He, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us." (Hebrews 6:19.) To show that God is unchangeable and eternally the same, James said, "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." (James 1:17.) Such immutability, indeed, is the hope of the world.

THE ROLE OF MAN

The works of God magnify his glory. This is seen in his creation and consideration of man. David said, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? And the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honor. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou has put all things under his feet." (Psalms 8:4-6.) David again said, "Lord, what is man, that thou takest knowledge of him: or the son of man, that thou makest account of him: Man is like to vanity: his days are as a shadow that passeth away." (Psalms 144:3-4.) Here the Psalmist considers man as a cipher, a vapor, a brief moment, as nothing, compared to eternity. How can Jehovah, the mighty Creator of heaven and earth, take knowledge of such an atom as man? How can he "that inhabiteth eternity" stoop to regard the creation of a day—one that passeth away as a shadow? But the mighty God thought enough of man to create him in his own image (Genesis 1:26); and to provide a means of redemption for

man after he had sinned (Ephesians 1:10); and to give his only begotten Son to die for man's sins. (John 3:16.)

Why, then, should we allow our minds to be absorbed in the things of time and space, and to neglect the eternal things? Let us realize that "the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." (II Corinthians 4:18.) Let us, then, set our "affections on things above, not on things on the earth." (Colossians 3:2.)

Perhaps you stand now on the brink of either a happy or miserable eternity. Your Creator bids you come to him in gospel obedience in preparation for eternal happiness. One would imagine that no rational creature could think of anything else but to prepare himself for a never-ending eternity of joy and peace. One would think that this single thought would engross his whole attention. Certainly it ought so to do; certainly if these things be so, there can be but one thing needful. Then let us, at least, whatever others may do, choose that better part which shall never be taken from us.

O GOD, OUR HELP

O God, our help in ages past,
 Our hope for years to come,
 Our shelter from the stormy blast,
 And our eternal home.
 Beneath the shadow of Thy throne,
 Thy saints have dwelt secure;
 Sufficient is Thine arm alone,
 And our defense is sure.
 Before the hills in order stood,
 Or earth received her frame,
 From everlasting Thou art God,
 To endless years the same.
 A thousand ages in Thy sight,
 Are like an evening gone;
 Short as the watch that ends the night,
 Before the rising sun.
 Time, like an ever-rolling stream,
 Bears all its sons away;
 Then fly forgotten, as a dream
 Dies at the opening day.
 Our God, our help in ages past;
 Our hope for years to come;
 Be Thou our guard while troubles last,
 And our eternal home!

—Isaac Watts.

The Inspiration Of The Bible

by

George W. DeHoff

It is a great pleasure to be again at Harding College. Those of us who attended school here return often in spirit and always feel that no other place on earth is quite like Harding College. I shall be always grateful that I came under the influence of Brother J. N. Armstrong and Brother B. F. Rhodes, who are now gone on, as well as Brother Benson, Brother Sears and others who remain. Those who build here build not only for time but for eternity as well.

The subject assigned me is "The Inspiration of the Bible." The great saints of all ages have believed in the verbal or plenary inspiration of the Bible. It is assumed that all who are here today believe in the inspiration of the Bible. My task, therefore, is not to convert you, but it is to be hoped that some Jacob whose head is resting too lightly on the sacred rock of inspiration might be led to recognize the mysterious ladder by means of which God speaks to man.

The authority in Christendom is not an external organization nor a system of ceremonies or philosophy. It is not a vague system of human inquiry. The Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible is our authority in religion. This consists of a definite system of facts, doctrines, commandments and promises. Upon this solid rock, our faith is built. We can not ignore the heritage of our forefathers nor forget the testimony of those who have lived and died for Christ; we can not discard altogether our own experience as Christians—we have tasted the goodness of God—but, in the final analysis, all this is meaningless if the Bible be not inspired. Is the Bible inspired of God? This is our question.

DEFICIENCIES OF AN UNINSPIRED BIBLE

An uninspired Bible would indeed be a poor guide for men in religion. "Is the Bible inspired?" is really a question of whether we are following God or man. Is our religion of human or divine origin? An uninspired Bible would certainly have these defects:

It would give *no infallible standard of truth*. All the defects and mistakes of its authors would become ours together with our own. Every man would become his own authority.

An uninspired Bible would give *no authoritative ground for obedience or everlasting hope*. Its commands would become only suggestions; its assurances of everlasting life only the idle dream and fond desire of its writers.

An uninspired Bible *would not cultivate a docile and humble spirit* but would appeal to pride and reason. Men would become critics of the Bible instead of letting the Bible be a critic of man. Paul tells us (Hebrews 4:12) that the word of God is a "critic" of the thoughts and intents of the heart (from the Greek work "kritikos"). Modernism reverses this process and attempts to make the thoughts and intents of man's heart a critic of the Word of God.

We must not, however, overstate the case. Inspiration is not essential to the historical credibility of the scriptures. The facts of the Bible are established on historical grounds. That Jesus of Nazareth lived, died and arose again are established historical facts. We can sympathize with honest doubts especially in young men who are continually assailed by a campaign to discredit the scriptures, but what shall we say of those who refuse to investigate the firm historical ground upon which the Bible rests?

SOURCES OF MISAPPREHENSION

AH professed Christians agree that the Bible came from God. Why then is there any argument among them as to its inspiration? Why do some question whether or not it is the inspired truth? Perhaps there are many reasons for this. Some are: a misconception of what inspiration is and the evidence to support it; presuppositions and assumptions hostile to any supernatural fact; and a faulty interpretation of particular passages of the Bible bearing on the subject.

An unwary advocate of inspiration may adopt an extreme viewpoint which he can not defend and, when driven from it, find no secure stopping place short of infidelity. On the other hand, a kind hearted, liberal man in striving to get along with those who are losing their faith in inspiration may surrender the citadel to the enemy.

THE QUESTION BEFORE US

The question before us is simply: *In what sense is the Bible God's Word?* Is it divinely "breathed out" or not? What do we mean by "inspiration"?

Our question does not concern the *genuineness* of the scriptures. That is a question of authorship, of whether the men who are reputed to have written the Bible actually did so.

This question of inspiration does not deal with *Textual Criticism* of the integrity of the scriptures. That is a question of whether or not our Bible is the same as the original, of whether we have faithful copies of the sacred word.

We do not deal in this study with *Higher Criticism*, which is a study of the style, mode of thought and expression of the different writers by which the age and circumstances of different writers may be discovered.

Our problem is not one of *authenticity* which concerns the historical verity of the scriptures. Did the events really occur? This is not our problem.

Nor do we deal with the *canon* when we discuss inspiration. The canon has to do with which books belong in the Bible. Certain books are doubtless true which do not belong in the sacred canon because they are not inspired.

We do not discuss our *rule of faith* — is the Bible a sufficient guide in all matters of religion?

This discussion on inspiration does not deal with the *evidences for Christianity*. There is a great body of evidence in many fields to show that the Bible is the truth or at least to lead people to believe it is the truth.* That is not our question in this study.

Our question is: *In what sense is the Bible God's word?* Is the Bible a message from God? If so, in what sense? To what degree is it God's Word?

BOTH HUMAN AND DIVINE

The Bible is both human and divine. A document may be given from God so as to exclude all human authorship as when the decalogue was given by God and all people heard directly. (Exodus 20: 19-20.) The Bible is God's word throughout, and yet it is man's word throughout. It is not of man as to its source and does not depend on

* In a little volume entitled *Why We Believe the Bible* the author has attempted to give a brief review of some of these fields of evidence.

man as to its authority, but it is by man as to its medium. Yet it has not come through man as water runs through a lifeless pipe but through man as an agent voluntarily active and intelligent in its communication. The Bible is all human and all divine. It is 100 per cent a human production. From Genesis to Revelation it bears the stamp of its human authorship. At the same time, it is 100 per cent a divine production and bears unmistakable evidence of its divine origin.

The best statement of what we mean by inspiration is found in II Peter 1:21. "Holy men of God spake as they were moved (borne along) by the Holy Spirit." The men did the speaking but God gave the impulse. There is no other book like the Bible as there is no other person like Christ. Christ was both human and divine at the same time. He was a human being, clothed in human flesh and subject to the same temptations and desires as all of us. At the same time, he was the divine Son of God. Our Bible is both human and divine at the same time. Could not an all-powerful God leave men free to select their own words, utilize their own backgrounds, education and training and yet so supervise the Book as to have it free from error and a perfect production.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN REVELATION AND INSPIRATION

A man may receive a revelation from God without being inspired and he may be inspired to write something which he did not receive as a revelation. The multitudes who heard Christ speak received a revelation from God but they were not inspired. The people who heard God speak to Moses received a revelation from God but they were not inspired. God spoke to Joseph in a dream telling him to take the child Jesus into Egypt but there is no evidence that Joseph was inspired.

Many inspired men wrote under inspiration things which they knew without revelation. Luke no doubt knew of the letter of Claudius Lysias (Acts 23: 26-30) without any revelation from God. He doubtless knew that Caesar Augustus sent out a decree that all the world should be taxed without any revelation from God, but he was inspired to write these facts. Paul was broken-hearted for his Jewish brethren. He did not have to receive a revelation from God to learn this, but he was inspired to write this fact. Revelation is the process of God communicating truth to men. Inspiration is the process by which God guides men in writing the truth.

PRINCIPAL VIEWS OF INSPIRATION

There are several different views of inspiration. The principal ones are these:

(1) *Mechanical inspiration* or dictation. This is the theory that God selected and dictated every word of the Bible as a man dictates to his stenographer.

(2) Another theory is *partial inspiration*—that the Bible is inspired as to its doctrines, ideals and religion but not as to its historical facts and scientific ideas. This makes every man his own God and his own devil to decide what is God's word and what is not.

(3) *Degrees of inspiration*. It is contended by some that various parts of the Bible are inspired—some to one degree and some to another.

(4) *Natural inspiration* is the idea that certain people are by nature inspired while others are not.

(5) *Universal inspiration* is the idea that all men are inspired more or less.

(6) *Plenary or full inspiration* (sometimes called verbal inspiration) is the idea that all of the Bible is God's word, that it is infallible truth and of divine authority. It is the idea that the Bible is at the same time human and divine, that human beings wrote every word of it, but that the Holy Spirit so guided and directed these men that they wrote exactly what God wanted them to write without any errors or mistakes. This is the view that I am contending for in this study.

NEGATIVE STATEMENTS OF THE DOCTRINE

We do not claim to know the mode of divine influence in inspiration. This is a question of fact: Did God inspire men to write the Bible? It is not a question of theory or how he did it. I do not know the *how* of either revelation or inspiration. I do not know *how* the Holy Spirit dwelt within or influenced the apostles. Indeed, I do not know how my own spirit dwells within me, but I do not question the fact that he does.

We do not claim that inspiration is a mechanical process. The idea of mechanical inspiration came about because the Roman denomination called the church infallible. Those protesting against her false claims and assumptions cast about for something infallible. They swung to the extreme of making the word of God purely mechanical.

Calvinists in emphasizing the sovereignty of God forgot the will of man. Those who insisted on purely mechanical inspiration forgot the human part in producing the Bible; they overlooked the fact that God has power to make the Book both human and divine at the same time. We do not claim to know all about the process by which God spoke to Moses (Exodus 19:19), or at the baptism of Jesus (Matthew 3:7), or on the Mount of Transfiguration. (Matthew 7:5.) We do not know the process by which God spoke to Paul near Damascus. (Acts 26:14-18.) These are examples of revelation. We are able to speak to one another. Surely God could speak to any person at any time. That is *revelation*. Surely he could then give that person power to write the message and guide him as he did so. This is *inspiration*.

Inspiration does not destroy consciousness, self-control or individuality. Man is a combination of inheritance, environment, education and training. Every man is different. God used this material; he used these men as a means of writing his word.

Inspiration is not a natural elevation of man's spirit as in the case of poetic genius. Inspiration is a miraculous process and must be so regarded or actually it becomes no inspiration at all.

Inspiration does not give a perfect knowledge of all subjects or any subject. It did not render the writer infallible in other things. It did not make a man into a God. Inspiration had nothing to do with Paul's skill as a tentmaker or with his difficulty in speaking. Inspiration had only to do with the writing of a correct account. The prophets did not always understand their own words. (I Peter 1:10-12,.) Inspiration did not necessarily make them understand all they wrote; it was the process of God guiding them as they wrote.

THE BIBLE ON INSPIRATION

The Bible claims to be the inspired word of God:

"The law of the Lord is perfect." (Psalms 19:7.) This could hardly be said of an imperfect book filled with mistakes and errors.

"Forever, O Lord, thy word settled in heaven." (Psalms 119:89.) If we are continually discovering that it is filled with errors and we are having to decide which parts are true and which false, it is not settled in heaven or anywhere else.

Jesus said, "The scriptures can not be broken" (John 10:35.) He alluded to the Old Testament. The Jews at that time had all of the present Old Testament books which they regarded as the word of God.

They had certain other books which were highly regarded but were not counted as inspired. Jesus was acquainted with the Old Testament. He said "The scriptures,"—the writings—"cannot be broken." In John 5:38 he said. "The scriptures testify of me." In Matthew 5:17-18 he said, "One jot or one tittle shall not pass away until all be fulfilled."

Paul states: "Every scripture is inspired of God." (II Timothy 3:15.) "Scripture" means "the writing"; "inspired" carries with it the idea of "breathed out" hence here is a statement that God breathed out the words which have been written. "For the prophecy came not in olden times by the will of man . . . holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." (II Peter 1:21.)

Jesus said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away but my word shall not pass away." (Matt. 24:35.) Fifty times the New Testament calls the Old Testament "the scriptures." The writer of the book of Hebrews said, "And God said," a number of times throughout the book.

In speaking of his death our Lord said, "Thus it is written and thus it behooved the Christ to suffer." It "behooved" Christ to pay attention to what God had written. Will it not "behoove" us to do the same thing?

Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit to guide the apostles into all truth. (John 16:13.) When we read the Bible we are not reading what the apostles selected of their own accord; we are reading what the Holy Spirit guided them to select and to write.

SOME EXAMPLES

When God gave the ten commandments, he said, "I have talked with you." (Exodus 20:1.)

Balaam's ass spoke the word of God to rebuke his master. (Numbers 22:28.) This is perhaps an example of purely mechanical inspiration as we can hardly conceive of the animal being given the idea and left to choose his own words.

Caiaphas spoke by inspiration of God without knowing it. (John 11:49-52.) He said it was expedient that one should die for the nation. God used the feelings and words of this evil man to deliver his message to the people.

When Jesus sent out the disciples he said, "Take no thought" for what you shall say. God gave them the very words which they were to say. Paul said, we speak "Not in words which man's wisdom teacheth

but which the Holy Ghost teacheth." (I Corinthians 2:3) The Holy Spirit taught the apostles what to say—what to write. We have, there, fore, the word of God. If God had wanted another "i" dotted or another "t" crossed, he would have had it done. The writers did not use one word unless God wanted that word used. They put in every word which God wanted them to put into the Bible. Major arguments are sometimes based on the use of one letter. "He saith not, and to seeds as of many; but as of one, and to thy seed, which is Christ." (Galatians 3:16.)

On Pentecost day (of Acts 2) the Holy Spirit enabled the apostles to speak in other languages—languages which they had never studied.

SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD DOES NOT EXCLUDE MEANS

The sovereignty of God does not preclude the employment of secondary causes. God works through means in dealing with us. If he has used means in accomplishing his sovereign will regarding other things, why should it be thought incredible that he would use means—words—to get his message of truth to us?

At the Red Sea God caused the wind to blow. This wind was like any other wind but God was using it to divide the sea. (Exodus 14.)

God used the waters of the Jordan to heal the leprosy of Naaman. (II Kings 5.) The water was like any other water but on that day it was used of God for a special purpose.

Our blessed Lord put clay on the eyes of the blind man and had him to wash in the pool of Siloam. (John 9.) This clay was like any other clay; this water was like any other water but God used them on this day to accomplish his mission.

The words of the Bible are human words but God guided the men who selected them and used these words to deliver his message to us. Like the organist sweeping the keyboard and bringing forth a minor strain, then a joyous major refrain, so God has placed his hand on the head of the weeping prophet Jeremiah, the scholarly Doctor Luke, and the lion-hearted Paul and used them all to accomplish his will. One man may write prose or poetry; he may write tender words that move us to tears or words that sear and bum. Should it be thought incredible that the Creator of the universe could guide different men as they wrote all the different types of literature found in the Bible?

NO INSPIRATION WITHOUT WORDS

We can not think without using words. There is no music without notes; no arithmetic without numbers. There is no revelation without

words and there is no inspiration without God guiding the writers in selecting the words.

Of course, there are some difficulties to believing in the inspiration of the Bible. Every difficulty is caused by our lack of information. As we learn more, these difficulties vanish. It is a rather sorry excuse to make our own ignorance the reason for criticizing the Word of Almighty God.

AN INDESTRUCTIBLE BOOK

The Bible is an indestructible book. Wars have been fought; victories have been won. Every page in this Book has been stained with blood. It has come down to us through great trial and tribulation. In every generation some one has come forth to tear it to pieces and criticize it. Such attacks have only called forth defenders of the Book in ever-increasing numbers. Every attack has been met; every argument has been answered.

Into every country of the world believers are going with the Word of God. Its blessed influence is gaining strength and power and when the last battle has been fought and the last victory has been won, when the last attack has been made and the last drop of martyr's blood has been shed, when the last song has been sung and the last prayer has been prayed, the earth will melt with fervent heat and the skies shall be rolled up as a scroll, but Christians will stand before the Lord, the Righteous Judge and see opened their book which guided their weary feet and brought them at last safely home. "Even so, come Lord Jesus." Amen!

"The Bible Confirmed By History"

by

F. W. Mattox

Christianity is a religion that is based upon both facts and ideas. If you separate ideas from facts you have mere philosophy. If facts alone were considered apart from ideas you would have mere history. In Christianity we have a perfect blending of facts and ideas which have worked together to produce the perfect religion and serve to convince the mind of man of its divinity. These facts and ideas so blended in Christianity cannot be separated. To do so would produce the same result as it would to separate the warp from the woof in a fine tapestry.

You can separate the person of Confucius from Confucianism without doing injury to this ancient oriental religion. You can separate the person of Mohammed from Mohammedanism and do no damage to this medieval religious development, but contrariwise, you cannot separate the person of Christ from Christianity. To do so absolutely destroys any hope for absolution from sin and all hope of immortality. Should this be attempted what would be left would be mere philosophy, for the remission of sins rests upon the historical facts of the crucifixion of Christ and the hope of immortality rests upon the historical fact of his resurrection and ascension. This is why we say Christianity is a perfect blending of both facts and ideas.

It is in regard to the facts of Christianity that we are to deal here. To us these facts are of necessity historical facts as they took place long before we were born. Our purpose is to see how the historical facts of the Bible manifest that it is an inspired and revealed message from God to man. This study is not made at this time because there has been new historical evidence found to cause one to doubt the truth of the Christian faith, for new evidence has continued to better establish the Christian claims. This study is made to cause one to better see the false claims of the Modernists. By Modernists we mean those who reject the Bible as an inspired revealed message of God to man. The Modernist's faith (for it too is a faith) is based upon the conclusions of Naturalism. They believe fundamentally in the idea that there can be nothing out of or beyond nature and nature's laws

as they understand them. They deny the virgin birth because it is contrary to nature. They deny the resurrection of Jesus and all of his miracles for the same cause. Having thus accepted the belief that nothing has ever been or can ever be contrary to the regular workings of nature they reject the Bible as divine and instead of examining evidence to see if it might be true, they begin to try to explain why anyone ever thought that it was true. This study then is a challenge to all to make a careful examination of the Christian's claims. For if all historical evidence is accurate, there is good reason to believe the whole is accurate.

We will note first that any work which deals with historical facts in any way must represent these facts accurately or men cannot put any trust in it. Many documents have been rejected by the scholarship of the world by the discovery of historical fraud. The false document called Pseudo Isidorian Decretals which was used by the Medieval Catholic Church to exalt the authority of the Pope is an outstanding example of this. Any historical inaccuracy in a work immediately raises suspicion upon the whole work. If this is true in the works of men it would be doubly true if found in a work claiming to have come from the all knowing God.

Secondly, we call attention to the fact that in historical works, accuracy in regard to detailed information which can be corroborated by other testimony, leads one to accept as accurate other statements which cannot be readily verified. This fact, in regard to the mind of man, is played upon by the unscrupulous, as in the above mentioned Pseudo Isidorian Decretals, where unknown falsehood was intermixed with known truth to produce a given effect. Such treachery, however, cannot long stand the penetrating light of investigation. The best of frauds are soon found out and in this regard I call your attention to the fact that no written document has ever had such careful scrutiny as has the Bible.

Third, let us notice that the Bible is not designed as primarily a historical work. God has revealed no history merely for the sake of history. The Bible is an intermixture of facts and ideas. The facts were necessary to the ideas or the ideas were established by facts. This means that every historical *fact* of the Bible is an incidental narrative that gives meaning to the *idea* which God is presenting. This means that many historical facts would be merely alluded to or mentioned in fragments. This is exactly what one finds in the Bible.

Consider then the difficulty that would be upon the builder of fraud. According to the best human judgment it would be impossible to allude in an incidental way to the hundreds of historical references

found in the Bible without making innumerable mistakes, if such were the work of later minds who were fabricating a fraud. On the other hand when we consider the hundreds of historical facts mentioned in the Bible, those stated clearly and those alluded to incidentally and those in fragmentary form, and realize that each one has been carefully scrutinized by the world's best informed minds and each still stands out in its brilliant accuracy we have a strong comfort to the believer and an unrelenting embarrassment to the skeptic.

It is not my purpose here to leave the impression that historical accuracy is the only evidence of scriptural divinity. The miracles of Christ, the fulfillment of prophecy, and the testimony of early martyrs as well as the effect of Christianity on the lives of those who drink deep into it, and other such points as its beautiful internal harmony, are each separately powerful in convincing earnest seekers after truth. Taken together, the impact is overwhelming. Yet the force of the first three of these types of evidence depends upon historical proof. Let us look then at a few of the many historical facts that prove the divinity of the Bible.

The Spirit of Revelation says that Christ came in the "fullness of time." This statement itself refers to the historic setting for the beginning of the new and final dispensation. The world was at peace because of the world government. Great roads and shining lanes made communications the best the world had ever seen up to that time. The most accurate of languages was widely used and through God's dealings with the children of Abraham a people had been prepared in prophecy and promise for the world's redeemer.

With all of these favorable conditions awaiting the establishment of the new kingdom other conditions were quite the opposite, for Christianity sprang up under the most adverse conditions. The Roman world was satisfied with its religions. Mithraism, Zoroastrianism, Neo-Platonism, along with the Eleusinian mysteries, and the hold over of the Greek Zeus and his whole family of mythical half-Gods quite satisfied the Roman's feeling for the supernatural. The philosophies of the Stoics and Epicureans gave answer to the need for a moral code and the Roman mind was content in its philosophy and sensuality.

In the religions mentioned in this brief sketch we see illustrated the universal truth that all natural religious developments are in harmony with natural tendencies. The gods are made to be like the worshipers and the religious rites are as sensual and immoral as the tendencies of fallen man. This consideration itself is strong evidence of the divinity of Christianity. For it is a historical truth that Chris-

tianity gave the world a new concept of God as well as a new concept of man. The newness of these concepts in the fact that they are in opposition to human tendencies is strong evidence of their being divinely given. The claim of the modernist that the Christian religion came as a slow mythical development has no historical evidence to support it. History is abundant in its evidence that the Christian religion made a sudden appearance, and even though it was contrary to human tendencies its spread was phenomenal.

Before going further we should state that this study now logically falls into three parts: (1) The historical evidence concerning the claim of Christianity being of divine origin (2) The historical accuracy of the recorded events mentioned in the scriptures (3) The historical evidence of fulfilled prophecy. Since the last division has been dealt with many times it will not be included in the scope of the present study.

First we will notice the claims made by the Bible. By claims I do not mean that they are to be found in clear statements but rather by implication. Although implied they are still real claims and must be reckoned with.

1. The New Testament claims that Christianity is a revealed religion with a miraculous beginning. This claim is denied by Modernists who say it is the result of a natural development. For years atheists denied the existence of Christ on the earth and claimed his entire life was a mythical development. To the educated mind this denial is one of the greatest of the curiosities of literature. It is the result of the impact of naturalism which forced its adherents to great extremes in their efforts to eliminate the supernatural. To them, the easiest way to eliminate the Christ was to deny his existence in the person of Jesus of Nazareth. A person holding this view is either unlearned or has no sense of the reality of historical evidence.

Following the reasoning of such mycologists, it is as easy and convincing to prove that Napoleon Bonaparte never lived as that Jesus did not. Look at the evidence. The life of Jesus is referred to in a convincing way by the Jewish historian, Josephus. There is in this work the disputed passage in which the resurrection of Jesus is mentioned and also the undisputed narrative of the death of James the brother of Jesus.

New light, however, has been given concerning the disputed passage in Josephus. This passage, which is in all printed copies of Josephus, is as follows: "Now there was about this time Jesus, a wise man, if it be lawful to call him a man; for he was a doer of wonderful

works, a teacher of such men as receive truth with pleasure. He drew over to him both many of the Jews and many of the Gentiles. He was the Christ. And when Pilate, at the suggestion of the principle men amongst us, had condemned him to the cross, those that loved him at the first did not forsake him; for he appeared to them alive again the third day; as the divine prophets had foretold these and ten thousand other wonderful things about him. And the tribe of Christians, so named from him, are not extinct at this day." This passage has been rejected by scholars not only because Josephus was an unbeliever in Christ, but also because it appears out of place. In the context Josephus is describing tumults in Palestine, and scholars for this reason reject the passage as an interpolation by some later believer.

A new discovery of a North Slavic manuscript of Josephus, however, gives an entirely new slant on this passage. In fact it is as follows: "At that time a man appeared, if he can be called a man. His nature and his body were human, but his appearance was more than human. He performed miracles through some invisible power. Some said of him that he was our first Lawgiver (Moses), risen from the dead, and making himself known by many healings and magic works; others thought that he was sent by God. I, personally, in view of his whole life, should not call him a messenger of God." The passage then goes on to describe the tumult raised by the followers of Jesus. This treatment of the influence of Jesus is in perfect harmony with what one would expect from Josephus and is in perfect harmony with his relating other cases of tumult. The explanation that some Christians changed the testimony of Josephus to be in favor of Christ is logical to believe. But an injustice was done the cause of Christ by so doing. The original testimony by coming from an unbeliever is much more convincing as to the truth of the earthly existence of Christ.

Other testimony from Josephus, as to Jesus being a historical character, is found in a statement that has never been questioned as genuine. This is the passage that tells of the death of James, the brother of Jesus in the following words: "But this younger Ananias who took the high priesthood, was a bold man in his temper, and very insolent, when therefore he thought he now had a proper opportunity to exercise his authority he assembled the Sanhedrin and brought before them the brother of Jesus who was called Christ, whose name was James and some others and when he had formed an accusation against them he delivered them to be stoned."

The earthly existence of Jesus is further proved by the Jewish Talmud which dates back to the first century. Loible, in his great work, *Jesus Christ in the Talmud*, has brought to light forty-one

such passages. Here you have derogatory references to the Mother of Jesus and his birth. Joseph and Mary Magdalene and the Lord's disciples are repeatedly mentioned. Even the miracles of Jesus are discussed and ascribed to magic. If Jesus had never lived these Jews would never have used the tactics they did. For no one would fight a mythical character the way these Jews fought Jesus. It would have suited their purpose much better to expose the myth. But Jesus being a real character they could not thus so recognize him.

In the year 64 Nero is believed to have had an important part in burning out the slums of Rome, and as suspicion began to be placed on him he turns this hatred to the Christians. Tacitus, who was born A.D. 61 says this, "But neither all human help nor the liberality of the Emperor, nor all the atonements presented to the gods, availed to abate the infamy he lay under of having ordered the city to be set on fire. To suppress, therefore, this common rumor, Nero procured others to be accused, and inflicted exquisite punishment upon those people, who were in abhorrence for their crimes, and were commonly known by the name of Christians. They had their denomination from Christ, who in the reign of Tiberius was put to death as a criminal by the procurator Pontius Pilate. This pernicious superstition, though checked for a while, broke out again, and spread not only over Judea, the source of this evil, but reached the city also; whither flow from all quarters all things vile and shameful, and where they find shelter and encouragement. At first they were only apprehended who confessed themselves of that sect; afterwards a vast multitude discovered by them, all of which were condemned." Here we have not only reference to the person of Jesus but also accurate harmony with scriptures as to the time and place of the beginning of Christianity. Note also that within thirty years of the death of Jesus Christ, many Christians were being persecuted in Rome.

Suetonius, who was born about 70 A.D., wrote the lives of several of the Roman emperors. In his *Life of Nero* he refers to Christianity as a "new magical superstition." In his *Life of Claudius* he said, "He banished the Jews from Rome, who were continually making disturbances, Christ being their leader."

In the year 103 Pliny the younger was sent by the Emperor Trajan to be governor of Pontus and Bithinia. Here he found many Christians and upon looking into their faith by means of torture, found that they believed in Christ as a divine person. Pliny, in writing Trajan concerning them says, "I have never been present at any trials of Christians: so that I know not well what is the subject matter of punishment, or of inquiry, or what strictness ought to be used in

either. Nor have I been a little perplexed to determine whether any difference ought to be made upon account of age, or whether the young and tender, and the full grown and robust, ought to be treated all alike; whether repentance should entitle to pardon, or whether all who have once been Christians ought to be punished, though they are no longer so; whether the name itself, although no crimes be detected, or crimes only belonging to the name, ought to be punished. Concerning all these things I am in doubt."

Trajan's reply in part is as follows: "You have taken the right method, my Pliny, in your proceedings with those who have been brought before you as Christians; for it is impossible to establish any one rule that shall hold universally. They are not to be sought for. If any are brought before you and are convicted, they ought to be punished. However, he that denies his being a Christian, and makes it evident in fact, that is by supplicating to our gods, though he be suspected by having been formerly, let him be pardoned upon repentance."

This testimony alone, given by the enemies of Christ, proves that Christianity made a sudden appearance at the very time and place claimed in the New Testament and that its characters really lived.

When we turn to the friends of Christianity for their testimony the evidence is equally forceful. The scripture, attested to be both external and internal evidence, is a result that must be explained as to its cause. The only satisfactory explanation for its development is to accept it as inspired by God to men living in the first century. Before the year 95 A.D. Clement of Rome quotes from Corinthians, Ephesians, Hebrews, and I Peter and this again proves the early development and dissemination of the Christian Faith.

No longer should intelligent people be led to believe that Christianity had a mythical beginning. Evidence is in perfect harmony with the implied claims of scripture that Christianity made a sudden appearance, that it spread over the Roman Empire during the first century, that it was opposed by the rulers, and its adherents were persecuted in large numbers within thirty years of the death of Christ. Myths cannot grow that fast.

The second phase of this study is concerning the harmony of historical facts recorded in the Bible with other commonly accepted history. We first call attention to the belief, commonly held by all historians, that recorded history of man fades out about 5,000 years back from the present. The Bible records events back another 1,000 years. Yet when there is comparison made between Bible history and

any evidence by which it can be compared there is very apparent harmony.

Skeptics of revelation used to maintain that Moses could not have written according to Bible claim, because writing had not developed in his day. This claim is no longer made since the discovery of the Laws of Hammurabi. Here we have not only distinct writing but a codified body of laws dealing with agriculture, commerce, social relations, etc., written 500 years before the time of Moses. Recent discoveries have added hundreds of clay tablets recording the history of Egyptian and Babylonian kings, many of whom are mentioned in the Bible. The Hittites, who were once claimed by skeptics to be a mythical people, have been proved to have been in every respect what the Bible claims for them. In such matters as these the skeptics have been pushed back, point by point from their Biblical attacks.

Every character mentioned in the Bible that lived within the reaches of recorded history is found to be in his proper setting as to time, place and type of character. The emperors of Rome, Augustus, Tiberius, and Claudius are each mentioned accurately. The governors Quirinius, Pontius Pilate, Felix, Festus, Sergius Paulus and Gallic are each found to be truthfully portrayed in scripture.

In regard to the government of Palestine we have one of the best opportunities for examining the historical accuracy of the Bible. This is true because of the complex nature of the government. Josephus records that within fifty years from the birth of Christ the government of Palestine was changed in its form, five times. If the events of the New Testament were the product of the imagination it would be a miracle within itself that a story of many parts and characters could be made to live in such a complex government without making mistakes and without showing a strained effort to make it all harmonize. In the New Testament there is not only perfect harmony but there is no effort at all toward showing the harmony. Events are allowed to progress in the most casual way and the student has many opportunities for examination of their accuracy. Lack of space prohibits a lengthy comparison here but the following brief sketch will suffice for any who desire to study this point further.

At the time of the birth of Christ, Palestine was subjected to the sole government of Herod the Great (under the Emperor Augustus). Next Herod's dominions were partitioned amongst his sons, which one, Archelaus reigned over Judea with the title of King. After this, Judea was reduced to the condition of a Roman province, while Galilee, Ituraea and Trachonitis continued under princes. Then under Herod Agrippa I, the old kingdom of Palestine was restor-

ed. Finally the whole country was reduced under Roman rule and Roman procurators were re-established, while a certain degree of deference is paid to Herod Agrippa II to whom Festus refers Paul's case for a special hearing.

By studying the New Testament alone it would be difficult, if not impossible to ascertain these many changes in government, but by having the government described by Josephus, the brief remarks referring to it in scripture can well be compared and in every test case the accuracy of Holy Writ is clearly apparent.

Every historical event recorded in the Bible is accurate. The census that Luke records having taken place when Quirinius was governor is still being rejected by skeptics. I was told by a highly educated professor in a large southern university that there was no record of such a census ever being conducted. This caused me to make a search. In the *History of the Roman Empire*, by Professor H. Stewart Jones of Oxford, on page 19 of the edition of his works published by G. P. Putnam's Sons, is found the following statement: "Augustus determined to carry out a statistical survey of the Empire and its resources. The evidence shows that this survey—which seems to have begun in Gaul in 27 B.C.—was prolonged for many years, and was extended to the dependent kingdoms, such as that of Herod in Judaea, and also that reassessments were made at intervals of fourteen years." In checking further I found this evidence had come from the work of Suetonius and is to be accepted as entirely accurate. Since the Roman government made many exceptions to its general policy in dealing with the Jews, there is every reason to believe that this census was carried out in keeping with Jewish custom.

The facts concerning the death of John the Baptist are fully attested to by Josephus. He gives another reason than that given in scripture as to why Herod put him to death but this merely indicates that Herod may have given different reasons than the main cause for his act. Many religious persecutions have been glossed over to the public as needed because of treason. The words of Josephus are as follows: "Now some of the Jews thought that the destruction of Herod's army came from God, and that very justly, as a punishment for what he did against John, that was called the Baptist; for Herod slew him, who was a good man, and commanded the Jews to exercise virtue, both as to righteousness towards one another, and piety towards God. and so to come to baptism: for that the washing (with water) would be acceptable to him, if they made use of it, not in order to the putting away (or the remission) of some sins (only), but for the purification of the body; supposing till that the soul was thoroughly

purified beforehand by righteousness. Now when (many) others came in crowds about him, for they were greatly moved (or pleased) by hearing his words, Herod, who feared lest the great influence John had over the people might put it into his power and inclination to raise a rebellion, (for they seemed ready to do anything he should advise) thought it best, by putting him to death, to prevent any mischief he might cause, and not bring himself into difficulties, by sparing a man who might make him repent of it when it should be too late. Accordingly, he was sent a prisoner out of Herod's suspicious temper, to Macherus, the castle I before mentioned, and was there put to death."

The facts given by Luke in the Book of Acts are corroborated very clearly. The statement that Paul found Priscilla and Aquilla at Corinth because "Claudius had demanded that all Jews leave Rome" is a clear example of accuracy. We have already quoted Suetonius to the effect that Claudius "banished the Jews from Rome." Tacitus throws more light on this by saying that although this edict was "stringent" it was also "ineffectual" and this accounts for the fact that later Jews were back in Rome—even Aquilla and Priscilla.

Luke further tells of a famine foretold by Agabus that took place in the reign of Claudius. History shows a very severe famine in the eleventh year of the reign of Claudius.

Very striking accuracy is found in the word used to describe the city officials of Thessalonica. They are called Politarchs. For years unbelievers claimed this as an inaccuracy as in most Roman cities such officials were called "procounsels" or "propraetors." This criticism is no longer made since the discovery of an archway in Thessalonica gives the very title "politarchs" to the magistrates of the city.

Such examples can be brought forward almost endlessly. Historical research is proving one of the richest sources for confirmation of faith. Bible accuracy has been confirmed by such numerous examples, and as there are no known examples of inaccuracy, it appears more and more unintelligent to sit in the scoffer's seat. To deny the accuracy of all points not specifically confirmed by secular evidence (because there is no secular history to use for comparison) and to ignore the amazing accuracy in numberless examples where there is a basis for comparison, betrays an attitude of heart that is repulsive to sincerity. Accordingly, when the wrath of God is manifest upon such sons of disobedience surely the most merciful of minds will say it is a just recompense of reward.

The Bible As The Foundation of Christian Faith

by
Burton Coffman

"Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God."
(Romans 10:17, Authorized Version.)

In that terse sentence Paul stated the foundation of Christian faith. It is lodged in the Bible. There is no other possible source. In fact, the Christian religion rests squarely upon a single volume known in all the world as the Bible. The Bible is the foundation of Christian faith.

As another speaker has said, the religion of Christ is built upon a *person*, that of the Lord Jesus Christ. However, it is a fact so obvious that it needs but to be stated that without the Bible men would have no authentic information whatever about Jesus Christ. Therefore, although it is true that his religion is built upon a person, the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, nevertheless, it is also true that Jesus Christ is revealed only in His Word, the Bible.

To certain others the traditional church is the foundation of faith; and men are even asked to believe the Bible because it is certified by the historical church. In spite of this view, however, the Bible itself forbids it. It is "the word" that "liveth and abideth forever." It is "the word" that will judge men "in the last day." The church itself is to be governed by and subordinated to the Word of God. This makes the Bible, therefore, the judge of the church. It is the constitution and by-laws of the Christian religion.

In regard to the Bible, there are just two things upon which we shall lay emphasis in this study. These are (1) Its inspiration, and (2) Its finality and completeness.

THE INSPIRATION OF THE BIBLE

Perhaps more misunderstanding exists upon this point than upon any other reference to the Word of God. What is inspiration? How do we know the Bible is inspired? What about the various translations? These and many other perplexing questions rush upon us at the very mention of inspiration.

First, we shall examine the term "inspiration." Philip Schaff, in his great encyclopedia of religious knowledge, states that the Greeks had no word for "inspiration." It simply does not exist in classic and profane Greek. This is true because the Greeks had no counterpart to Divine Revelation. They did not even know the word for "inspiration."

"The Greek word for which 'inspired' is the translation does not occur in classical or profane Greek . . . but seems to have been used for the first time, in writing, in II Timothy 3:16."¹

In the light of this fact, then, how emphatic must be the words of the Apostle Paul in which he affirms the inspiration of the scriptures. "All scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work." (II Timothy 3:16, Revised Standard Version.)

It will be observed that the Revised Standard Version reverses the equivocal translation of the Revised Version and returns this verse to its rightful place as a dogmatic affirmation of the inspiration of the scriptures thus corresponding with the King James Version in this verse.

Of course, the Bible was not actually written by God. There are, in fact, only two instances in which God is said to have written anything, once in the Old Testament and once in the New.

God wrote the tables of the decalogue on Mt. Sinai, but this action was speedily followed by the breaking of the tables both literally and figuratively. In the New Testament, it is written that Jesus Christ stooped down and wrote in the sand upon the occasion when he was confronted by the Pharisees with the woman taken in adultery. This, unlike the writing of God at Sinai, seems to have been a message of grace; but it fared no better than the tables of the law and was obliterated within the hour by the trampling feet of the multitude. How strange it is, and how prophetic of man's attitude toward the laws of God that the only instances of the writing of God were followed immediately by the violation of that writing by sinful men!

Although God did not actually write the scriptures, he nevertheless gave them to men who did write them. Furthermore, it will be

¹Philip Schaff, *Encyclopedia*, Vol. II, p. 1101.

observed that inspiration has to be word by word if it is inspiration at all. God did not merely supply the ideas. He gave the words of the Holy Scriptures; or at least he so influenced the speaker that the words were accurate. If they are to be trusted at all, then they must be trusted as the words of God. This theory of inspiration is an old one, but it alone meets the requirements of reason and logic with reference to this difficult subject. The testimony of the ages is almost unanimous upon this point.

EXTERNAL EVIDENCE

The great Jewish historian, Josephus, declared with reference to the Old Testament:

"All the writers of the Old Testament were prophets, and as such, interpreters of the divine will and unconscious of what they spoke. They were in an ecstatic condition or trance both when they spoke and wrote and were simply the passive organ of the Spirit of God!"²

Clement of Rome, a contemporary with the apostles of Christ, writing in the first century said: "The Scriptures are the true words of the Holy Ghost."

Augustine taught that every word of the Bible is infallibly accurate.

The Roman Catholic Church in the Vatican Council of 1870 declared that the scriptures are "Revelation from God without error, having been written by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, they have God for their author." This position of the Roman Catholic Church had been previously announced in 1546 at the Council of Trent.

Martin Luther taught that the Bible is a book upon "A letter or title of which more hangs than upon heaven and earth."

Philip Schaff (quoting Drs. Warfield and Hodge) declared: "The Holy Spirit elevated and directed the writers when need be and thus secured the errorless expression in language of the thoughts designed by God."

Now the sum of these testimonies, Catholic, Jewish, and Protestant is unanimous and convincing argument for the word by word inspiration of the Holy Scriptures.

² Josephus, quoted by Philip Schaff, *Encyclopedia*, Vol. II, 1102.

INTERNAL WITNESSES

We now pass from these external testimonies and view the words of the scriptures themselves, for it is there that we find the most convincing evidence of their inspiration. In fact, the internal witnesses to the inspiration of the scriptures are so emphatic as to present a dilemma. Their contention in favor of inspiration is either (1) fraudulent or (2) authentic. No middle ground whatever can be surveyed between these positions.

The prophets and apostles through whom the words originally came made the unqualified claim that God was the author of what they wrote! Note the following:

Isaiah: "Hear O heavens, and give ear O earth, for Jehovah hath spoken." (Isaiah 1:2.)

Jeremiah: "Now the word of Jehovah came unto me." (Jeremiah 1:4.)

Ezekiel: "The word of Jehovah came expressly unto Ezekiel the priest the son of Buzi." (Ezekiel 1:3.)

Daniel: "In the first year of Belshazzar, King of Babylon, Daniel had a dream and visions of his head upon his bed; then he wrote the dream and told the sum of the matter." (Daniel 7:1.)

"Yea, while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation." (Daniel 9:21.)

Amos: "The words of Amos who was among the herdsmen of Tekoah, which he saw concerning Israel in the days of Uzziah, King of Judah." (Amos 1:1.)

John the Apostle: "The revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave him to show unto his servants, even the things which must shortly come to pass." (Revelation 1:1.)

Peter the Apostle: "For no prophecy ever came by the will of man, but men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit." (II Peter 1:21.)

A candid view of these claims compels the admission of their validity or the rejection of the entire faculty of Old and New Testament writers as joint conspirators in the perpetration of the greatest hoax in history! The latter alternative if not impossible is certainly

utterly unreasonable thus leaving the strongest possible presumption in favor of the traditional view of the inspiration of the scriptures.

The testimony of Christ himself is conclusive. It is hardly necessary to remind Christians that Jesus Christ is worshiped as God. He was and is infallible. His attitude toward the Holy Word will determine the attitude of his followers. His respect for the scriptures as altogether accurate not only strengthens the faith of his followers but also refutes at the same time the quibbles of his enemies with reference to the scripture.

The very failure of Jesus Christ to contradict the teachings of the Old Testament may be construed as an endorsement of them. He said to his disciples, "If it were not so, I would have told you." (John 14:2.) Furthermore, his constant appeal was to the authority of the scriptures. In the hour of his temptation in the wilderness, he lodged his defense in the scriptures. "It is written;" "It is written;" and "Again it is written!" (Matthew 4:4-10.) He confounded the Sadducees, saying, "Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures nor the power of God." (Matthew 22:29.) Now, it must be admitted that all of this appealing to the scriptures by Jesus Christ is absolutely inconceivable upon any other hypothesis than the absolute and infallible accuracy of those scriptures. Certainly a member of the Godhead would not try to confound the devil by an appeal to a fallible and inaccurate authority!

Moreover, take the following instances in which the unequivocal declaration of scriptural infallibility and inspiration is affirmed by Christ himself in the most solemn manner:

"All things must need be fulfilled which are written in the law of Moses and the prophets and the Psalms concerning me." (Luke 24:44.)

"And the scripture cannot be broken." (John 10:35.)

"O foolish men and slow of heart to believe ALL that the prophets have spoken." (Luke 24:25.)

"Till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass away from the law till *all things* be accomplished." (Matthew 5:18.)

NEW TESTAMENT WRITERS

The New Testament affords additional proof of the inspiration of the scriptures in the attitude of its writers toward other portions of the Bible.

Matthew, for example, quotes from the Old Testament more than sixty times; and without an exception, there is implied the infallible accuracy of the ancient scriptures, hence their inspiration.

Many of the arguments of the New Testament authors are made to turn upon minute fragments of the Word of God, which, of course, is an absurdity unless the inspiration of the scriptures is admitted.

Phrases are treated as inspired. In Hebrews 12:27, the author makes an argument for the destruction of the planet on which we live from the single phrase, "yet once more," as it is quoted from the Old Testament.

The tense of verbs is inspired. In Matthew 22:31-32, that writer quotes a passage from the Pentateuch and builds an argument for the immortality of the soul on the fact that God used the present tense when he said, "I am the God of Abraham."

The number of nouns is inspired. No less a person than Paul affirms this when he argued that the promise was certified to the "seed" not "seeds" of Abraham. (Galatians 3:16.) This would indicate that even the letters are inspired, since the change of a single letter would vitiate the meaning.

PROVED BY PROPHETS

One of the most convincing evidences of the inspiration of the Bible, however, is seen in the fact that the prophets through whom the Word of God came did not always understand that word themselves.

The Apostle Peter affirms that the prophets had to study their own writings in an effort to know their meaning. "Concerning which salvation the prophets sought and searched diligently who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you, searching what time or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did point unto, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow them." (I Peter 1:10-11.)

Daniel is another instance of a prophet who heard the words and recorded them but did not know their meaning. "And I heard but I understood not. Then said I, O my Lord, what shall be the issue of these things? And he said, Go thy way, Daniel, for the words are shut up and sealed till the time of the end." (Daniel 12:8-9.)

When the writer of the 22nd Psalm outlined in prophecy the crucifixion of Christ, even mentioning the piercing of his hands and

his feet, it is extremely unlikely that the prophet had any idea what that type of death was like, since there is practically no evidence that crucifixion as a form of punishment even existed until long after that psalm was written.

A New Testament example of a prophet who spoke the words but didn't know what they meant is the case of Peter. On Pentecost, he outlined the terms of salvation and said, "For to you is the promise, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call unto him." (Acts 2:39.)

Any fair understanding of these words, "to all that are afar off," would, of course, apply them to the Gentiles. There can be no doubt of their meaning in the light of what followed. However, Peter did not understand this; and God Almighty performed a miracle at the house of Cornelius in order to teach Peter the meaning of the words he had already spoken!

And then there is the classic case of Balaam. He tried to say one thing, but was compelled by the Spirit of God to say something else. Time and again he sought in vain to curse Israel, but God over-ruled his tongue and compelled him to speak not the words of Balaam but the words of God. "And Balaam said unto Balak, Lo, I am come unto thee, have I now any power at all to speak anything. The word that God putteth in my mouth, THAT shall I speak." (Numbers 22:38.)

The sum of this evidence is overwhelming. Inspiration is not merely the framing into the best words of the prophet of the ideas infused by God. Inspiration is the revelation to men of the words of God through the medium of a prophet who did not fashion either the words or the ideas but gave them as God put them into his mouth.

CHARACTER OF THE BIBLE

The evidence of the inspiration of the scriptures would not be complete without an outline of the arguments based upon the character of the Bible itself. Here is the Book that is higher than man. It must therefore have a source that is higher than man. It is the Book, and the only one, that never grows out of date. It truly "liveth and abideth forever." Volumes could be written upon this subject, but it will suffice here, merely to outline some of the mountain peaks of evidence in this field.

The stupendous dimensions of the Bible place it beyond the creative power of man. We consider the Greeks a rather foolish people

to have believed that old fable about Atlas carrying the world on his shoulders; but they were not more foolish man people today who believe that men wrote the Bible. It is a work that the best intelligence of ages has found it impossible completely to master. The scope, the height, and breadth, and depth of the Bible are such that mankind is utterly incapable of having produced it. It doesn't even sound like men.

The story is told of the discoverer of the Orinoco River in South America. He at first thought he had discovered an island; but as he sailed up the broad mouth of that mighty river, he suddenly revised his estimate of the land he had discovered. "No," he said, "It would take a mighty continent to afford a watershed big enough to send a flood like this down to the sea. We have not found an island but a continent!"

That deduction proved to be good geography. In a similar way, we are sure that the Holy Bible did not come from a watershed as puny as that afforded by merely human intelligence. Here indeed is the mind of God!

A PERFECT WHOLE

The unity of the Bible is also an argument for its inspiration. Here is a book produced in fragments over a period of many centuries; and yet when these fragments are put together they make a whole Book, remarkable in its unity and logic of design. C. J. Sharp commented on this in these words:

"It should be recalled that the Scriptures were written by at least thirty different men of different nationalities, written in different languages, in different centuries, separated from first to last, by about sixteen hundred years!"³

"Is it possible that thirty men, unknown to one another, writing in different languages, different countries, even, separated in time by three times the period since Columbus discovered America, should produce a book that thus constitutes such a perfect whole, unless mere was back of it and back of them ONE MIND, one designer who guided them all? There is only one sensible or logical conclusion, and that is that mere was one mind back of all, and that one mind could be no other than the mind of God, inspiring and guiding the first writer and the last and all between."⁴

³C. J. Sharp, *Why We Believe*, (Standard Publishing Co.), p. 9.

⁴*Ibid.*, P. 12.

As the poet Dryden expressed it:

Whence but from heaven come men unskilled in arts,
In several ages born, in several parts,
Weave such agreeing truths? Or how or why
Should all conspire to cheat us with a lie?

The most amazing impartiality is seen in the Sacred Scriptures. Of all the writings known to mankind, where is there anything that even approaches this utter detachment, this scrupulous impartiality, this unexampled freedom from bias that we find in the Word of God? The paragraph by J. W. McGarvey on this point is a classic. Here it is:

"There is no attempt at concealment of their own sins; there is no toning down, no apology. They are described without hesitation, and with the same fullness of detail, as are the worst deeds of their enemies. The proposal of James and John to call down fire from heaven on an offending village is as bluntly recorded as the murder of the innocents of Bethlehem by Herod; the dispute among the apostles as to who should be the greatest is as plainly set forth as the dissensions among the Pharisees concerning Jesus; and although when the gospels were written, Peter was the most prominent and honored man in the whole church, they every one described his cowardly denial of his Lord with as much fullness of detail as they do the dastardly betrayal of Judas. They offer no apologies for Peter; and they have no word of reproach for Judas. What writers since the world began, describing events in which their deepest feelings and their dearest interests were involved, have approached these writers in this particular? If they were guided by the impartial Spirit of God, this accounts for it; but who shall account for it on any other hypothesis?"⁵

Another point is the brevity of the scriptures. In this characteristic, the scriptures are like no other writings. Who can imagine the martyrdom of the Apostle James being recorded in a single sentence of seven words in the Greek, translated by eleven in the English? What consideration condensed the entire thirty years of Jesus' life, following his infancy, into the compass of a single short paragraph? Yet, these and many other restraints tell of a brevity in the Bible that is positively unique. To quote again from the scholarly McGarvey,

⁵J. W. McGarvey, *Sermons*, (Standard Publishing Co.), pp. 3-4.

"Truly, if it were said of Jesus, that never man spake like this man, we must say, never man wrote like these men; and the logical inference is that they wrote under the restraining power of the Spirit of God."⁶

Many other arguments might be brought form in favor of the inspiration of the scriptures. Among these are: its wonderful poise and freedom from vile passions, its code of morality evidently arising in a source above man, its preservation through history in spite of dungeon, fire, and sword, its fulfilled prophecies, its anticipation of many of the scientific discoveries even of our own times, its power of continuing in date from age to age, its influence over the lives of men in every age and under all conditions, and the startling fact that this Book speaks a message to man which carries its own atmosphere of truth. As related by Dr. J. R. Dummelow in his commentary, *Article on Inspiration*,

"The man whose own life is not under the influence of the Holy Spirit cannot expect to understand inspiration The Bible is not like any other book. It bears the stamp of the divine, and it gathers around the person and word of Jesus Christ, who is the central figure of human history. The Bible tells us how the world can be regenerated and how we can be saved. The remedy for its frequent misuse is not to read it less but to read it more, and to read it with greater reverence."

There is one objection to inspiration that is so widely entertained, that we should perhaps allow some mention of it here. Granting the inspiration of the scriptures, the question of various translations immediately arises. It is almost a cliché that the Bible has been translated and retranslated so many times that we could hardly hope to know what was originally contained in the Word of God. However, this concept is altogether false.

It is true, of course, that the Holy Spirit gave (in the case of the New Testament) the Greek text; and there are admittedly instances of slight deviations from the inspired original. However, full information on this point leads to the conclusion that any deviations from the original are of as little consequence as a fly speck on Michael Angelo's Moses. Only one syllable in every ten thousand words is even open to question! The translations that have come down through history are

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

so accurate that when the King James Version is compared with the Revised Version, they read as one text; and yet these two versions are derived from sources that had been separated by at least a thousand years! It will be remembered that the Sinaitic Manuscript was not available at the time of the translation of the King James Version, but was still buried in the musty archives of the monastery of St. Catharines at the foot of Mt. Sinai.

R. A. Torrey in his book, *Our Bible, How We got It*, relates this remarkable incident which he quotes from Thomas Cooper:

"A party of scholarly men met at a dinner party. During the conversation, someone put a question which no one present was able to answer. The question was this:

"Suppose that the New Testament had been destroyed, and every copy of it lost by the end of the third century. Could it have been collected together again from the writings of the Fathers of the second and third centuries?"

"The question startled the company; but all were silent. Two months afterwards, one of the company called upon Sir David Dalrymple, who had been present at the dinner. Pointing at a table covered with books, Sir David said,

"Look at those books. You remember the question about the New Testament and the Fathers? That question roused my curiosity; and as I possessed all the existing works of the Fathers of the second and third centuries, I commenced to search; and up to this time I have found the entire New Testament except *eleven* verses!" "

This dramatic story shows how foolish are the fears some have felt about the uncertainty of the New Testament text. The simple fact is that nothing on earth even approaches the certainty which may logically be entertained with reference to the Bible. To borrow an expression from the late Charles L. Gooddell, "If all the verses of the Bible were to pass in review before the critics, they might reply in the words of Paul and Silas to the jailor: Sir, Do thyself no harm, for we are all here!"

THE COMPLETENESS OF SCRIPTURAL REVELATION

Having devoted the greater part of our time to a consideration of the inspiration of the scriptures, we now devote the remaining minutes to a consideration of the finality and completeness of that revelation.

The claims of the Holy Scriptures are such that they either constitute God's only revelation to man, or they are *no revelation whatever!*

Man is forbidden to add to or take from the Holy Scriptures. This prohibition occurs in both the Old and New Testaments.

"Ye shah not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish from it, that ye many keep the commandments of Jehovah your God which I command you." (Deuteronomy 4:2.)

"I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto them, God shall add unto him the plagues which are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life, and out of the holy city, which are written in this book." (Revelation 22:18-20.)

An angel from heaven cannot change the gospel as it is recorded in the Bible.

"But though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach unto you any gospel other than that which we preached unto you, let him be anathema. As we have said before, so say I now again, If any man preacheth unto you any gospel other than that which ye received, let him be anathema." (Galatians 1:8-9.)

The apostles were not to be succeeded by successors who would keep the word up to date; but the revelation was "once for all" delivered unto them.

"I was constrained to write unto you, exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once *for all* delivered to the saints." (Jude 3.)

The word from which the expression "once for all" as translated in this passage always means "once, without the possibility of its being repeated." The original is "hapax," and means "once for all, not to be repeated." The same word is used for the manifestation of Christ (Hebrews 9:26), the suffering of Christ (I Peter 3:18), the death of Christ (Romans 6:9-11), Christ's offering of himself (Hebrews 9:12); the death of every man (Hebrews 9:27), the destruction of our planet (Hebrews 12:26), and the giving of the scriptures (Jude 3).

The significance of this message "once for all delivered," is therefore very great. The very terminology of the scriptures forbids the

notion that this revelation will be supplemented or improved upon by others. Even the Apostle Peter anticipated no successor who should announce the word of God after him. On the other hand, he wrote:

"The putting off of my tabernacle cometh swiftly, even as our Lord Jesus signified unto me. Yea, I will give diligence that at every time ye may be able *after my decease* to call these things to remembrance." (II Peter 1:14-15.)

Many texts declare in so many words the revelation given through the apostles of Jesus to have been *complete*.

"All scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work." (II Timothy 3:16, Revised Standard Version.)

"His divine power hath granted unto us ALL THINGS that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that calleth us by his own glory and virtue." (II Peter 1: 3.)

"Howbeit, when he the Spirit of truth is come, he shall guide you into *all the truth*." (John 16:13.)

"But an angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors and brought them out and said, Go ye and stand and speak in the temple to the people *all the words of this life*." (Acts 5:19-20.)

Christians of the apostolic age were warned against going beyond the things which were written. Note the following:

"Now these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes; that in us ye might learn not to go beyond the things which are written." (I Corinthians 4:6.)

Furthermore, there is a fundamental requirement of every authentic doctrine in the true religion that it must have been spoken *first* by the Lord Jesus Christ. This principle is stated in these words:

"How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation? Which having at the first been spoken through the Lord, was confirmed unto us by them that heard?" (Hebrews 2:3.)

In so many words, this means that any teaching that did not originate with Jesus Christ is not to be received as a doctrine in the Christian faith. This principle makes it impossible for the orthodox

Christian to receive additional revelations subsequent to the apostles of Christ.

One other passage will suffice to show how diligently the inspired writers of the New Testament labored to prevent any other revelation (so-called) from claiming any equality with the writings of the apostles of Jesus. John said,

"Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God; he that abideth in the teaching, the same hath both the Father and the Son. If any one cometh unto you, and bringeth not this teaching, receive him not into your house, and give him no greeting." (II John 9-10.)

The summation of all these pronouncements from the Word of God, then, is contained in the principle that the Bible is *God's only Word*. It is either that, or it is not God's word at all. There is no way whatever to harmonize the claims of the New Testament with any theory that would admit of subsequent revelations designed to supplement its holy teachings. As Jesus declared, "He that rejecteth me and receiveth not my sayings, hath one that judgeth him: THE WORD THAT I SPAKE, THE SAME SHALL JUDGE HIM IN THE LAST DAY!" (John 12:48.)

We have now endeavored to show that the Bible is inspired and that as such it is the final and complete revelation of Almighty God for this dispensation. The acceptance of these two principles will substantiate our major premise that the Bible is the Foundation for Christian Faith. The fact is, Christians must everywhere return with a pure heart to the Bible. It is the Bible and the Bible only that can supply the faith so sadly needed by this generation. Every man should take as his motto the stirring exhortation of Paul the Apostle to young Timothy when he said, "Give diligence to present thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, handling aright the word of truth." (II Timothy 2:15.)

My prayer for this generation is that men may reverence the word of God. Here in the precious Bible is the hope of our world. While the world rushes on in the gathering twilight, what a tragedy that man is still neglecting his only source of divine light. May God help us to arise and walk in the light while yet there is time. Let us close this exhortation with the plea of the Apostle Peter when he said:

"And we have the word of prophecy made more sure; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts!" (II Peter 1:19.)

The Lordship Of Jesus Christ

by
A. R. Holton

"And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shone round about him a light from heaven: and he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And he trembled and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do." (Acts 9:36)

Whatever the term "Lord" may have meant, it meant to Saul of Tarsus the one who had a right to command him. "Lord, what wilt thou have me do?" indicates that Paul recognized here the Lord of his life. This experience of Paul colors all the rest of his life. He never gets away from this experience. It was here that clear and unmistakable evidence was given concerning the resurrection. It was here he must have admitted that Stephen was right when he committed his soul unto Jesus, when he said, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." It was this great truth, the Lordship of Jesus Christ, that Paul preached and exemplified throughout his long life. This was the shining light that led him across seas and mountains and many dangers. It was against the background of this mighty truth that he stood in the presence of the Caesars. It was with this truth that he went into the humble homes of the people of the Roman Empire.

The classic defense of the Lordship of Jesus Christ, over against every other consideration, is Paul's letter to the Colossians. It is our purpose to give a brief exposition of the main emphasis of this book. In the very first chapter, Paul calls our attention to three great words. These words have made the church in all lands, and in every century. Your faith in Christ . . . the love which you have to all the saints, for the hope which is laid up for you in heaven" (Col. 1:4,5.) The three words, faith and hope and love, are used together several times in Paul's letters. These words are without doubt the greatest words of the English language. The first one seems to be first—faith in Christ Jesus. Paul presumes that the experience of the Colossians

will correspond to his experience, and for him, it was faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. It was this faith that led him to complete obedience to every command. And we may believe that the Colossians had been able to manifest faith and hope and love because they had known the Lord Jesus Christ.

Paul, in this book of Colossians, states in few words the very essence of Christianity. Christianity is the simple faith that Christ is the answer and the help to all that is wrong in human life. Paul would not agree with some present day teachers, because there are some today who would tell us that there is nothing wrong in human life. These early Christians believed that something tragic had gone wrong, and that Christ was the answer to that tragedy. In order to set before us some of the simple statements of what God has done in Christ, let us look at the text itself:

"Redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins." It is not our purpose here to go into a long discussion of the terms Paul here uses. Let us just point out simply that Paul here is setting forth what Jesus Christ has done for man in this tragic situation in which he finds himself. He needs redemption, and he needs forgiveness of sin, and it is in Christ and through his blood that this is made possible.

"Who is the Image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature." We may believe that mankind has made a long search for the face of God. If we read history aright, every temple and every altar across the world is a mute symbol of this seeking. Paul is stating simply that no one has ever, or can ever, see that face who does not see it in the face of Jesus Christ. The long, wistful longing of mankind was ended when Jesus came. That lovely face should never be hid by sin.

"By him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him." Here again, it is the simple argument that in Christ is the creative power, and that the thrones and dominions threatening the world were created by him and for him. We may not know how they can be for him, but Paul is setting forth the Lordship of Jesus Christ, and this Lordship is beyond thrones, principalities and powers, in heaven or in earth.

"He is before all things, and by him all things consist." Not only is he the agency in creation, he is the power by which all things are held together.

"And he is the head of the body, the church." Paul seems to feel that he needs to bring his thought down to earth and something

practical. His Lordship extends not only to the image of God, and not only to the creation of the worlds, but to the church. And the church is set in the midst of our human life, our sorrows, our fears; in the midst of this, Jesus is Lord.

"By him to reconcile all things unto himself: by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies, yet now hath he reconciled." This is another way of stating the Lordship of Jesus Christ. It was God's purpose, through him, to reconcile all things. Notice that all of this was conditional, "if ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature, for I, Paul, am made a minister."

No wonder then Paul comes to the close of the first chapter of Colossians with this conclusion: "To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus." If Jesus is Lord, Paul argues that Christ in you is the hope of glory, and if he is Lord, the good news to the world is to preach him; warn men and teach men and present every man perfect in Christ. Let us remember that all of this is in support of the claim that Jesus is the answer to man's need. (Colossians 1:14-29.)

"In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." The Lordship of Jesus Christ means that he is the treasury house of wisdom and knowledge. You can see at once that all of this would not fit in to the thinking of either the ancient world or of our world, because the Jews certainly would not admit his conclusions, and the Gentiles would cling to their way of knowledge and wisdom. Paul is presenting something unique to the world when he claims the Lordship of Jesus Christ. (Colossians 2:3.)

The apostle Paul now turns from this summary of God's action in Christ to meet the arguments of some who were offering substitutes for the Lordship of Christ. Let us take the first one:

"Lest any man should beguile you with enticing words." It has been the mistake of men in many centuries to follow creeds and the doctrines of men instead of Christ. The first substitute for the reality of Jesus Christ as Lord is mere words. Over against the reality of Jesus Christ today are all the creeds and doctrines and statements of men. This does not mean that there are no doctrines in Christianity,

but it does mean that your doctrines will be all wrong until you acknowledge the Lordship of Jesus Christ, and that's the point that Paul is making.

"Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world." You have gone after all these things, Paul is saying to the Colossians and not after Christ. Christianity is not a philosophy, nor a world view, though there can be no world view without Christ. Paul's argument is to enable man to put first things first. The Lordship of Jesus Christ was first in Paul's life. Great doctrines came out of this loyalty. A great world view came out of this loyalty, but it is all out of focus to put the doctrines and the world view first.

"Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy-day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: which are a shadow of things to come: but the body is of Christ." In order for there to be a shadow, there must be light, and there must be a body to make the shadow. God's light has been in the world, and the body that has projected its influence across the world is Christ. Paul is protesting to his brethren that they have taken the shadow rather than the body. In other words, you talk about meat and drink, and holy days and new moons and sabbath days, but you reject Christ.

"Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels." It has been one of the besetting sins of men to think that if they can get an angel on their side, they have a great strength to support them. Paul's argument is: Do you suppose that God would reveal something to an angel that he did not reveal to his own son? Again it was Paul's experience that is reflected in this argument to the Colossians. It was the Son of God that appeared to Paul on the road to Damascus. It is the Son of God who is the image of the invisible God. It is the Son of God in whom are the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. And God is not going to reject his son and give a revelation even to an angel.

"Why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, (touch not; taste not; handle not; which all are to perish after the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men?" There have been those, always, who would reduce Christianity to a set of rules. Paul's argument is that if the world could have been saved by rules, the Ten Commandments need never have been set aside. And if men could have been saved by mere morality, there would have been no need for the death of Jesus. Paul has shown then what God has done in Christ, and he has now set forth the substitutes that men have offered for this that Christ has done. (Colossians 2:4-23.)

As always, these great arguments of Paul conclude with something very practical. "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God." This is the great conclusion. The Lordship of Jesus Christ demands that we live as if he were Lord. There are certain things then in our lives that are to be killed: fornication, covetousness, which is idolatry, anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication, lying. These are to be put away and killed. And in view of the Lordship of Jesus Christ, they were to put on the new man—mercy, kindness, humbleness, meekness, long-suffering, forbearance, love. "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly." (Colossians 3:1-25.)

All this is to be applied to masters, to servants, to children, to wives, to husbands. The Lordship of Jesus Christ makes a difference in the home, and in the market place, and in our lives, "for ye serve the Lord Christ" (Colossians 3: 24).

in order to sum up some implications of this book, let us set forth some of the things that seem to be on the surface.

First, the Lordship of Jesus Christ implies that God, through Christ, touches our lives at its most difficult point—the point of sin and rebellion against God. The cross of Christ means that God was taking part in human suffering, and it was in the cross and within human suffering that Christ came to redeem us.

And second, the open tomb and the resurrection signified that Christ had come into our life, had partaken of our deepest fears, but had triumphed over them.

And third, it was in this situation that Christ brought us forgiveness. It was through his cross, it was through his blood, it was through the suffering of God with humanity and for humanity that brought his forgiveness.

And in the fourth place, not only forgiveness, but in Christ we have the fountain of the life that is eternal. It is from Jesus that we have the strength to live, and this is what is meant by the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

Fifth, the Lordship of Jesus Christ also means that whatever else sin may be, it is basically the refusal of man to make God the center of his being. For the Lordship of Christ means for Paul, and for every one else, that the ego is not on the throne. Sin has been described as disobedience, and rebellion, and as pride, and as unbelief, and as worldliness, and as lust, and as sensuality, and as selfishness. And of course all of these terms are descriptions of sin. But in its very essence,

it is the denial of the Lordship of Jesus Christ. When the foundations of a house slip and crack, the whole structure will twist and split and may collapse. This accounts for much of our blindness in the world today. We are looking at the world out of focus, because God is the center, and if we put ourselves in the center, we look at all things wrong. Paul looked at life clearly and steadily, because he found the Lord of his life and put God and Christ at the center. Now this is basic. It is this that Paul argues in the Colossian letter.

Sixth, the Lordship of Christ means something for the dignity of man. Man is a spirit, with purpose and love and affection. He can distinguish, if he has found the Lord of his life, between good and bad, between true and false, between holy and irreverent. Suppose man could never grow in his great conceptions. It is in the Lordship of Christ that we have the place where the light shines in, and to acknowledge him as Lord is to start on the upward road. And then, too, this Lordship of Jesus Christ means that human life has its origin in God, and its destiny in God. You can no more think of a man without God than you can think of the whitecaps without the ocean; or of the leaf without the tree, or a blade of grass without the earth. Yes, if Jesus Christ is the Lord of life, then life has its origin and its destiny in God.

And then the Lordship of Jesus Christ means further in its proof of the dignity of human life that goodness and beauty and truth and holiness must be clothed in reality. What God possesses, we inherit. So much greater is man than matter. The star does not know that it is whirling through space. The pyramids do not know what they are, though they have looked across the sands of the desert for centuries. Man is great, not for what he is, but for what he can become. The Lordship of Jesus Christ is the token of what man can be.

This concept also adds to the dignity of man in that it gives him courage to preach. Knowing that life has a Lord, men need not dwell in immorality, and men need not lose faith in each other. With this faith, the preacher can go to the prison in the belief that there is a Lord of life. We can deal with boys and girls in the belief that human life has a high destiny. We can go to the streets and gutters of our city believing that however dark human sin may be, there is a Lord of life.

The classic example in the New Testament of what will happen if we do not make Jesus Lord is in First Corinthians. If you do not make Jesus Lord, you divide over men. Some were for Apollos, some for Cephas, some for Paul. If you do not make him Lord, it is easy to fall into idolatry and eat meat offered to idols. If you do not make him

Lord, you sue your brother in the pagan courts and cannot settle your own differences. If you do not make him Lord, you endanger your home by immorality and unfaithfulness. If you do not make him Lord, you think that speaking with tongues is of importance, when every gift of the Spirit is to take its proper place under him. When you do not make him Lord, you are liable to corrupt the Lord's Supper and make out of it a common meal, in which gluttony and drunkenness prevail. If you do not make him Lord, you make baptism a secular rite. Those who were being baptized in Corinth, having forgotten Jesus as Lord, thought that the man who baptized them had some kind of claim upon them, and Paul said therefore, "I thank God I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius."

Thus our study comes to a close. To acknowledge the Lordship of Jesus Christ is the only happy way to live. It means hard work, but it means happiness. Many of our lives today are broken and ruined because of divided loyalty. Jesus must be the Lord of life. Therefore, do not substitute him for words. Do not substitute him for philosophies. Do not substitute him for doctrines. Do not substitute him for moral advice or exhortation. Because if you want the sweetest word that angels' tongues can know, speak the name of Christ. If you want a world view, look at the world with Christ as the center. If you want to make your doctrines valid, acknowledge the Lordship of Christ. Repentance is valuable only if Christ is Lord. Baptism is valuable only if Christ is Lord. Let us make no mistake; those who accepted the Lordship of Jesus, according to the book of Acts, obeyed him in baptism. Three thousand on the Day of Pentecost; the Ethiopian after Phillip preached Jesus; Saul of Tarsus after he said, "Lord, what wilt thou have me do?"; Cornelius after Peter had spoken to him about Christ; the jailor after Paul had preached to him the Word of Life. Yes, if you would seek the validity of your doctrines, measure them by Christ. Do not substitute him for moral advice and exhortation, because if you have him, you have the highest morals that the world can ever know.

The Stone Of Zion

by

L. O. Sanderson

In presenting to you the scriptural and practical material of the topic of the occasion, we recall the oft repeated approach of the colored preacher who said, in explaining his technique of sermonizing, "Fust, I tell 'em what Ize gwina tell 'em; secundly, I tells 'em; and lastly, I tells 'em what I dun tole 'em." Somewhat in that fashion we propose to discuss "The Stone of Zion." God's word establishes the fact that literal Zion is literal Jerusalem, and that spiritual Zion equals the new Jerusalem, the church of the First Born. The divine record is also clear that Christ is the tried stone, the foundation stone. Hence, the stone of Zion is the Christ of the church, and other foundation can no man lay.

Samuel reveals to us that "David took the stronghold of Zion: the same is the city of David." (II Samuel 5:7.) The "city of David" is Jerusalem, for "David and all Israel went to Jerusalem . . . where the Jebusites were" and "took the castle of Zion, which is the city of David." (I Chronicles 11:4,5.) Here we see the literal identity. Figuratively, Zion (Jerusalem) refers to the church. In Revelation 21:2, John says "I, John, saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." There is no more fitting or meaningful term than bride for the blood-bought church. Even John the Baptist knew this: "He that hath the bride is the bridegroom." And Paul is clear in showing that we, God's children, the church, are married to Christ (Romans 7:4), and that there must exist the marriage relationship between Christ and the church. (Ephesians 5:23-32.) The bride which John saw was the new Jerusalem, and we know that, while Hagar answers to the literal Jerusalem, Sarah stands for the new "Jerusalem which is above" and "free, which is the mother of us all." (Galatians 4:26.)

If there might still be doubt as to spiritual Zion, we refer you to Hebrews 12:22,23: "But ye are come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first born, which are written in heaven." How fitting is the figure in which Zion is the type and the church the anti-type: "For the Lord hath

chosen Zion; he hath desired it for his habitation. This is my rest forever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it. I will abundantly bless her provision: I will satisfy her poor with bread. I also will clothe her priests with salvation: and her saints shall shout aloud for joy. There will I make the horn of David bud: I have ordained a lamp for mine anointed. His enemies will I clothe with shame: but upon himself shall his crown flourish." (Psalms 132: 13-18.)

Zion, the church, is the choice of the Lord—he desired it, he planned it, he purchased it by his Son. It is a city of divine rule and authority—all such legislative right belonging to the triumphant Savior, who is "an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David." The spiritual Zion is, as Jerusalem was, a place of divine services and sacrifices, where believers unite in the bonds of fellowship and love, and continue steadfastly in the divine order of practice and worship. It is a city of spiritual blessings, limited to her boundaries and pledged alone to the citizens of her divine realm. It is a city of gracious liberties and exalted privileges, with freedom from sin through obedience of her inhabitants, and constant access to the throne of grace by the least to the greatest, who bow to the will that governs her.

But we turn to ask: Who is the stone of this spiritual Zion? And the answer is clearly set forth in the divine record. The Psalmist speaks of the "stone which the builders refused" as becoming "the head stone of the corner." Three of the gospel narratives—Matthew, Mark, and Luke—attribute this Old Testament prophecy to the lips of our Lord, who, as surely, applies it to himself. An imprisoned apostle cites the same prophecy to the rulers of the people and the elders of Israel, declaring that this stone is Christ the crucified, whom God raised from the dead. (Acts 4:8-12.)

The Lord spake through Isaiah, saying, "Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste." (Isaiah 28:16.) Now the apostle Peter knew this prophecy—or guided by the Spirit, he used it—and, more, he connected the utterances of David and Isaiah in his first epistle, with the very application we are here making of it. Urging the laying aside of malice, guile, hypocrisies, envies, and evil speakings, new born babies were to desire the sincere milk of the word that they might grow, "if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious. To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious." This was the Christ! This was the chief cornerstone laid in Zion. This was "the stone which the builders disallowed" and "the same is made the head of the corner." (I Peter 2:1-7.)

During the personal ministry of Jesus on earth, there were varied and conflicting opinions as to his identity—some, embracing the fear of Herod, and urged on by their own superstitions, said he was John the Baptist risen from the dead; others, because of his profound teaching and bold declarations, admitted that he was at least one of the prophets. But Christ was concerned with the convictions of his own disciples, and, since many great works and wonders had been performed, which should have been sufficient proof of his messiahship, he asked, them the direct question: "But who say ye that I am?" Simon Peter said: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it." (Matthew 16:13-18.)

While there has been much disputation as to whether the term rock refers to Peter, to Christ, or to the truth which the apostle confessed, it still remains that the rock was to be the foundation of the church. It is a simple matter to eliminate the apostle as this foundation. First, we observe that Christ used different words—the apostle was *petros*, but it was upon this *petra* that the church was to be built. If Peter was to be the base, why did Christ not say "upon this *petron*, I will build?" Or why not say, "Thou art Peter, and upon thee will I build my church?" Secondly, to say that Peter was to be the rock would make insurmountable conflicts in the divine record. That meaning would (1) eliminate the other apostles, who, in one sense, were with the prophets the foundation (Ephesians 2:20,) and (2) make I Corinthians 3:11, which says no other foundation can be laid than Christ, a contrary statement. The apostle was not the rock.

That the rock was Christ or the truth that he was and is the Christ cannot be gainsaid. We are acquainted with Dean Alford's contention that pillars and stones in the spiritual structure refer uniformly to man; with Olshausen's conclusion that "the faith of Peter and the confession of that faith is the rock;" and with the various arguments, pro and con, relative both to Christ and to the truth of his messiahship. Still, in either case, it will remain that Christ is the stone of Zion, whether we refer to his person or to the fact of his anointed Sonship, for the church is built and rests upon his humanity and divinity, his kinship to man and his relationship to the Father, his own knowledge and demonstration that he came from God, and the conviction and contention of the apostles that he was the Christ. When either of these falls, the others will fall. Christ,

then, in one figure, is the full foundation of the superstructure, the church; the church began and continues because he was and is the Christ; an acknowledged faith in this truth and in Christ is essential in the production of the material of the superstructure; and, in another figure, the apostles were the foundation in that they laid it.

Christ is the rock of which the smitten rock was a type. Paul tells of those "baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea," and contends that they "drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ." (I Corinthians 10:2-4.) That rock, in the days of Moses, rested high in the range of mountains of which Sinai was the chief, indicative of the exaltation and glory of the Christ.

And how fitting here, also, is the prophecy of Isaiah that "the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills," and "out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." (Isaiah 2:2,3.)

The smitten rock in Horeb suggests also the strength and the unchanging stability of the spiritual Rock of Ages, smitten, as it were, by the command of God and in the presence of many. Christ is omnipotent, the same yesterday, today, and forever. His suffering and death were but the will of the Father, and he was arraigned, tried, condemned, and crucified before the elders of Israel. From that rock of old came forth the water that the people might drink, but not until it was smitten; and from the Rock of Zion comes the water of life, but none was there before Calvary. And thus we see the Rock in type.

And yet we note some differences: The water from the rock at Sinai quenched the thirst of the temporal, while the living water satisfies the boundless desires and needs of the inner man. That water was limited to the house of Israel, but from the Rock of Zion comes a supply for the whole world. That rock in Horeb, amid all its loftiness, was a lifeless, infertile mass, but we come, "as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God and precious." (I Peter 2:4.)

Christ is that stone, with strength and power, firmness and durability; but he is more: he is the living stone! He had life; he was and is life; he is the source of life; he is the living Christ! He is not, as the stone, an unconscious, insensible object; but, as the living stone, a personality with feeling, who knows our plight, and is touched by a feeling of our infirmities. True enough, he was "disallowed indeed of men," but it was not for lack of evidence, for before their eyes he was "evidently set forth." They simply denied his messiahship.

refused his proof, rejected his claims, despised his doctrines. But the living stone was of God's choosing, pleasing in his sight, attended by him in his work and sacrifice, and, when his task was finished, raised him up and exalted him to his right hand. The only begotten was precious to the Father and is forevermore.

But there remains another matter for discussion, and, clearly, this record presents the church as God's building and the Christ as the one and only foundation. It reads: "For we are laborers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building. According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise master-builder, I have laid the foundation and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." (I Corinthians 10:9-11.)

Divisions had their origin at Corinth. One said he was of Paul, another of Apollos; one of Cephas, another of Christ. Thus Christians arranged and classified themselves with human leaders, which is the ground of denominationalism. But Paul condemns their thoughts and actions, pronounces carnality upon their state, and shows that there is but one foundation with only one spiritual building. There is but one spiritual Zion; and that is built upon but one, the Rock that is higher than I; no man dares to lay any other, and each must take heed how he builds thereon.

This is an architectural figure—the foundation is that part on which the whole building rests. Whether we may think of the foundation as being the beginning of something, or the essential principle connected therewith, or an endowment by which that movement subsists, it will still remain that Christ is that foundation. Whether we consider one or all of the significant meanings, Christ is still all and all.

The Son of God is the foundation of the gospel—the founder, the source, the subject, and glory of the Christ, and his will, the faith once delivered to saints, is the faith of Christ. Its doctrines, its blessings, its ordinances, its promises meet the need of man and give glory to the Christ. He has "brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." Without Christ, there would be no gospel! The truthfulness of its revelation depends upon the reality of Christ!

The "living stone," likewise, is the basis for our reconciliation to God, for the Father was in Christ "reconciling the world unto himself." Christ met the demands of a wounded Father by shedding his blood as a ransom for many, and in him "we have redemption in his

blood, even the forgiveness of our sins." He is the door; he is the way. Except we enter by him, we cannot but be thieves and robbers; except we abide in him, we cannot be saved. Fashioned, as he was, in the likeness of man, and tempted in all points, yet without sin, he is the perfect pattern for those who journey with him. He is the mediator between God and man; he is our advocate at the right hand of God.

Christ, therefore, is the ground of the Christian's hope. We are saved by hope; yet hope that is seen is not hope. Our "patience of hope" is "in our Lord Jesus Christ." If he is not the resurrected Redeemer, then we are without God and without hope in this world. But thanks be to God, he has "begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" (I Peter 1:3), and he is in us "the hope of glory." (Col. 1:27.) Our hopes concern other days of service here, salvation worked out, victory in death, resurrection from the dead, an entrance into the everlasting life, and an eternal bliss with Christ in the presence of God and the angels. But all our hopes rest with the Savior, who served, who set the pattern fair, who triumphed over death, and who pledges many mansions in the sky.

Not only is Christ the foundation of truth, reconciliation, faith, and hope, but he is the one and only foundation of Zion, the church of the first born. He is the alpha and omega, the all and in all. While this foundation is especially distinguished for its strength, its suitability, its completeness, its perpetuity, nevertheless, men must be warned not to build on any other. Some are so foolish as to build upon the sand; some are unwilling to dig down and remove the rubbish that they may build on the solid rock. And when builders propose to build larger structures than the foundation or smaller buildings than the base, then shall the church cease to be God's Zion. The living stone has no other avenue of operation than through Zion: and certainly the church could be of no lasting value without the Christ, who is "head over all things to the church."

This text, however, anticipates that men shall try to lay other foundations, else we cannot understand the warning that none other can be laid. The history of the human race, with the record of the origin and spread of denominationalism, stands as proof of the accurateness of this supposition. Some build upon a single principle, some upon methods; in other efforts, men, saints, and movements become the groundwork. All around us are false and unauthorized foundations, with embellished buildings which open welcome doors to many who do not and never will, in that environment, drink from the spiritual rock, for the one foundation stone is no part of human ways and structures.

You may ask: In what ways do men try to build on other foundations? There are those who lay the groundwork of reason—if not reasonable, it is unacceptable. They rule out the divinity of Christ, make light of atonement, and scoff at his resurrection. They mock at the inspirational power of the Spirit, trample beneath their feet the idea of an eternal God, and count his word a myth, or, at most, only on a par with the writings of Shakespeare. They depend on their own abilities and morality, explain away miracles, and make Satan a character of the imagination. If they cannot reason it out, it is not there! Surely this is building on a base of rationalism.

Then there are those who will build only on a part of the foundation. They will embrace faith but will exclude obedience. They rest on the foundation of mercy to the exclusion of justice. They believe the Bible concerning heaven, but refuse the part about hell. They accept what they like, but find excuse to omit what they do not desire. They may practice that which is ordained in truth, so long as it seems to meet their own need, as they see it; but will go far beyond that which is written if it better suits their purpose. On and on we can go, pointing out the efforts of men to build on another foundation, and more, to show they are not even careful how they build on the one foundation laid.

Let me urge that the foundation has been laid; that foundation is Christ. The folly and wrong of trying to lay another appears even more prominent when we recognize that the one already laid is wholly sufficient. There is not a need that is not met in Christ; there is not a worthwhile possibility for man which he does not offer. He is able to save to the uttermost; he wills that all may come to him; if anyone ever had the right to write the rules by which we run the race, Christ is that one. To attempt to lay any other groundwork is but to reflect on the wisdom of God in furnishing the one foundation. It is but to reject that which Christ himself gave to the world. But more, such an effort cannot but involve the soul in horrible woes. To reject the Christ is to turn down the only way that God proposes to save man; and the end for those who try any other way cannot but be the place of torment reserved for those who vary from his revealed will.

The Invincible Kingdom

by

R. C. Bell

At first, God ruled over the good earth which he had made. Later, since God wants no subjects but the loyal and willing-hearted, he permitted "The old serpent, he that is called the Devil and satan, the deceiver of the whole world" to come and contest, through man, his government and possession of the earth. Thus began the colossal world-old struggle, probably the renewal on earth of an ancient feud between God and rebel angels in heaven, to which Old Testament writers, Christ, Peter, and Jude all allude.

The issue between them was which should be king and have dominion over the earth. This superlative, classic drama unfolds in the Bible. The prologue of the drama, consisting of the two opening chapters of Genesis, narrates the antecedent action before the conflict began; the epilogue, consisting of the two closing chapters of Revelation, describes heaven after the conflict ends; all between pertains to the gigantic conflict of the epic protagonists. And since the mighty war is still going on, only readers of the Bible can know that God, because he has more to put into this titanic, personal duel than his antagonist, is to be the ultimate victor.

GOD'S INTENTION

After Adam and Eve had refused his rule and accepted Satan's instead, God, in marvelous grace, made known to the traitors that he was still *for* them and intended to rescue all their posterity who were willing from this false, murderous seducer; he made known to them that he would ally himself with them against their adversary, who was too strong for them unaided.

The woman's seed in Genesis 3:15 refers to the coming Deliverer, who in implementing God's intention, would himself become man and build a kingdom for men whom he would win back to God. This first prophecy of the Christ names the human race as the race to which he was to belong. The promise to Abraham names his nation, the promise to Jacob his tribe, and the promise to David his family.

Daniel gives the time when, and Micah the village where Christ was to be born. By these prophecies and many more running through the centuries, God's prophetic picture of the Messiah, ever growing in definiteness and fullness, continually reminded men that, despite their weakness and wickedness, God was still for them and planning to come to their succor. By the time the composition of the Old Testament was complete, this picture was life-size and so life-like that, when the Savior should appear, he could be identified beyond all doubt.

Moreover, God in order to make his purpose doubly sure gave an elaborate system of types and symbols in the Law of Moses. Especially the blood of animals, since animals were substitutionary sin offerings for Jewish sinners, was typical of the blood of Christ, who was in due time to become substitutionary sin offering for all humanity. These types, even to the strange experience of the prophet Jonah and the fish, were all shadows of Christ the coming substance. And as there can be no shadow without its corresponding substance to make it, there could have been no type or shadow in Moses unless there were a Christ to fulfill it. Indeed, the central theme, the dominant note, the great, constitutional, covenant promise of the entire Old Testament is "The Redeemer is coming."

GOD'S INVASION

In the unfolding of God's changeless intention to ransom enslaved man from his remorseless despoiler, the hour finally struck for him, through Christ, to annex humanity to his deity and be "Son of man" by becoming the seed of a virgin, human mother. Mysterious and baffling? Yes. But is it more so than any other baby life? or than Eve's beginning? In explaining to the perplexed and troubled husband of the virgin mother, Gabriel quoted Isaiah's old prophecy, "Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel; which is, being interpreted, God with us." (Matthew 1:23.) In this supernatural, unique, and truly romantic manner, the God who is eternally *for* man is marching on in his *intention* to rescue hapless man from his destroyer. This infant in Simeon's arms in the temple is the invasion of mankind by the Ancient of days, coming to live *with* man. Inscrutable wonder and inexplicable condescension, both in one, indeed!

This invasion of mankind as the way to restore wayward men demonstrates the richness of God's grace "in all wisdom and prudence." It manifests, as only the Maker of men can, an infinitely profound understanding of human nature and practical psychology. It "achieves the human touch" of which the book of Hebrews is so

full and, as only the omniscient, sympathetic God, suffering with his suffering, despairing creatures can. It reaches down into the depths of the heart and of the fountains of gratitude, which lie too deep for tears. Nothing but such boundless kindness and measureless love can subdue rebellious hearts and renew communion and fellowship with God. Trace the taproot of the fervent worship and the selfless service of any truly spiritual Christian and it will be found to sink down into the subsoil of gratitude at the bottom of his heart. What can so quicken and regenerate man's lapsed nature as such unmerited favor? Such grace, all other grace exceeding, "creates a soul under the ribs of death."

God's invasion through his Son is his eternal, almighty goodness at its supreme best. For who can doubt, if there were a better way to reclaim man, that God in His wisdom and love would use it? It appeals to the loftiest and most Godlike within men. Who but a stony, subhuman ingrate can fail to feel and yield? Men who do not feel its gripping power are beyond God's help, for even he can do no more, if this melting appeal to the feelings and conscience, kindles in men answering love to God, a work is done inside them that cannot be done otherwise. What men love does much more to them than does what they know intellectually. Learning, when the heart is savage, makes men more dangerous. Unless knowledge is counterbalanced by love, it fatally sours and puffs up.

The four Gospel narratives with one voice shout: "The long-looked-for Deliverer has come and is *with* men. Expect anything. Now, nothing is too great or too good to happen."

GOD'S INDWELLING

In the long process of perfecting his way for retrieving lost man, God used diverse methods and diverse men in successive stages of development, but all progressed cumulatively and culminated in one way. For example, the promise to the patriarchs was symbolized in Moses and realized later. In much the same manner, members of the Trinity were used at different times for different purposes. Since Christ said repeatedly his kingdom was like something in nature, may it not be that, as each of the three aspects of the sun (light, heat, energy) contributes its respective part to life on earth, so each aspect of God (Father, Son, Spirit) contributes his respective part to this great redemptive scheme?

After the *intention* of God for man took form in Christ's *invasion* of humanity to live *with* man, the next step in perfecting the divine

intention was for the Holy Spirit to come and dwell in man. In giving his last directions to the apostles before He ascended to God, Christ told them to tarry in Jerusalem until they were "clothed with power from on high"; and that they were to "receive power, when the Holy Spirit is come." The weapon for active war against Satan is being fashioned according to God's plan. It is to be energized, empowered, and unsheathed by the spirit.

THE BOOK OF THE ACTS

Instead of organizing a publicity campaign of their own, the apostles did as Christ said and waited in prayer for the Holy Spirit to come and complete the institution which Christ had said before his death would be his church, or kingdom. And into this new church, or "house of God," the Spirit promptly entered and took up residence. For Peter made known to those who were becoming citizens of the new kingdom, by accepting the risen and reigning Christ as their King, that they were receiving the Spirit, not as an earned wage, hut as a "gift." This was the first time the Holy Spirit ever dwelt in men in this way, for he could not come in the Christian way till after Christ was glorified. (John 7:37-39.)

Later, when the apostles were defending the church against Jewish enemies, Peter, referring to the death, resurrection and exaltation of Christ, said: "We are witness of these things; and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God hath given to them that obey him." (Acts 5:32.) This Scripture teaches that all who are born into the family of God, by obeying the Gospel, receive when they obey the Spirit as a birthright. To this agrees the passage in John 7, for it is declared that every believer in Christ was to have the Spirit within him, even as a fountain of living water. And at Antioch, "The disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit." (Acts: 13-52.) Therefore, not only some, but all Christians received the Spirit as a *gift*, because they were Christians. "And because ye are sons, God sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." (Galatians 4:6.)

Certainly, the great, central Book of the Acts teaches Christians that the Holy Spirit lives within them. But it does not stop to explain the mystery of *how* this can be. Is such explanation necessary? No attempt is made to explain mysteries in other realms. What man refuses to eat bread until he understands all the mystery that lies back of bread and the assimilation of food? In *faith*, hungry men swallow bread down, mystery and all, lest they die. The rationalist who repudiates all that he does not understand in religion is most

irrational and inconsistent, for the church has no greater mysteries than nature has. There are no mysteries to God, anytime, anywhere, unless it be man's ingratitude to him.

A final verse from The Acts may help. About A.D. 50, when the question of circumcising converts from the Gentiles was vexing the church, a group of representative men convened in Jerusalem to consider the matter. After "The apostles and the elders, with the whole church" had reached an agreement, they announced their decision as follows: "For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things." (Acts 15:28.) Here is an example, for all time, of the Holy Spirit and human spirits (without miracle, but not without mystery) working harmoniously and effectively in cooperative, practical, spiritual thinking and living. The Spirit did not invade human volition on this occasion and depersonalize these men, as the materialistic Devil, in his crafty, fiendish work of liquidating thoughts of all personality, divine, human, and demonic, often does. Rather, the men chose to put themselves at the Spirit's disposal in order that they might draw on his superhuman wisdom and power. If Christians, since, had always followed this example when honest difference and dispute arose, the church would have been spared much in trouble and blood and gained much in peace and achievement. It is not yet too late to follow it.

Consider too, this happened before the New Testament was written. The Spirit rendered this service without either miracle or written word. Christians must never forget that the living Christ has continued ever since Cana to make wine without miracle; and that, though the Holy Spirit has written the New Testament since A.D. 50, he did not intend it to be a substitute for himself. He calls it his "sword," which He expects to use, of course. Hence, it is the weapon which he uses in his warfare against the Devil, who is the usurping, temporary "god of this world." (II Cor. 4:4.) The most unused power on earth, and the most needed power among the children of men today is the power of the Holy Spirit wielding his sword.

THE EPISTLES

The letters of the New Testament agree with the Book of Acts, for God, through the Spirit, wrote both them and The Acts. "But ye are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you. But if any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." (Rom. 8:9.) "Know ye not that ye are a temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" (I Cor. 3:16.) "Or know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit which is

in you, which ye have from God? and ye are not your own." (I Cor. 6:19.) A prayer that Paul offered for the Ephesians: "That ye may be strengthened with power through his Spirit in the inward man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith." (Eph. 3:16, 17.)

The respective context of "Be filled with the Spirit" (Eph. 5:18) and "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly" (Col. 3:16) is such that it is certain the expressions were to Paul as the two sides of a shield. And if each expression is taken in its scriptural meaning, it is impossible to heed one of these admonitions without heeding the other. Paul to Timothy: "That good thing which was committed unto thee guard through the Holy Spirit which dwelleth in us." (II Tim. 1:14.) Paul wrote to Titus: "God saved us through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, which he poured out on us richly, through Jesus Christ our Savior." (Titus 3:5,6.) Observe that God in his three aspects appears in this scripture. What is the significance of Paul's warnings, "Quench not the Spirit," "Grieve not the Spirit," and "Believest thou the prophets"?

Verily, the indwelling God, through his Spirit, is the great constitutional covenant promise of the New Covenant, as the invasion of God, through his son, is the great constitutional covenant promise of the Old Testament. Christ not only lived his life as an example for men, but he also still lives his life in *willing* men. Of course, he does not smash his way through to get into men, as sectarian dogma has contended. Paul says: "It is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me." (Gal. 2:20.) The eternal living Christ is not a great teacher long since dead.

FAITH VERSUS REASON

Because they cannot understand this "divine-human encounter," some men will not believe in it. They need to remember that the way of life, in any sense, is by faith, not by reason. They need to consider, also, that both Christ and the Bible combine divine and human elements in a mysterious way as well as does the church. Though no man can see *how* Spirit mixes with spirit, if he has confidence in the witness who says it is true, he can believe and be blessed in his faith, even as the farmer sows in faith and reaps. Instead of giving men the insoluble problem of explaining prayer, Christ teaches them to ask in prayer, simply as children ask Christ himself prayed very much more than he talked about prayer. Does not the lack of formal, technical logic in the Bible (a thing so important and final with men) suggest that the sources of truth lie above and beyond human searching? That intelligence and infinite Truth, though not unreasonable and unintelligible, are not exhausted by finite reasoning? Man's danger is not

that he become too intellectual, but that he become *merely* intellectual.

Christianity is a great venture of faith. Christ says: "Come unto me . . . and I will give you rest." This promise is no more susceptible of dogmatic, argumentative proof than is an acorn's becoming a giant oak. Plant the acorn and see what happens. Likewise, single-heartedly accept Christ's invitation and experience what happens. The Christ of history never fails to become the Christ of experience, too. In both his speeches and his writings, Paul repeatedly tells his experience. Furthermore, he exhorts others to find out for themselves, as he was doing, "What is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God." "The proof of the pudding is in the eating." Factual knowledge of the Bible is not enough. Christ said to the legalistic Jews: "Ye search the scriptures, because ye think that in them ye have eternal life; and these are they which bear witness of me; and ye will not come to me, that ye may have life." (John 5:39,40.) Even the scriptures and the church cannot save unless they lead to personal fellowship, communion, and spiritual affinity with Christ, the giver of life, for he gives life on this condition only. Christ, the Living Word, comes to men through the written word.

THE ETERNAL KINGDOM

When man rebelled against God's eternal Kingdom in Eden in favor of Satan's way, God foretold that he would win man back, through Christ's mediatory Kingdom, to his way. After four thousand years, accordingly, Christ came to overthrow Satan and to restore God's reign, ultimately. When the long, bitter battle between Christ and Satan ends, with Satan's being conquered and banished into eternal punishment, heaven, as it is described in the last two chapters of Revelation, is then to ensue. And what more can heaven be than God's perfect, eternal Kingdom restored, to continue without evil and without end? Constitutionally, this kingdom is as immutable as is God himself. Its cardinal principles are Creator-God's absolute *sovereignty* and creature - man's absolute *subjection*. No matter by what name it be called, such as reign, government, or kingdom, these Principles never change, for to change them would mean another God. Both before sin entered and after sin shall be no more, basically, it remains the same. One God, one humanity and one relationship between the two. God's kingdom in this sense is eternal and invincible.

When God created man, He made him to fit his eternal law, which was already in operation. Does not Christ's statement that "The kingdom of God is within you" (Luke 17:21) involve this thought?

That is, God's government for man and man's nature are perfectly adapted to each other. Man was made in God's likeness to live in God's way. And he cannot live any other way. When he tries to do so, his personality disintegrates, and he falls into ruin, both individually and socially. Thus, God decrees that men who do not live as they are designed to live punish themselves, somewhat as a cog in a machine ruins itself by getting out of gear. It is as much God's will that his wrath be revealed "against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men" as that godly men be blessed. God's kingdom is man's native air and his soul's homeland. "The soul of man is naturally Christian." All this is more incontrovertible evidence that the kingdom of God is eternal and invincible.*

*If, perchance, other views than yours are found in this piece, reader, consider whether they are irreconcilable with yours. Is there contradiction or merely supplementary matter? When John forbade a man's casting out demons in Christ's name because he did not belong to their group, Christ rebuked John with: "Forbid him not: for he that is not against you is for you." (Luke 9:50.) Only teaching that is "contrary to the doctrine" should raise an issue among brethren. (See Romans 16:17.)

The Fruits Of Faith

by
E. W. McMillan

The records of heaven will show that days and seasons like the one experienced here each year at Thanksgiving were among the most profitable that people had. The sympathetic touch of heart upon heart, especially when those hearts are Christian, is next to the touch of God in the life. I need them and long for them. Last year at this time I was in Tokyo; it was the first time to miss Thanksgiving in many years. Next year, it now seems, I shall be there again. Much will happen between now and then. I shall endeavor to be back in the States and be here; but whether it comes out that way or not, I shall relive in memory, if not in person here, the joys of this Thanksgiving day with you.

President Benson has requested that I speak on the subject, "The Fruits of Faith." At first it seemed a difficult subject, not easy to make interesting. But since receiving the assignment, I have made long journeys and lived in many lands. I've made little journeys with Noah, Abraham, the prophets; I've entered the sanctuaries of the angels to seek information about what they do as ministering spirits for the saints; I've communed with God through prayer. Out of these journeys in Bible study and from these seasons in prayer, there has dawned upon my understanding the clear light that Brother Benson assigned me a subject which contains the essence of life on earth with God and the only hope of salvation hereafter.

What is the relation of faith and fruit in the life? Faith. Saving faith is accepting without wavering all that God says, because he said it. Be it a fact, a command, or a promise, faith lays hold upon it without halting or fearing. Christian fruit is the result of faith in the life—what the eyes of others see, and what God sees in the heart.

Fruit. Through all the centuries God has spoken in the terms of fruitage when testing his people. Isaiah, chapter five, spoke of Israel as a beloved vineyard, who disappointed God because they "brought forth wild grapes." Wisdom, speaking through Solomon, said, "My fruit is better than gold, yea, than fine gold; and my revenue than

choice silver. I walk in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of justice; that I may cause those that love me to inherit substance, and that I may fill their treasures "

Or, if one prefers, let us walk with the Christ. It was God's religious leaders whom he most condemned. He saw immoral people; he walked among heathen who bent to worship before stocks and stones; he saw the political caprice of the Roman officials; but neither of these became the object of his sharpest words. The Jewish churchmen, offering themselves as examples in prayer, sermon, and good works, claiming the only doctrinal accuracy in the world—these were they whom he called hypocrites, sons of hell, whitewashed tombs. And why? Because they claimed so much and were so little. Two days before his arrest, walking near the Holy City, where these boastful leaders lived, he spoke the words that killed a fig tree. Why did he do that? The tree was harmful to no one, its green leaves were lovely to see; why kill a tree? Ah, it was because that tree was robed in the leaves which claimed that figs nestled underneath them, but no fruit could be found. It was a perfect example of the Jewish nation, which bore God no fruits, but offered only words and appearance.

Or, come to the early church. Christians are branches on the Vine, Christ, to bear fruit or be cut off and burned; the Galatian Christians were to bear the fruits of the Spirit in "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control," with the assurance that no law on earth or in heaven could be against such fruitbearing. The saints in Colossae, through their faith in Jesus Christ and love for all the saints, were said to have won the cherished prize of a living hope, laid up in heaven, and this hope was "bearing fruit" in all the world. And in broad contrast with these great fruit-bearing trees of faith in God, Jude saw and scorned some who were "trees without fruit, twice dead, to be plucked up by the roots."

But the years have raised up teachers of faith who have perverted its real meaning and its great value. Skeptics have said it is a mere crutch for the feeble minded; rationalistic scholars have sought to secure faith by reason; the mere formalists have reduced faith to a mere detached doctrine to be performed. But faith is a LIFE-

In his first Corinthian letter Paul taught that faith does not depend upon, nor is it strengthened by, scholarship. He called it "the wisdom of the world," but the word "wisdom" comes from a Greek word that means mental excellence at its fullest and best. We

call that attainment scholarship. But Paul plainly said men do not commune with God through that door; he then went on saying that we are saved through preaching, which is the opening of the door to faith. Here I challenge a tendency which has seemed to charm men through all the years. There seems to have been, and to be now, some sort of magic in the appearance of one who knew, or knows a lot of things, and we are prone to overlook his lack of the Christian graces if he knows much. Now, let there be no disparagement for those who have acquired much information; it is a great attainment; but this attainment as such is neither the gateway to a knowledge of God nor a foundation for saving faith in God. That faith consists in simply accepting in a child like way all that God has said, because he said it.

Nor does salvation depend upon personal goodness. Often we hear prayers close by saying, "And finally, if we have been faithful, save us in the judgment." An assigned reason for this request likely would be that John said, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." Of course, we can not hope to be saved if we constantly and knowingly violate the commands of God, but if we are saved it will not be because we were so faithful to all the will of God. The admonition, "Be thou faithful unto death" means, "Do not surrender your faith in God even if it costs you your life;" it does not intimate that we can be so good that God will save us because we were that good. A better ending to our prayers would be, "Keep us as faithful as we can live, and in death, clothe us in thy grace, in order that we may be saved."

I tremble under an appearance that some seem to be placing the Christian faith on defense. It has never been on defense nor will it ever be. Neither scholarship nor personal righteousness can add anything to faith. God has never defended, explained or justified himself. He labeled the man who doubts him as a fool. It is good to show the shame of those who want proof that Christian faith is justified; but Christian apologetics are not, of themselves, needed in the life which truly believes God. That life "walks by faith, not by sight" (or reason;) and, "The just shall live by faith." Accepting as true the verdict of God that all of us are "sinners saved by grace," the believing heart goes forth on its adventures of faith with its God. In these adventures there will be always the fruitbearing which proves their kinship to him. What are these fruits?

The first fruit of faith is the destruction of fear. How universal is that enemy. We fear poverty, pain, public sentiment, death, and the judgment. But the psalmist said, "Though I walk through the

valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil." Jesus said, "Fear not them that can kill the body, but after that have no more that they can do." Yet we go on fearing and trembling. Faith and fear can not live in the same life at once; they are mutually destructive. Faith is never afraid of enemies, or of adventuring with God, or of doing right and taking the consequences. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." To the person of real faith there is no such a thing as fear, or dread, or defeat.

The second fruit of faith is a useful, helpful life. A life in communion with God through faith loses its selfishness and becomes unselfish. Its actions are not based on prominence or place. Its happiness comes of sources not human but divine. The Lord said, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me." Up to the very moment of death, he manifested a calm and a joy. Happiness to him consisted in underwriting the debt of suffering due others and permitting them to go free. People who will not live by his faith catch the understanding of what made him great and become changed into his likeness through the same unselfish service to others.

The normal consequences of this faith are not only enlarged service to others, but the loss of the vindictive spirit and the development of compassion. "We do not have an high priest which can not be touched with a feeling of our infirmities; but one who was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us come, therefore, boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in the time of need."

About twenty-five years ago I gained an understanding of this passage which has never left me. I had just completed a talk in the funeral of a man whom I had never known. His wife had preceded him a year before. When the body of this man was almost out of sight, the little eight year old son rushed to the grave's edge sobbing and pleading, "Don't leave me, daddy, don't leave me." In that moment of great concern every energy of my being went out to that child, for I was touched with compassion for him. That is the meaning of the passage that says Christ is touched with the feeling of our infirmities. Oh, the compassionate nature of God! The sparrow's fall is marked by him; the very hairs of our heads are numbered; the tears that flow down human checks and the upheavals of our hearts move his compassions. Those whose lives are united with his through faith are, likewise, touched when others suffer, not only our friends, but also our enemies. Our lives become transformed into builders of other people's lives. We never think, "What can I do TO him?" We always ask, "What can I do FOR him?"

The third fruit of faith is that cluster of graces called, "love, joy, and peace.

Looking at the first one—love—we are reminded how far God has gone in his appeal to the race. People are moved by three things: fear, the hope of reward, and love. God has appealed through all these—hell is for the lost, and heaven is for the saved. The Bible says much about both. In presenting love, God has demonstrated that. "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son." That scene was not a word picture of love; it was a life demonstration of it. It met the universal need and longing to be loved. Was there ever a person who did not want to be loved? Has there ever been a heart to which love had no appeal? The life which trusts God owns all the love of heaven; but it also, in turn, shares that love with all other people—friends and foes alike.

Along with that love, there lives joy. "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world," said the Lord. He had no soldiers, no weapons, few friends; yet he said, "I have overcome the world." He had no home on earth, no angels to protect him on the cross, and even his Father's face would turn from him; yet he said, "I have overcome." Already he could see the outline of his own body hanging on the cross, mocked by enemies and unattended by friends, dying; yet he said, "I have overcome," and added, "Be of good cheer." What was there to see that would bring cheer or joy? Surely, he owned something we seldom know. So he did. It was his faith in his Father. He conquered every adverse emotion of his own being, surrendered himself to his enemies, allowed them to nail him on a cross then was buried as other men were; but his confidence all the while was that he would arise from the dead. He foretold it and rebuked his disciples for not believing him. Truly, his was a victorious faith, one full of joy.

But when such faith lives in a life, it has to feel the calm of peace. It is born of the knowledge that God lives in his heavens, and all is well. Such faith is as a breath out of heaven, into the heart. Faith and peace live together and die together.

Last of all, a life with this faith, will become to the world that knows it a transforming power that will save it.

In 1916 William Jennings Bryan gave this quotation:

"I know of a land, deep set in shame,
Of hearts that faint and tire;
I know of a *name*, a *name*
That would set that land on fire."

There is a magic and power in the appeal of Christ as a person. Suppose what we call his miracles were attached to a known criminal! Suppose his great sayings had dropped from the lips of a known degenerate! Wherein is the real guarantee? Do the miracles and sermons of the Christ guarantee him, or docs he guarantee them? The great power in Peter's Pentecost sermon was the PERSON with which it dealt. Those who heard it were men who could never answer, or deceive, or bribe, or mislead him. He knew the very secrets in their own hearts. His guileless life had stamped itself on their understanding. His countenance transformed on the mountain was but an indication of the transparent glory they knew to be in him. They had hired men to swear lies and condemn him; and yet they had listened to his prayers that they might escape the penalty of their sins. These character qualities they could not forget. The life they knew guaranteed the sermon they heard.

What is the power that makes Christianity live today? A simple faith that Christ was divine set the lives of a dozen men on fire, and they in turn kindled a fire in millions of Jews in Palestine. It set on fire the life of Paul, and he crossed all the known seas and continents led by it, divinely designated as a "light to the gentiles." In him more than any other apostle we see the real meaning of a life lived in faith with God. He saw it not as a doctrine but as a life. "Present your bodies a living sacrifice," he said. His constant prayer was, "That I may fill up the measures of the sufferings of Christ." Again, he prayed, "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his suffering, becoming conformed to his death." Paul was a prisoner in Rome when he said that, soon to meet God in judgment. His deepest longing was not for temporal security, or prominence, power, or even for friends. His deepest longing was to share the sufferings of his Lord. And why? It was because he had learned to truly love him, and because he knew that no one could be saved until he had suffered for his faith. It is the universal desire on the part of humanity to provide comfort and ease in later life; but Paul's was the opposite. I wonder, Oh, I wonder! how many of us will miss heaven because we refused to bear the fruit of sharing the miseries of others. I'm thinking that the names of those to be saved may be written in blood. Certainly, suffering, deep and lasting suffering, must be the lot of those who will be saved.

The other week, a man said to me, sure, the Japs should have the gospel, but some of us here just don't like the Japs." Whoever withholds the gospel from the lost on that account may be lost with them.

So, as we pass by the tree of saving faith what do we see? We see that faith is not a theory, not a philosophy, nor even a doctrine, as such. It is supremely a life in the form of a fruitbearing tree. It is a transformed life, radiant with goodness, and tinted with all the colors of the heavenly nature. It is more than a pretender at worship on Sunday; it is a life and a light in the world every day. As to a table spread with good things to eat, the hungry lives about it come for strength.

The Psychological Soundness Of The Christian Faith

by
James D. Bales

The psychological soundness of the Christian faith needs to be stressed in words and demonstrated in life in the midst of a generation which is psychology-conscious. The world's interest in psychology is indicated by the flood of books which include the term psychology in their titles, such as: *The Psychology of Selling*; *The Psychology of Religion*; *Educational Psychology*; *Psychology and Life*. The world is also showing its increasing need of peace of mind.

In presenting the fact that Christianity is psychologically sound, one must, of course, avoid a pre-mature harmonization between Christian faith and what some psychologists say. Their theories are sometimes wrong and thus to endeavor to harmonize the Bible with such theories would result in a false interpretation of the Bible. Then those who identified this or that psychological theory with the Bible would think that the Bible is discredited when this or that particular theory is discredited. And yet, there are certain well established principles in psychology, and these are in harmony with the teachings and products of Christian faith.

The needs of man reveal the nature of man. His needs being more than material, man is more than a matter-machine. The fact that Christianity meets the deeper needs of man and develops his noblest potentialities is one of the proofs of its truth. "He who made this book made me," stated a native as he looked into the perfect law of liberty and saw himself as he really was, and when he saw what through grace he could become. This is simply another way of stating that Christianity is psychologically sound; that it knows the inner workings of man; that it knows what is wrong with man; that it knows man's needs, how he thinks, how he tries to cover up, what he may become, and what he must do in order to develop his amazing potentialities.

The concluding statements of the above paragraph indicate that the term psychology is being used to cover the inner workings of man's mind and heart; although doubtless professional psychologists might not define it exactly in this way.

The subject is important for unless Christianity docs know man,

and what can and should be done about his inner workings, it cannot be from God. If, to illustrate from the field of medicine, the physician who gave the diagnosis and prescription in the Bible does not correctly do so, he cannot possibly be the one who knows man's nature and needs. On the other hand, the adaptation of the Bible to the needs of man, its thorough knowledge of man centuries before modern psychology was born, shows that the one who wrote it had a thorough knowledge of man—a knowledge of man from which man has often tried to hide.

The word of God claims to have such a knowledge of man. "*The word of God . . . is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*" (Hebrews 4:12.) And need we remind you that by the "heart" the Bible means the emotional, intellectual, and volitional make up of man.

As one studies the discernments of our inner workings which are contained in the Bible, one is more and more constrained to acknowledge their validity. When Jesus read the life of the Samaritan woman, or as she put it he "told me all that ever I did" (John 5:39), she said, "Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet." (John 4:19.) And so it is that as we become more and more acquainted with the word of God, and the more vividly we realize that it is perfectly acquainted with us, we also recognize that it is the work of him who made us, for it has complete knowledge of us.

It must be sound psychologically, for it produces the sound mind. The fact that the Bible is psychologically sound illustrates a characteristic which is found through the Bible. That characteristic is that *whenever and where ever we can check the bible for accuracy—whether it be in psychology, in history, or in what not—it is accurate.* This, among other things, creates such confidence in it that we trust it even where we cannot check it.

MAN'S NEED FOR FAITH

There is the need for a faith which gives meaning. Dr. James S. Plant wrote concerning children that "There is the need that these children shall develop some sort of faith . . . some faith, some frame of reference within which the various items of life obtain a meaning."¹

¹Objectives for Children in a Democratic Society," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political Science*, November, 1940, p. 229

This is not only a need for children but also for all men. For a sound mind and a stable life one needs some faith which will furnish a core For life and give meaning to its various elements.

As Clyde, in *Susan and God*, remarked, people need "something to believe in—and to hang onto." Man cannot hang on to a negative nor rest forever seated upon a question mark. As Dr. McGosh once said: "But this negative philosophy cannot last any great length of time. Persons cannot live long, for they cannot breathe, in a vacuum. A terrible wind will rush in to fill up the void when it begins to be felt; If men's heads do not discover the fallacy, their *hearts will turn away from the emptiness.*"²

In another place he put it thus: "The bird which has been buffeting the wind of the wild waste of the ocean will alight on the first bare rock or mast-top it falls in with. Persons who have been cheated by those who promised to give them everything, but really gave them nothing, will be ready to trust the first man who bestows on them ever so small a boon. So there are youths in our day, who, feeling as if metaphysics could give them nothing, are occupying themselves exclusively with the baldest psychics."³

Men who have been robbed, or who have robbed themselves, of faith in God and in Christ have seldom found satisfaction in the flesh alone. They have often wholeheartedly embraced anything which promised to bring some meaning and utility into their future lives. Mankind simply cannot live for long by bread alone. At first they may try to live by the flesh alone. "Having no God to worship, no sanction to keep evil at bay, no future to repair today's wrongs, no sure self to honor and perfect, what wonder is it that the crushed spirit has rushed to embrace any transient gleam of joy and any form of self-expression!"⁴

However, this does not bring satisfaction for a very long period of time. Those who continue to think recognize that living to simply eat and drink is a very low aim for life. The life of lust, the life of the beast is just as unsatisfactory to man in the long run for man is man and not beast. He finally tries of the flesh pots of Egypt. He searches for something that he can hang onto, something secure, something which promises him more than he has been able to find so far. And

² McGosh, *Christianity and Positivism*, p. 179.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 181.

⁴ D'Arcy, *Orthodoxy Sees It Through*, p. 57.

often he will credulously accept such things as Christian Science, violent religious nationalism, or some other fantastic cult, because he has a hunger of the heart which he must satisfy in order to really feel that he is living. As D'Arcy put it: "The spirit of pessimism has penetrated deeply into society, and in the country of the blind the one-eyed are kings."⁵ "The wild surging of restless spirit is evident in our own society. It is a testimony to the deep need of man for spiritual security and for a purpose in life."⁶

That such took place, to some measure, in Germany and helped prepare for the advent of Hitler is abundantly illustrated by Dr. Michael J. Demiashkevich in his book, *The National Mind*. As Dr. Spencer Leeson, in the Bampton Lectures for 1944, said concerning such situations, "The souls of men were empty, famished. The new popular despotisms such situations, "The souls of men were empty, famished. The new popular despotisms fed them, and starving men will eat anything. Here were philosophies that descended into the street, bringing men a breath of life . . . and these philosophies are religious. The souls of their people were fed, though with rank and poisoned food. Here in England the same hunger was by degrees also making itself felt, and that premonitory purposelessness and disillusionment were becoming apparent in wide circles of our countrymen . . . While the war lasted, we had our purpose and our absorbing task; but what will happen afterwards, when that deadly lassitude and exhaustion sets in, as they did in 1919, and we ask each other what was it all for? What is it all for? When the wicked spirit found the soul empty, he saw his chance."⁷

This same hunger of man to satisfy this deep psychological and spiritual need for a faith is thus stated by the psychologist Dr. Henry C. Link: "It is not only natural for man to believe in something—it is absolutely essential; but in the absence of an irrational belief in religion, he becomes the food of every faith which promises the abundant life *as he, at that moment, desires it.*"⁸

⁵*Ibid.*, p. 57.

⁶James D. Bales, "Something To Hang On To," *20th Century Christian*, Nov., 1942, p. 27.

⁷Dr. Spencer Leeson, "Christian Education," *The Bampton Lecture*, 1944

⁸*The Return of Religion*, p. 57.

⁹I beg to differ here for it is my conviction that the Christian *faith* is founded on a rational basis in that there is sufficient *evidence* on which to base our faith. J.D.B.

FAITH IS POWER

A faith is not only essential to give real *purpose*, but also to furnish it with power. "The man whose personality is organized by a single and consistently followed ideal will possess power just because he is free from psychic dislocations. The degree to which organization can be achieved will depend on the worth of that ideal. If an ideal can be found capable of absorbing, exercising, and uniting in its pursuit the whole self, the man will come to his full stature."¹⁰

This purpose cannot come from science alone. As Link put it: "There can be no solution to life's deeper problems, no increased happiness for the individual, through the development of greater scientific knowledge alone. More science only adds more confusion. Unless the sciences are integrated and subordinated to the homely facts of everyday living, they will destroy rather than liberate the mind which created them. This integration must come from without the sciences them-selves, it is not inherent in them and it is not a subject for scientific proof. It must come from a faith, a belief in certain values of life which is fundamental and which no logic can displace."¹¹

This integration must come from religion, and with this integration comes inner peace. "Above all, your religion means a trust in God and his sometimes mysterious ways. Such trust will give you the inner security and confidence you need to carry you through this difficult situation. I may make a few helpful suggestions in this matter, but no human being can give you anything comparable to what your religion will give you. You are infinitely fortunate to have a religion to depend on."¹² "The mind, coupled to religion, is a stronger mind for it, a mind not so readily swayed by the passions that parade as reason under an enlarged vocabulary."¹³

FAITH IS CONSTRUCTIVE

Christ furnishes us with the faith which does lead to a wholesome integration of personality. It produces an ordering of life which not only gives the individual a purpose in life, but also a purpose

¹⁰Canon Raven, *Christ and Modern Education*, p. 65-66.

¹¹Link, *Op. Cit.*, p. 55

¹²*Ibid.*, p. 61.

¹³*Ibid.*, p. 62.

which leads him to help, not harm, his fellowman. With purpose there comes power, but without the proper faith and purpose, this power can be destructive both to the individual and to those whom his life contacts. Christianity not only satisfies our deep need within for faith purpose, and power, but does it *in such a way as to develop the whole man into a being who will work for the good of all men.*

Yes, Christianity is psychologically sound in its recognition that man cannot live by bread alone, and in its adequacy in giving him the spiritual faith which fills him with true life within. This makes his life a life-giving life instead of a life-taking life. (Matthew 4:4.)

Christ's warning against hypercriticalness and harsh judgment is psychologically sound. Christ warned against hypercriticalness when he rebuked those who considered the mote in their brother's eye and considered not the beam in their own eye. They would be judged by the same judgment with which they judged. (Matthew 7:1-5; Luke 6:37-38.) Psychologists have found that of those who could not relax some are often those who are hypercritical of others. There are, of course, other causes in the case of some people, but it was striking that when the persons, with whom these psychologists dealt, had cultivated a more understanding and sympathetic attitude toward others that they were able to relax. What was the psychological explanation? Those who were hypercritical of others, by a process called projection, believed that people were hypercritical of them. Thus they were always on guard and constantly felt that others were surveying them with a critical eye. This built up a feeling of tension and made relaxation impossible. With what judgment they judged they were ever judging themselves, and thus was measured out unto them what they had meted out unto others.

The Christian does not, of course, follow Christ simply for the psychological advantages found in discipleship, but such blessings are some of the benefits of the Christian faith which we experience here and now. Peace of mind and joy in this life are by-products, for us, of submission to Christ.

FAITH REQUIRES HONESTY

Christianity is psychologically sound in its insistence on inner honesty. The Lord taught that honesty is essential to conversion, for unless the seed falls into honest hearts it will not be fruitful. (Luke 8:15.) Those who have no love for the truth, and who take pleasure in unrighteousness, are dishonest within and will thus receive strong delusions. (II Thessalonians 2:10-12.) Let us notice a little more

closely how that the failure to be honest has some very bad psychological effects on the individual.

If a Christian fails to deal honestly with the difficulties to his faith which he meets with from time to time, he will lose the joy and zeal of faith and may ultimately completely depart from it. Instead of honestly admitting that there is a difficulty this dishonest person oppresses it and tries to crowd it out of his mind. This he continues to do with all the difficulties and challenges which are hurled against his faith in Christ. These accumulate in the back of his mind, so to speak, and create a feeling of uneasiness and uncertainty. Gradually they may undermine his faith. Or he may suddenly decide to face up to all these difficulties and be floored by them. For "unfortunately, in such a moment of crisis, the bias to which the judgment is subjected may be lost sight of. It would seem best, therefore, that the transition from a dishonest to an honest attitude towards doubt should be brought about very slowly, or if this is impossible, that the probable psychological result of what is in effect a study of only one side of the problem, should be kept strongly in mind."¹⁴

The honest thing to do is to admit that the difficulty is there, for it *is* there and to suppress it is not to get rid of it. Clearly define the difficulty and keep on the alert for information which bears on it. In this way one will recognize the answer when he finds it. If he has tried to hide the difficulty from himself he may pass by the answer a dozen times without seeing it. Often one has only to clearly see the difficulty in order to see through it. At any rate, one will keep these difficulties from accumulating and finally flooring him, since he will search for the answer and thus find it sooner or later; or at least discover that even unanswered it need not destroy faith.

DISHONESTY DISASTROUS

Now consider the passage which stated that a lack of love for the truth and the taking of pleasure in unrighteousness will result in strong delusions. (II Thessalonians 2:10-12.) This statement is eminently sound, psychologically. That person who takes pleasure in unrighteousness, and who does not want to forsake it but wants to make it his way of life, will not long consider anything which would

¹⁴ Dr. Robert E. D. Clark, *Conscious and Unconscious Sin*, p. 40.

¹⁵ For an extended discussion on rationalization, see the above, *Conscious and Unconscious Sin*.

show that such is wrong. He will not continue to consider it, for he docs not want to give up the unrighteous life; nor does he want to hold anything in his mind which would cause him to be uneasy in this manner of life. He does not love the truth about himself and about his way of life. Thus he will not long listen to the truth about it. Instead he seeks out the teachers and ideas which will tickle his ears and assure him that he is right as he is. Finally, he turns aside from the truth (which condemns him) and turns unto fables. For the only things that can approve his manner of life are fables and falsehoods. (II Timothy 4:3-4.) Thus he becomes the victim of strong delusions. His dishonesty was psychologically unsound and resulted in disaster as *he fitted himself to receive error, not truth.*

CHRISTIANITY IS PRACTICAL

Christianity is psychologically sound in its emphasis on the practical, on doing. There is in man a tendency to shun the practical demands which his faith makes on his life. There are some religions which encourage this tendency and assure him that all is but a realm of thought and thus his religious life may be one of thought and contemplation only. This, however, is not good for man. It tends to surround his religion with an air of unreality and to undermine real character. Thus *Christian-thinking* is an essential element of the Christian life.

In commenting on the fact that Christianity teaches that faith without works is dead, and that faith is made perfect through works (James 2:22, 29), Dr. Henry C. Link observed that those who excuse themselves from the duties of religion reveal an unwholesome attitude toward all life. "My clients believe in friendship, for example, but not in the social activities and personal sacrifices by which friends are made. They believe in a happy marriage but not in the many acts by which it is achieved. They believe in their abilities and aptitudes but not in the routine drudgery by which superiority in any vocation is attained."¹⁵

This emphasis on work, on doing, is in harmony with the emphasis in psychology today on doing things as the real road to happiness. A "good personality or character is achieved by practice" and not by introspection only. Yes, Christ's emphasis on good works, on doing, on

¹⁵*Op. Cit.*, p. 18.

service, has been abundantly vindicated by the findings of modern psychologists."¹⁷

In this connection it is of interest to note that the great doctrines of the Christian faith are used to enforce practical conclusions. The pre-existence and the humiliation of Christ was set before brethren in Philippi not for the purpose of speculation and the satisfaction of idle curiosity, but to prove that they ought to be humble, and to motivate them by the example of Christ. (Philippians 2:5.) The providence of God is set forth not in order that we may know how he may work for our good, but to reassure us so that we may be faithful in our everyday life even when adversity besets us. The coming resurrection is discussed not to satisfy curiosity but to inform us to the extent that we shall be stimulated to diligent effort *now* (I Corinthians 15:58.) This practical characteristic of the Bible is dealt with in greater detail by Richard Whately in *Essays on Some of the Peculiarities of the Christian Religion*, and by James D. Bales, in *Soils and Seeds of Sectarianism*, in the chapter on "The Soil Called Speculation."

SELFISHNESS IS UNSOUND

Selfishness is fundamentally unsound. Jesus taught that he whose selfish, worldly interests constitute the core of life will not find real life. "For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it." (Matthew 10:39; 16:25.)

Those who are selfish and who do only that which pleases their fancy; and who will not exert themselves for some high principle will find that their range of dislikes will increase and their range of likes decrease. As time goes on life becomes more and more filled with disagreeable things until the selfish life becomes the doomed life. He who does things for Christ's sake is responding to something higher than his personal inclinations. This leads to a steady increase of one's grange of interests, likes, and successes" and the fuller life is the reward of the giving up of a selfish life. "No discovery of modern psychology is, in my opinion so important as its scientific proof of the necessity of self-sacrifice or discipline to self-realization and happiness."¹⁸

This psychological soundness of Christianity is in striking contrast with those philosophies which make man the center of everything, and the satisfaction of his earthly desires as the ultimate purpose of life.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 19-20.

¹⁸ Link, *Op. Cit.*, p. 29-30.

Christianity is psychologically sound in its recognition that more than evidence is necessary in order to lead a man to change his position. One's will, as well as evidence, is involved. (John 5:40.) Jesus said that one must be willing to do the will of God in order to know his doctrine. (John 7:17.) As Professor Meyer has observed: "The moral aim of his self-determination—to do the will of God. He who is wanting in this, who lacks fundamentally the moral determination of his mind towards God, and to whom, therefore, Christ's teaching is something strange, for the recognition of which as divine there is in the ungodly bias of his will no point of contact or of sympathy; this knowledge is to him a moral impossibility. On the contrary, the bias towards the fulfillment of God's will is the subjective factor necessary to the recognition of divine doctrine as such; for this doctrine produces the immediate conviction that it is clearly divine by virtue of the moral likeness and sympathy of its nature with the man's own nature . . . (it) however, must not be limited either to a definite form of the revelation of it (the will of God), to any one particular requirement (that of faith in Christ) which would contradict the fact that the axiom is stated without any limitation; it must be taken in its full breath and comprehensiveness—'that God wills,' whatever, however, and wherever this will may require." The good and honest heart, as well as the evidence, is essential. (Luke 8:15.)

This gives us the psychological and pedagogical explanation of Christ's attitude toward miracles which seems, on the surface, to be a vacillating one. John said that record of the miracles was given that men might believe. (John 20:30, 31), and Jesus clearly stated that miracles were one of the grounds on which he called for faith. And yet, in some situations he rebuked the desire for signs and said that it proceeded from a wicked heart. (Matthew 12:38-40.) We must remember that these men had already seen miracles, and other credentials of Christ. Their trouble was not the lack of evidence but the lack of a receptive heart. Since Christ understood what was in man "we should expect Him to seek to convince people by an appeal to the mind until He knew that He had presented sufficient evidence, and that rationalization alone stopped that evidence being accepted. After that, a continued attempt to present evidence on the same lines would have caused greater and greater sin against the light: Naturally, He would therefore refuse to go on presenting it, and instead would make the greatest efforts to show people that they were rationalizing in the hope that they might realize what were the true reasons for their rejection of Himself."¹⁹ It was psychologically sound for Christ

¹⁹Clark, *Op. Cit.*, p. 167.

to direct their attention to their inward condition which they were ignoring by their attaching the blame, for a lack of faith, on an assumed lack of evidence.

CONDEMNATION OF UNSOUND COMPENSATION

It is right for an individual to remember his past failures and mistakes and to utilize the memory of them as a drive to motivate him in working hard for the right which he now sees and which he once neglected or opposed. This is a different kind of compensation than that of the individual who deliberately sets aside a commandment of God, because it does not suit him to observe it, and then thinks that he can make up for it by being extra careful about something else. This, the underlying assumption implies, will make up for our refusal to observe the other commandment. In time this may so deaden the conscience that it no longer disapproves our disobedience, for after all is it not made up for by our strictness elsewhere?²⁰

This type of compensation is severely condemned by Christ in his condemnation of one particular manifestation of it. Those who tried to make up for their failure to support their parents by giving money to the temple were labeled as violators of the word of God. (Mark 17:1-11.) This condemnation of compensation is eminently sound for were it tolerated it would permit an individual to do anything that he wanted to do, and do it with all good conscience, just so he was strict on some other point. It would fill the world with men who convinced themselves that they were righteous because they tithed garden plants, but left undone weightier matters such as justice, love, mercy, and peace. (Matthew 23:23-24.)

MAN'S MORAL CAPACITIES

Man has certain moral capacities and any philosophy or psychology which denies this is a lie. *It is a lie against human nature*, and is declared to be such not only by a slight use of one's intelligence, and the Bible, but also by the efforts at self justification which are made by the adherents of such a theory. They endeavor to prove that their theories are not immoral and that they are not therefore basically detrimental to morality and society. When they disclaim human responsibility and morality, and one points out that such leads to a degradation of man and the removal of moral distinctions they attempt to prove that such is not the case. Professor Paul Tillich, in *Interpretation of History*, has pointed out that "The wielders of 'might' and

²⁰Clark, *Op. Cit.*, p. 83-84.

'power' always seek to justify themselves on moral grounds: they wield authority 'for the good of others.' In every power is an element of renunciation of power, and the power lives on this element." He goes on to point out that even a materialistic philosophy such as Marxism likewise falls back upon ethical considerations: 'Even in Marxism the proletariat, as bearer of the coming fulfillment of human existence . . . has an objective quality of holiness, a *vocation* on the strength of which it can wage the battle for power . . . The holiness of power is the critical norm to which it is always subject."²¹ In other words, men of violence who ruthlessly destroy other men, generally justify it on some basis which will remove from them the stigma that for their own selfish satisfaction they have done horrid things. And thus they plead that they have done it for the good of civilization; for civilization to advance their own race and doctrine must be established regardless of the means which are necessary to its establishment!

Not only do these deniers of morality endeavor to protect their theories against charges of immorality, and of their being an evil, but also endeavor to *justify their own personal conduct*. This they sometimes do by maintaining that men cannot help doing what they do, and that therefore they are due no moral censure. But to endeavor to *justify*—to show that it is just, right—one's conduct is to acknowledge that there is a standard to which it ought to conform, and if it does not conform it is worthy of condemnation. If they are right, however, in their non-moral views, they should make no attempt to justify their own conduct and position against the charges of immorality. Their simple reply, and the only reply consistent with their theory, would be that there is no such thing as morality or immorality. A system is neither good nor evil for these terms are meaningless, on the non-moral view.

The Bible knows man, however, far better than these modems. It puts to utter shame those who are so blind as to think that they can teach that man is a mere machine, with no power of choice, and that it will have no disastrous effects. Psychologically man is so constructed that he cannot forever continue to believe that he has no responsibility for his conduct. Christianity is sound in that it realizes man's moral nature and capacity and develops men morally as does no other faith. The fact that it is true to man's highest nature and capacities is demonstrated in the fact that it develops to their greatest possible heights these capacities and this nature.

²¹Quoted by Muste, *Non-Violence in an Aggressive World*, p. 195-196.

MAN'S MORAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Christianity heightens man's conviction of his responsibility for his own conduct, and thus of his accountability. It teaches that man is accountable not only when men are looking, but always for in some way God knows the secret thoughts of his heart.

This recognition of responsibility is vital. The whole concept of law is based on it. *No one can become mature unless he becomes responsible.* The person who tries to dodge the responsibility for his own life becomes a miserable coward inwardly, and often a heartless brute outwardly. *No education can be sound psychologically if it does not increase the sense of personal responsibility and accountability.* The soundness of Christianity is shown in the fact that it not only recognizes this fact, but that it also teaches that it is certain that none shall escape the responsibility for his own life. It shows that accountability is not merely a theory but a fact, for God will bring our thoughts and deeds into judgment.

Since man to become mature must recognize his accountability, the Bible is sound in its emphasis on man's need for conviction of sin, righteousness and judgment. Man has a tendency to make light of an, to ignore righteousness, and to deny judgment. In fact, all of these things are bound up in the denial of human responsibility. The Bible recognizes these things and thus the primary purpose of the gospel is to convince man of the fact that he is guilty, that he needs to become, righteous and that judgment faces him if he does not do so. Thus Jesus taught the Spirit would convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment. (John 16:7-13.) This work of the Spirit is done through the truth of God which shows that man is accountable; that he can become righteous in Christ; and that judgment is coming. For on Pentecost such was preached to men on the basis of a fourfold (miracles of Christ; the miraculous demonstrations then taking place; prophecy; the resurrection) testimony to Jesus' Messiahship. This led to their conviction and they cried out and asked what to do. (Acts 2:36.) They were told to repent and be baptized for the remission of their sins and that they would receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. (Acts 2:38.) In other words, they were shown that they were guilty; that they could become justified in Christ; and thus they were shown how to escape judgment.

The cross is psychologically sound. Man needs a way of justification from sin *which will keep him from viewing sin lightly.* He must realize that sin is not a light thing which can be forgiven and dismissed with a snap of the finger. He must have a way of justification which

will heighten his sense of responsibility and thus his realization of the guilt for sin. And at the same time he needs to be able to become freed from the burden of the guilt of sin. He needs, in other words, a way of justification which will not minimize his sin, but which will not at the same time leave him helplessly paralyzed by the recognition of his extreme guilt and of the consequences of sin when judgment descends upon the sinner. The cross of Christ furnishes a way. It shows man that sin is so sinful that it brought about the death of Christ. Without the atonement through his blood there could be no forgiveness for sinners. (Romans 3:23-26.) And thus man is impressed with sin's sinfulness and the sinner's guilt. But the cross does not leave him crushed by the consciousness of sin, for it is also a demonstration of the love of God. Thus the sinner is assured that there is pardon, if he will accept it, through the Lord Jesus Christ. In saying these things we are not trying to say that the cross is mere psychology, for it is not; but to say that it is psychologically sound.

The psychological soundness of the cross is also indicated in the fact that it *appeals to the two basic motivating forces —fear and love*. The cross appeals to the sinner to leave sin, for what will sin bring upon the one who spurns the message of the cross and continues in that which necessitated the death of Christ? It appeals to love for it shows that even while mankind was at enmity with God that Christ died for us. (Romans 5:8-10.) The cross is the supreme demonstration, the language of action which involved suffering and sacrifice, of the love of God. This love appears to us and calls forth love in return. And thus driven by fear and drawn by love the sinner is moved to leave sin, when he meditates sufficiently on the fact of the cross in the light of evidence which shows that he who died on it was the Son of God and that he died in our stead.

The cross and Christianity are psychologically sound also in the fact that the pre-eminence is given to *love*, not to *fear*. Fear has its place, but love is more powerful, and love is given the greatest prominence in the scriptures.

Man yearns for immortality. Christianity satisfies man's psychological need for the assurance that death does not end all. An agnostic friend once said to the author: How wonderful it would be if life could go on forever, freed from its aches and pains. William James, who was not a Christian, found that his heart expressed a yearning and a desire which finds satisfaction in the Christian assurance of eternal life. "As for the other side, and Mother, and our all possibly meeting, I can't say anything. More than ever at this moment do I feel that if that *were* true, all would be solved and justified. And it

comes strangely over me in bidding you good-bye how a life is but a day and expresses mainly but a single note. It is so much like the act of bidding an ordinary goodnight. Goodnight, my sacred old Father! If I don't see you again—farewell! a blessed farewell!²²

Time would fail us if we mentioned and briefly developed all of the features of the faith which are psychologically sound. If time permitted attention could be given to the soundness of Christ's recognition of the need of some men to give attention to details and of others to concentrate on broad principles; of the full development of the sound Christian personality; of its recognition of man's needs for affection, understanding, and companionship; and such like. Enough, however, has been said to illustrate something of the psychological soundness of the faith once for all delivered to the saints.

²² Dr. Kallen, Editor, *The philosophy of William James*, p. 218.

God And His Physical World

by

L. C. Sears

Can a man of intelligence justify a faith in God today? This is a question which young people in many universities and colleges have been asking. To this question I hope this lecture will suggest an answer. In this study I want us to keep three things constantly in mind:

First, *our age is not the first to be troubled with doubt.* No materialists were more absolute than Democritus, and Epicurus centuries ago, and no skeptics more penetrating than Sextus Empiricus. Even Darwin and Huxley did not proclaim the principles of evolution more dogmatically than Lucretius sixty years B. C. Yet Christian faith met this searching skepticism with a triumphant certainty which gave new hope to a world wearied with its doubts.

Second, *in any explanation of the world there will always be things we cannot understand.* Why should a God of infinite love and power permit suffering, imperfection, and death? This was a question which none of the philosophers could explain. It does not enter the scope of the present lecture, but with a faith in God the Christian finds a satisfactory reply. If every question is not clear, however, we must remember the limitations of the human mind. Whatsoever power created a universe as vast and as intricate as ours must have possessed an intelligence beyond our human reach and a vision which extended over the eternities. To a five months child you might explain all day Newton's law of gravitation, but how much would he understand? He has not lived long enough to know our language, much less to comprehend the nature of force. In comparison with a Power great enough to create a universe the wisest of men are as babes. Not all the genius of science, working through the centuries, has yet mastered the secrets of the physical world alone. How shall we understand the nature of the invisible world of life and the forces behind it?

Third, *we must accept the existence and the reality of things we cannot, through any of our senses, see and know.* A visitor in a laboratory reached out curiously to pick up a dish with some strange-looking Matter in it, but the chemist seized his arm. "Why, what's wrong?" he asked. "Man", said the chemist, "There's enough force in that dish

to blow this building and both of us into kingdom come!" The visitor stepped back respectfully. There was nothing in the substance he could see. Had he tasted it, there was nothing he could taste, nothing he could smell or hear. Yet there was force, invisible, but terrific in its power. How do we know Force exists? We can see it work! Its effects are visible or audible. Through the things we see and hear we know the reality of the invisible power which causes them.

So also is Mind. Jerome Elaxander in his *Life, Its Nature and Origin* says, "No one doubts the existence of matter, the forces affecting it, and the fact that living, thinking beings are continually emerging from it. Yet it requires even more faith to believe in the reality of matter, which we know of only indirectly through our senses, than it does to believe in the reality of our mind, with which we are in much more direct contact." Mind or Intelligence is invisible. But we know it exists because we think, and we see the effects of thinking in the world around us.

Of this same nature is God. Whatever power created the world necessarily belongs to the invisible. But since we cannot see, how shall we know the nature of this power? Was the world created by blind chance and accident, or by a God of intelligence and love? Again, as in the case of Mind and Force, we can know the nature of the creative Power only by the way we see it work.

Now let us start with Paul's statement to the Romans, "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness; because that which is known of God is manifest in them; for God manifested it unto them. For the invisible things of him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even his everlasting power and divinity." The statement indicates that apart from the Bible God has revealed himself through this creation so clearly that all men may see his power and his divine nature. In these lectures, therefore, we want to see how clearly the visible universe reveals the nature of the invisible power behind it.

The intelligence of men is seen in their ability to adapt means to definite ends, to design and plan, to arrange things with order and system. If the world is actually created by a God of intelligence and not by blind chance, we should certainly see some evidence of design in nature, of things being adapted to definite ends, of order and system rather than chaos. Immediately we can think of dozens of instances to support such a faith.

But the skeptic replies, "How do you know the things you see indicate purpose or plan? Perhaps they merely happen and you grow

used to the arrangement you find. If you throw tons of junk into a heap, the pieces have to fall in some relation to each other, under, above, or near by. We merely see the world as it happens to be, and read design into it."

The objection misses the point. We know we ourselves possess a measure of intelligence. With that intelligence we know we can distinguish between a pile of junk arranged by accident, and something definitely planned. It would certainly be a miracle of chance if a junk pile suddenly arranged itself on wheels, pieces of metal shaped themselves into rings and pistons, carburetor and valves, a rod set itself up as steering wheel, and other pieces became brakes and a hundred other gadgets, and the whole turned into a Buick car. Even a more; far-reaching transformation actually does take place. Not from iron alone, but from rock and ore, oil and air, sand, soybeans, tung trees, and a hundred other sources little particles utterly unrelated one to the other come from the four corners of the earth and arrange themselves with exactly the right lines, proportions, balance, and functions to produce an automobile. But we know that such a transformation requires an intelligence of a very high order. If we can recognize intelligence in the things we arrange, certainly we can see the same type of intelligence in the world around us.

It does not, moreover, weaken the argument from design to say that there are many things in which we can see no purpose. That may be only because we do not understand all the laws and uses of nature. A few years ago scientists thought the pituitary gland had no use and was probably the vestigial remains of an organ no longer functioning. Today it is recognized as one of the most important structures in the body. It controls growth, and determines whether one shall be a giant or a midget. It controls the action of the sex organs, the thyroid and the parathyroid activity, the Isles of Langerhan in the pancreas, where insulin is manufactured. It controls the adrenal cortex, on which in turn one's life depends. It governs the production of milk and the storage and use of fat. Pretty important after all. Other things which seem without purpose may prove just as important when we come to see.

But even if we find no purpose in some things, the presence of things with purpose is just as convincing. We can accept a junk pile as a work of chance, but just one watch found running in it proves a high intelligence somewhere in its creation. But when instead of one, we find multiplied instances of design its lack in any one case becomes an exception to the universal rule. Even such an exception, however, may be due to our ignorance, apparent rather than real. What, therefore, are some instances of design in the world?

The earth so far as we know is the only planet in a measureless universe planned and arranged exactly to support life as we have it. For this purpose an almost infinite number of conditions were necessary. The temperature had to be controlled between a narrow range of 132°F to 14° below zero, for beyond these extremes life could not long endure. The atmosphere had to have the right amounts of oxygen and the proper density. Carbon was also needed since it is part of all living matter. Other elements as different as hydrogen and iron were required. Both light and ultra-violet rays as well as darkness were essential. An irrigation system must be made, with air-conditioning as a factor. Adequate supplies of food must be assured, with provisions by which depleted soils could be rebuilt under their own processes. All these requirements and thousands more had to be balanced in the right proportions. Often these proportions had to be adjusted with almost infinite minuteness and exactness. For instance it has been estimated that the oxygen content of the air is less than one five-millionth part of the total of all substances necessary to support life. If, therefore, a slight mistake of one five-millionth had been made in the balance of things and oxygen had been omitted, life would have been impossible.

The control of temperature was in itself a problem of the greatest magnitude. The sun is the center of heat for our solar system, but with attention to economy it furnishes not only the heat, but the light and the ultra-violet rays which were also essential. The earth was placed at approximately 93,000,000 miles away from the sun. Had this distance been missed by a tenth either way, it would have been either too hot or too cold for life to exist. The earth also turns on its axis every twenty-four hours, giving us night and day. The night is essential to growth and to the storage of sugars in plants; the light is essential to the formation of chlorophyll, the green substance in leaves, which takes the carbon from the air and turns it into starches and sugars. On this process, known as photosynthesis, all life depends. But the length of night and day also had to be exactly proportioned to the needs of life. If the rotation of the earth were slower, days would become too hot for any living thing, and nights too cold. On Mercury, which keeps the same side to the sun continually, the temperature reaches the melting point of lead on one side, and 320° below zero on the other.

But the earth also revolves around the sun each twelve months, forming our year and giving us the seasons. This time again is exactly proportioned to our temperature control and the needs of growth. Had the revolution, instead of months, required twelve years as with Jupiter, we would have burned to a crisp during the six years of summer and congealed into icicles during the six years of winter. Had

it revolved each three months as with Mercury, the twenty-two day summer would have been too short for plants to grow.

Even with these provisions, however, there would still have been too great a variation of heat and cold. Consequently unlike some other planets a protective blanket of atmosphere was thrown around the earth. This breaks the rays of the sun in summer, and its water content holds an evenness of temperature both summer and winter. But the atmosphere also had to be kept thin, most of it concentrated within the first four miles of the earth's surface and thinning into nothing at altitudes of 100 and 200 miles. Had it been thicker it would have excluded the ultra-violet rays essential to life. Its density would also have pressed with such weight that a simple breeze would have swept houses and trees before it with a wave.

Economy of planning, however, is shown in that the atmosphere is made to serve several purposes at once. It not only shields from heat and protects from cold, but it supports life and furnishes the medium of irrigation and air-conditioning. The air is composed of four-fifths nitrogen and one-fifth oxygen. The oxygen is essential to all animal life and to the process of burning. Nitrogen is one of the constituents of chlorophyll, and is essential to all life. But the proportions of these elements had to be nicely adjusted. Had the amount of oxygen been doubled fires would burn with double intensity and be difficult to extinguish; if the proportion were sufficiently great, even iron stoves would burn like wood. The human body would be rapidly consumed with its own energy and our lives would be a fitful fever. Had the proportion of nitrogen, however, been doubled, the driest shavings would hardly have burned, and coal would resist heat like marble.

But since the atmosphere, which is so essential to life, had to be kept thin, what provision could be made against its being rapidly used up? The millions of animal forms or great forest fires could quickly exhaust the limited supply of oxygen. This problem was solved by the creation of two orders of life—the animal and the plant. Animal life breaths in the oxygen from the air and expels it as carbon dioxide, unfit for further consumption. But plants through their leaves taken in the carbon dioxide, separate the carbon, store it as starch or sugar, and expel the free oxygen into the air again. So each great order of life supports the other by taking from the air what it needs, and setting free the element on which the life of the other depends. Thus all life is supported and the supply of oxygen is kept through the ages.

But the moisture content of the air illustrates further the intelligence behind the planning of things. It not only helps keep the temperature moderate, but furnishes irrigation for the earth as well.

This involves, however, a careful balance of a number of other things and suggests a remarkable passage in Isaiah (40:12):

"Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with a span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance?"

The implication is that certainly no man ever had the intelligence or the power to do so; yet they have measures and proportions assigned—the sea and the land, the mountains and the depths of the skies. But not until recently have we seen how necessary these proportions are, and how exactly they fit the requirements of life.

Lucretius scoffed at the idea of intelligence creating such vast amounts of water to so little land, the high mountains and the burning deserts where no one could live. But even in this, wisdom is revealed.

Of the earth's surface approximately one-fourth is land, and three-fourths water. This might seem a waste of space, until we find that it requires a wide expanse of water to furnish room for the evaporation which makes the clouds and supplies the rain. Evaporation itself is a marvelous process. Water is 800 times heavier than air, yet the air can lift and carry millions of tons of it all over the earth. This is because water exposed to air gradually expands into vapor. In its vaporous state the molecules disperse into 1,600 times the space they occupied as a liquid. Strangely enough this makes them twice as light as air; they rise rapidly and are carried wherever the winds desire. It has been estimated that 16,000,000 tons of water fall *every second of the day and night* somewhere on the face of the earth. All the irrigation systems of men have never equaled an arrangement like this, so vast and yet so economical that it operates itself without a penny cost.

But how are the supplies of water carried across lands to places where they are needed? This is an engineering feat unequalled in its conception. It is the nature of air to rise when heated and to fall when cooled. During the day the sun heats the land more rapidly than the seas; hence air over the land becomes warm and rises. The cooler air over the sea moves landward carrying clouds and rain. At night the land cools more rapidly than the seas; hence the air over the sea rises, and the cool air over the land moves seaward.

Added to this regular movement of air, the mountains and deserts play their part. The deserts are great natural furnaces where during the day vast quantities of air are heated and rise, bringing winds sweeping across half the face of the earth carrying moisture

from the seas far inland. As these warm rain-laden winds meet icy currents from the mountain ranges, the water vapor condenses into rain or falls as snow upon the mountain tops. Thus the mountains serve not only as cooling and condensing centers, but as vast reservoirs of snow and ice, which melt in the summer and further irrigate the earth with their rivers and streams.

Another quality of water increases our wonder at the perfection of the plan. It is the nature of most liquids to contract, or become smaller, as they change into solids. Water on the other hand contracts till the temperature falls to 39°F and then begins to expand. This is one of the most amazing and important facts in nature. All life depends on water, and the seas and clouds, as we have seen, help to control the temperature of the earth. Since water expands and becomes lighter as it freezes, ice floats on the surface, forming an excellent insulation for the water beneath. No matter how cold the air becomes, the temperature of water six feet below the ice remains approximately 40°F. This permits the myriad forms of life in lakes and seas to exist. On the other hand, if water contracted as it froze, ice would gradually sink to the bottom of the seas. At great depths it would not melt under the heat of summer. It would continually grow thicker until the seas were frozen solid. Against such a mass of ice summer heat would avail little, but winds sweeping over the frozen seas would chill the land and bring perpetual winter upon the earth.

The arrangement of deserts, mountains, lands, and seas, create, therefore, a marvelous irrigation and air-conditioning system. But two things further may be noted. The two poles of the earth are desolate wastes of ice and snow. But like the mountains they are also reservoirs of cold, creating mighty air-currents which move across the earth bringing coolness and rain. Like these they are also strange rivers within the seas which bring coolness or warmth wherever they flow. The largest of these, the Gulf Stream, probably rises somewhere off the coast of Africa, flows silently across the tropic seas, and rushes from the Gulf of Mexico at a speed of eighty miles a day. It is approximately seventy miles wide and three thousand feet deep. It contains a volume of water equal to a thousand Mississippi in flood. Its force drives it up-hill for several hundred miles at a rise of five to six feet per mile. Its surface also rises perceptibly above the level of the ocean, forming an indigo-blue ridge as it flows along our eastern coast. When it leaves the Gulf its temperature is 86°F and is still 84° after several hundred miles. This stream flows northward, across the Atlantic, and southward past the British Isles, bringing warm winds and making England, Norway, and western Europe habitable. The Japanese Current in like manner warms Alaska and our western coast. In contrast

with these an icy current rises among the icebergs of Baffin Bay and flows southward. When it meets the warm Gulf Stream there is a titanic struggle for mastery. But the Arctic stream finally plunges beneath and continues its way south, bringing cool breezes and showers to the tropics.

Such in belief are the arrangements for lighting, air-conditioning, and irrigating the earth. No engineering firm ever undertook a task so huge. But despite its immensity how exactly do the sun, the moon, and the thousands of agencies and natural laws work together, each in its own place, to bring the plan to complete perfection! When you think of the centuries it has lasted, the millions of miles of earth's surface it has covered, can you imagine a system more intelligently planned to supply the needs of living things and be proof against the follies of human interferences? Can you dream of such a system as the result of accident or chance?

By what strange laws of necessity, moreover, does it continue its work unvarying with time? We have mentioned the earth's rotation on its axis. It spins around daily at the rate of more than a thousand miles an hour. We described its revolution around the sun, which is at the unbelievable speed of 66,000 miles an hour. In addition to these two motions it is hurling through space with the sun at the rate of 43,000 miles an hour. To try to visualize all three of these motions—spinning, circling, and plunging forward at such terrific speeds—happening at the same instant and continuing through centuries, dizzies the imagination. By what power does the sun pull the earth after it at such headlong speed? Why are we not left freezing and in the dark? Newton explained that there is an invisible force, which he termed gravity, whose power varies directly with the mass of bodies and inversely with the square of their distances. His formula measures the force, but nothing explains why it exists or how it works. I used to work mules to the plow, and both mules and plow were bodies and had mass or weight. But no plow ever started across the field after the mules until I had chained them together with visible and tangible chains. Yet binding our whole universe together, holding the stars in their spheres, keeping the earth at the right distance from the sun, is an invisible, intangible force capable of pulling 60,000,000,000,000,000,000,000 tons of earth through space at 43,000 miles an hour! And this is essential to the continuance of life on our globe.

These are only a few instances of design in the physical world. They could be multiplied many times. But when you consider that this tremendous inter-planetary force preserves century after century exactly the conditions necessary for life, and that the millions of

natural agencies and laws supplement each other in furnishing precisely the environment, facilities, and services living things require, the collective force of all these facts leads to only one conclusion: *Our visible world reveals the planning of a superhuman Intelligence, who at the same times possess infinite power. This is what we mean by God.* Hence, as Paul said, "The invisible things of him . . . are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even his everlasting power and divinity."

The Proper Conception of God

by
G. C. Brewer

The search for God is universal and insatiable.

"Wherefore hidest thou thy face,
And holdest me for thine enemy?"

(Job 13:24.)

"Then Job answered and said,
Even today is my complaint bitter:
My stroke is heavier than my groaning.
Oh that I knew where I might find him!
That I might come even to his seat!
I would set my cause in order before him,
And fill my mouth with arguments.
I would know the words which he would answer me,
And understand what he would say unto me.
Will he plead against me with his great power?
No; but he would put strength in me.
There the righteous might dispute with him;
So should I be delivered for ever from my Judge.
Behold, I go forward, but he is not there;
And backward, but I cannot perceive him:
On the left hand, when he doth work, but I cannot
 behold him;
He hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot
 see him."

(Job 23:1-9.)

In this language we see that the ancient servant of God was longing to have some contact with God which he had found himself unable to establish. He did not deny the existence of God and express the sentiment of the foolish man who says there is no God. But Job wanted to see the face of God and he felt that God was hiding from him and would not show his face. He even expressed the desire to come right up before the throne of God and to defend himself in God's

presence, but he was faced with the same difficulty that all men who have searched for God have encountered: he could not find where God is; he could not locate his seat and throne and could not, therefore, stand before him and plead his cause. In trying to find where God is and in trying to see his face, Job expressed the universal yearning of the human heart. Thousands of men have uttered a similar cry who did not know that Job had experienced the same feeling and had known the same disappointment.

Gamaliel Bradford expressed the feeling in these beautiful lines:

Day and night I wander widely
 through the wilderness of thought,
 Catching dainty things of fancy
 most reluctant to be caught.
 Shining tangles leading nowhere
 persistently unravel,
 Tread strange paths of mediation
 very intricate to travel.
 Gleaming bits of quaint desire
 tempt my steps beyond the decent.
 I confound old solid glory
 with publicity too recent.
 But my one unchanged obsession,
 wheresoe'er my feet have trod,
 Is a keen, enormous, haunting,
 never-sated thirst for God.

Other men have searched for God and, because they could not find him by physical research, have at last come to deny that God exists. The modernists of our day have repudiated the Bible picture of God and have accused orthodox Christians of worshipping a glorified man and of believing that God has the same passions and frailties with which men are afflicted. Dr. Will Durant says: "God, who was once the consolation of our brief life, and our refuge in bereavement and suffering, has apparently vanished from the scene; no telescope, no microscope discovers him."¹ Walter Lippmann describes the state of mind that modern men have toward God, thus:

"By the dissolution of their ancestral ways men have been deprived of their sense of certainty as to why they were born, why they must work, whom they must love, what they must

¹*On the Meaning of Life*, (Ray Long & Richard R. Smith, Inc., New York: 1932), p. 5.

honor, where they may turn in sorrow and defeat. They have left to them the ancient codes and the modern criticisms of these codes, guesses, intuitions, inconclusive experiments, possibilities, probabilities, hypotheses. Below the level of reason, they may have unconscious prejudice, they may speak with a loud cocksureness, they may act with fanaticism. But mere is gone that ineffable certainty which once made God and His Plan seem as real as the lamp post."

I do not mean that modern men have ceased to believe in God. I do mean that they no longer believe in him simply and literally. I mean that they have defined and refined their ideas of him until they can no longer honestly say that he exists, as they would say that their neighbor exists. Search the writings of liberal churchmen, and when you come to the crucial passages which are intended to express their belief in God, you will find, I think, that at just this point their uncertainty is most evident.

The Reverend Harry Emerson Fosdick has written an essay called "How Shall We Think of God?" which illustrates the difficulty. He begins by saying that "believing in God without considering how one shall picture him is deplorably unsatisfactory." Yet the old ways of picturing him are no longer credible. We cannot think of him as seated upon a throne, while around him are angels playing on harps and singing hymns.

"God as a king on high—our fathers, living under monarchy, rejoiced in that image and found it meaningful. His throne, his crown, his scepter, his seraphic retinue, his laws, rewards, and punishments—how dominant that picture was and how persistent is the continuance of it in our hymns and prayers! It was always partly poetry, but it had a prose background: there really had been at first a celestial land above the clouds where God reigned and where his throne was in the heavens."²

Richard La Rue Swain states this problem from an experience of his own:

"While I was dining one day with a young minister and his wife, the latter disclosed to me her religious state of mind. Said she:

²A *Preface to Morals*, (The MacMillan Company, New York: 1932), pp. 21-32.

"I have no God! They have taken him away and I do not know where to find him. My childhood conception of a Man-God on a throne in heaven is gone—and I think rightly gone; but I have nothing to take its place. I hear them speak of an immanent God; of a God who fills all nature. And I have no objection to this except that it brings no relief. Nature is so inexpressibly vast and complex that, to my mind, a God who fills all nature is so infinitely big and spread out that I can neither know him nor love him. He is altogether too attenuated for me; besides, this makes him so much everywhere that he seems to be nowhere. Here I am, without a God, working myself nearly to death in a great Church; and my heart is breaking for a father to whom I can go, as I once did, with all my hopes and fears. Moreover, all my young women friends feel as I do. We often speak of this among ourselves without knowing where to turn for relief."

The distressing experience of this minister's wife is more common than many think. With her type of mind it was inevitable that she should experience doubt while passing from the crude to the mature. Being bright, consecrated, and sincere she had simply hastened the crisis. That the church is not always present to take care of its own passengers when they arrive at these way-stations is the greater pity; because representatives of various spiritual inns will be sure to meet every incoming train. And if the church is neglectful of its spiritual pilgrims, it compels them to spend their night of doubt in the depot or on a bench in the park exposed to the tender mercy of religious fakers. Were the difficulties of this minister's wife met, it would be a great blessing to her and to thousands of other troubled souls; and at the same time it would immeasurably enrich our common Christian life.³

While Dr. Swain says we should meet the situation and solve this problem for people whose faith is weak, it is not sure that we can solve the problem to the satisfaction of all. It is most certain that we cannot find God as some of these writers indicate that we should. He cannot be found by the telescope or the microscope, and no one who has any correct understanding of the nature of God, to say nothing of the revelation of him in the Bible, will expect to find him by these means or through any other method of physical research.

³*What and Where Is God?*, (The MacMillan Company, 1922), pp. 1-2.

Paul says that it was the wisdom of God that made it impossible for men to find God by their wisdom. (I Corinthians 1:21.) God, therefore, has intentionally shut himself off from man so that man cannot find him through any of his own devices. But, if we are willing to believe in a revealed God, one who has been made known to us through inspired preaching, we will then walk by faith; and we may, through faith, come to know God. Paul said again, "I know him in whom I have believed." (I Timothy 1:12.) We may first believe and then come to know our God. Jesus said, "And this is life eternal, that they should know thee the only true God, and him whom thou didst send, even Jesus Christ." (John 17:3.)

If we are not willing to walk by faith and, therefore, to limit our knowledge of God by the word of God, there is nothing left for us but the uncertainty which, as Walter Lippmann says, leads into unbelief.

The Bible picture of God is accommodated to man's understanding.

Those who engage in the quest for God after the manner that has been described by the men we have just quoted often tell us that the Bible picture of God is antiquated; that we should not any longer think of God as a personal being seated on a throne in the sky surrounded by angels and looking with a far-seeing vision over all his vast dominions and even into the secrets of our hearts. They say that if we think of God after this manner, we have only a glorified man. They further tell us that the Bible ascribes to God, as we have said before, the attributes and characteristics of a human being; it even speaks of such weaknesses as jealousy and anger and regret, etc. Those who make such charges have surely never noted the fact that the Bible is replete with ornate figures of speech, and those who wrote the Bible and the men who originally read the writing never had any thought that people would take these figures of speech as literal. Figures of speech are used in reference to men that could, by no twist of the imagination, be made to apply to men in a literal way. In the same way, figures of speech are used with reference to God that no thinking person would ever attempt to literalize. As example of some of the bold metaphors of the Bible, we cite the following:

"The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground."

(Genesis 4: 10.)

"He hath washed his garments in wine, And his vesture in the blood of grapes."

(Genesis 49:11.)

"Their throat is an open sepulchre."

(Psalms 5:9.)

"Thou hast made us to drink the wine of staggering."

(Psalms 60:3.)

"The plowers plowed upon my back; They made long their furrows."

(Psalms 129:3.)

"The mountain shall be melted with their blood."

(Isaiah 34:3.)

"The sword of Jehovah is filled with blood, it is made fat with fatness."

(Isaiah 34:6.)

"I will sweep it with the bosom of destruction, saith Jehovah of hosts."

(Isaiah 14:23.)

"Moab is my washpot."

(Psalms 60:8.)

When the inspired writers speak of Jehovah, they use a type of metaphor known as anthropopathia, and this language is frequently spoken of as anthropopathy. As an example of this type of description of Jehovah, we gave the following quotations:

"Keep me as the apple of the eye; Hide me under the shadow of thy wing."

(Psalms 17:8.)

"Yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I take refuge, until these calamities be overpast."

(Psalms 57:1.)

"I will dwell in thy tabernacle forever: I will take refuge in the covert of thy wings."

(Psalms 61:4.)

"He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress: My God; in him will I trust. Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence. He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust."

(Psalms 91:1-4.)

We may see from these figures that God is not only spoken of as a man, but he is spoken of as a great tree in whose shadow we may

rest. He is also spoken of as a great fowl under whose wings we may be protected and by whose feathers we may be covered. It would be just as sensible now to say that the Bible pictures God as a glorified chicken as it would be to say that it pictures him as a glorified man. God is neither a man nor a fowl nor a tree. Nor yet is he a rock, although he is spoken of as our Rock. (Deuteronomy 32:15; Psalms 18:2,31.)

As we will not accept these pictures as literal, neither should we think of the passions that are attributed to God as literal. The only way we can understand anything is to bring it down into the realm of human experience. We must perceive of it in terms that are intelligible to us. These terms must describe some sensation or emotion that we are capable of feeling. Anything, therefore, that is said of God must be said in terms of human understanding. Any characteristic or attribute of God must be described as something man is capable of experiencing. If man were incapable of getting hungry, then to speak of some other being as getting hungry or of desiring food would not be comprehensible to man. If it were impossible for man to love, then to tell him that God loves him or that God is love would be meaningless to him. If man never had the experience of hating something, he could not know what is meant when it is said that God hates. If man never had a feeling of jealousy, he could not understand what God's attitude toward us is when he is told that God is jealous. So of anything else that is said of God: it must come within the realm of human possibilities.

When the inspired writer wants to make us understand that God strongly disapproved of man's behavior or was displeased with the conditions that man had brought about on the earth, what better way could he say it than to describe God as regretting that he had made man?

We even use similarly accommodated terms in reference to ourselves. Suppose a man should say, "I regret now that I was ever born." This implies that he did not regret being born at the time he was born, but now he does; and if he had it to do over again, he would not be born. Whereas we know that he had no choice about his birth, and at the time he had no intelligent feeling about the matter. When a man says he regrets that he was ever born, we simply understand him to mean that he is very much displeased with the state in which he now finds himself; he is unhappy and does not care to live.

When complaints and evil reports concerning any portion of his government or any number of his subjects come up to a *man* ruler, the first thing he will do is to investigate—look into the matter. So

to make us understand that God is giving attention to any specific affair on earth, the inspired writer uses an anthropomorphism and represents God as investigating—coming down to look into the matter. This would seem to limit God's knowledge and to imply that he must find out about things. But this is only accommodated language and must not be taken in a literal sense.

When the Bible speaks of God as *begging* a son, it is using an anthropomorphism. It is using a human relationship to illustrate a point. Christ was not *begotten* in any literal or physical sense, of course.

And certainly the infinite Spirit is not *jealous* of idols made of stock or stones, as though such idols could rival him or rob him of some of his glory and power.

When the Bible says God is *jealous*, it uses once again an anthropomorphism. That is the way God makes us understand that he wants *all our love and devotion*.

Those who criticize these figurative representations of God and of his characteristics and tell us that the Bible picture of God is unworthy of our belief fail to observe that the Bible gives also a very different description of God from that which these figures would indicate if they could be taken in a literal way. The following passages of scripture will show us that God does not have a corporeal being and that he cannot be seen with the natural eye or handled by our physical hands: *God is invisible*.

"Take ye therefore good heed unto yourselves; for ye saw no manner of similitude on the day that the Lord spake unto you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire."

(Deuteronomy 4:15.)

"Lo, he goeth by me, and I see him not: he passeth on also, but I perceive him not."

(Job 9:11.)

"Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him."

(Job 23:8.)

"On the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold him: he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him."

(Job 23:9.)

"Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Saviour."

(Isaiah 45:15.)

"No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."

(John 1:18.)

"By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible."

(Hebrews 11:27.)

"No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us."

(I John 4:12.)

God is unsearchable.

"Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?"

(Job 11:7.)

"It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know?"

(Job 11:8.)

"The measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea."

(Job 11: 9.)

"Lo, these are parts of his ways; but how little a portion is heard of him? but the thunder of his power who can understand?"

(Job 26: 14.)

"Behold, God is great, and we know him not, neither can the number of his years be searched out."

(Job 36:26.)

"Touching the Almighty, we cannot find him out: he is excellent in power, and in judgment, and in plenty of justice: he will not afflict."

(Job 37: 23.)

"Thy way is in the sea, and thy path in the great waters, and thy footsteps are not known."

(Psalms 77:19.)

"Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me."

(Psalms 139:5.)

"Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high,
I cannot attain unto it."

(Psalms 139:6.)

"Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; and his
greatness is unsearchable."

(Psalms 145:3.)

"Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the
everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the
earth, fainteth not, neither is weary?"

(Isaiah 40:28.)

"Oh the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and
knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and
his ways past finding out!"

(Romans 11:33.)

"For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who
hath been his counselor?"

(Romans 11:34.)

God and the world. We have learned from the quotations just given that God is invisible and, therefore, of course, we cannot identify him with matter. Jesus tells us that God is a spirit, and this, of course, would negate the idea that anybody might draw from the Bible quotations that God has physical organs or a visible form. Being a spirit and being, therefore, invisible, we can see why God does not show his face as Job wanted him to do or why we cannot come up to some particular location and stand before God as we would stand before an earthly tribunal. Some men identify God with the world and claim that the only God there is, is the natural forces of life and nature. This is pantheism, and of course this is neither a scriptural nor a satisfactory concept of God. We would as well to pray to the east wind or to an electric current as to pray to God, if this were true. In fact, the east wind is God; electric current is God; atomic energy is God, according to pantheism.

Yet we all have the problem of trying to determine what is the relationship between God and his world, and we find a difficulty in trying to connect a material object with the spirit being. How can this lump of matter have any relationship to an infinite spirit? Science deals with natural law and with physical substances, and science cannot find God in any of its researches: hence the scientists who often become materialistic in their views and say there is no God—all there is must have a material substance or else it does not exist, according

to that reasoning. This conclusion, however, is most unscientific. The scientists themselves have now shown us that matter does not have any eternal existence and, in fact, it does not have any material existence at all. They have analyzed and reduced substances to the vanishing point. The forms of matter have been divided and sub-divided until, after all, the scientists tell us that matter is energy. Atomic energy is one of the last things that they have brought to our view and are now putting to our use, and atomic energy comes from splitting the atom which is the smallest division of matter that scientists know.

Now this smallest particle has been turned into non-existence as a material substance. We have now discovered that instead of everything being material, everything comes nearer being spiritual. Life is a force, and all that we know about life and the earth are simply manifestations of God. The laws of nature are God's laws. The forces of nature are God's forces. The energies that we talk about are all God's powers. The poet has said: "O Thou Eternal One whose presence bright, all space doth occupy, all motion guide." The poet expressed in beautiful language what the scientists have now found out to be true: all life is motion, and all motion is guided by the infinite spirit that we call God.

An anthropomorphic God and a theomorphic man. Since God is a spirit, and since he guides and controls all the forces of life, someone may think that God has no personal existence. He himself is a form of energy and may well be thought of as electricity or as atomic energy. This, however, would be to eliminate God, as Walter Lippmann says, from our thinking; it would be pantheism. God must be a personal being and must be thought of as existing at some location or else our minds cannot grasp him, even to the point that we could worship him. God is a personal being and he is in control of all forces of life and may be thought of, therefore, at the headquarters of these forces or at the powerhouse of nature. Where this is located would be idle speculation, and there is no better way to picture it than it is given to us in the Bible. We think, therefore, of God as in heaven and we pray to him as Jesus taught us: "Our Father who art in heaven."

But how can God be confined to some location and, at the same time, be everywhere? If he is somewhere, he cannot be everywhere, according to our limited way of reasoning. But I believe by a simple comparison of God with man, we may have some understanding of this matter. Man is in the image and likeness of God, yet none of us will believe that God has a physical form and physical passions. But man's physical form is not man. Man has a spirit that came from God, and God is called the Father of spirits; but our bodies came from our

earthly parents, and these parents are looked upon as the ones from whom we get our flesh by natural birth. (John 3:1-5; Heb. 12:9.)

In speaking to a group of young people I asked them, "Where is my spirit?"

They replied, "In your body."

I asked them, "Do you think that my spirit is the same size and weight and form as my body; that it exactly fits into my arms, legs and head and body?"

They laughed at this thought and said no, that was not the case.

Then I said, "Where is my spirit?"

One of them replied, "It's in your head."

Then I said, "Shall we think that the spirit is the same size as the cavity in my skull and that it fills this space and will retain this shape even when it is freed from the body?"

The young people again answered in the negative.

This illustration makes us see that we cannot imagine that man's soul or spirit can be described in terms of his body if we take these terms in a literal sense. Man's spirit is invisible just as God is invisible.

As another illustration: When a little boy asked how God could be in New York, Chicago and San Francisco all at the same time, the teacher touched the little boy's head and said, "Is that you?"

He replied in the affirmative.

The teacher then touched his shoulder and said, "Is that you?"

Again he gave an affirmative reply.

Then the teacher touched his knee and said, "Is that you?" Again she received the same reply.

Now the teacher said, "How can you be up here, and here, and here?"

Of course, the little boy wanted to reply that each part of the body was a part of his personality. But, according to our first illustration, we can see that the body is not the spirit and, after all, it is not the personality. It is a manifestation of our personal being, but personality is not dependent upon the body. Man is conscious of himself through all the changes of his body. He can remember himself

when he was a small boy weighing only forty or fifty pounds; then he remembers himself as he came to be a man with a body that weighed a hundred and ten pounds; then he remembers himself as coming to be a person whose body weighs two hundred pounds. He knows that the foot that he once had would be completely lost in the shoe that he now wears, and the hand that was once his would not now cover the palm of his present hand. His body has changed so completely that it is not the same at all, and those who had not seen him through the years would not now recognize him as a person they once knew. His own mother, if she had not seen him from the time he was five years old until he is fifty years old, would never recognize him at all. Yet he knows he is the same being. He is conscious of his identity through all the changes of his body. His personal identity is not, therefore, dependent upon his body and may, as we believe, exist in a conscious state when the body has been dissolved.

From this now we can begin to see about God as a person. He is a spirit, yet he has a personal being. And, as to where God is, perhaps we can get some idea on this point by another simple illustration or two.

If I jab you with my finger, you may reply, "Why did you jab me?" And I could answer I did not jab you at all, that it was my finger. But you well know that my finger was under the control of my will, my mind, my spirit; and it was this will that directed the finger and used it for the purpose of jabbing you. Then where was I? I was at the end of my finger. That is where my will was expressed and my purpose was accomplished: my attention was at the end of my finger and its contact with your body; therefore, that is where I was.

But suppose I should take a fishing rod and stand ten feet away from you and jab you with the fishing rod. I could then definitely say that it was not I that touched you, that it was this rod; and that would, in a literal sense, be true. Yet we know that the rod was not responsible and could never have acted in this way if there had not been a hand in control of it and a will behind it. I, therefore, this time, was at the end of this fishing rod. The fishing rod only lengthened my finger, and at the end of the rod my will was expressed: my purpose was accomplished. I have a personal existence, and yet the effect of my personal being reached you by means of a fishing rod.

Or we might put my will at a greater distance from me by using a rifle. I see an animal a thousand yards away from me. It is my will and purpose to kill that animal. I raise my gun and draw a bead and pull the trigger; the gun fires; the bullet speeds away and finds its

target; the animal drops dead in its tracks. Where that bullet reached its mark was where my will was expressed and my purpose accomplished. Then where was I? I was right where the animal died. But you reply that I was a thousand yards removed from that place. So I was, and I had a personal existence. But, nevertheless, my personality—which we have found to be will or mind or spirit—expressed itself a thousand yards from where I was.

Now, in like manner, God uses the forces of life, of nature; he uses human beings and heavenly beings, even wicked men and, perhaps, devils, to do his will. Where is God? Well, he has a personal existence in a place we call heaven, and yet God is present wherever his will is expressed, wherever his purpose is accomplished.

As another illustration of a personal being whose will can be expressed, and even whose personality can be discerned at a great distance and in many places at the same time, we may think of the radio. Here is a man speaking in New York City, but he is heard across the continent in Chicago and San Francisco; he is heard in Honolulu, in Japan and in China; he is also heard in London, Paris, and Berlin; he may be heard around the world. Where is that man? Well, in a sense, he is everywhere. He is in all the places where his voice is being heard, where his words are being understood and where his thoughts are being communicated to other intelligent beings. People who hear him repeatedly become well acquainted with his voice pattern, with his tones and his inflections. These are expressions of his personality. And, thus, today we speak of certain men having a good radio presence. That means that their personalities make a favorable impression upon the hearers and appeal to and attract persons at great distances and in various parts of the world. This man is everywhere, but yet he has a personal existence; and, in this illustration, he is located in New York.

Perhaps these illustrations will give us some view of how we can conceive of God as a personal being located in heaven, and yet one who is everywhere and who is guiding all the energies and forces of the universe.

A proper sense of God humbles man. When man can come to a realization of the fact that he cannot find God by physical research and that God cannot reveal his face for the simple reason that he has no corporeal being, then man may come to a greater appreciation of the greatness and majesty of God. God cannot show himself as a physical being, for he has no such being, and this would be as impossible as it would be for God to He because it is inconsistent with his nature. But when we can know that God rules and controls the forces

of life and that he is the father of our spirits and that he holds in his hands the issues of life and of death, of time and of eternity, we may then worship him in spirit and in truth. There is no power that is not under his control; there is no place where he is not present. He is not identical with the forces of nature like electricity and atomic energy, but certainly there is nothing about these forces that he does not understand, and they have no power of effect that he cannot control.

Then, seeing that he is in everything and controls everything, someone may wonder why these things are used for destruction and for harm instead of for good and for pleasure of man. Here, however, we must see again that more man one will come into play when we think of God and man. Man has a will and he also has wisdom. God permits him to use it and, by using it, to harness and control forces as man may want to use them. If man, therefore, misuses these forces, then man is responsible and not God. If man would come to know this and believe that he himself should be under God's control and guided by God's spirit, then he would use all these great and wonderful things to the glory of God and to the good of his fellowmen.

Job, as we saw in the beginning of this speech, wanted to see the face of God and wanted to stand in his presence and to argue with him; but, after Job had come to see God manifested in God's creation and to see God's control in the earth, the air and the sea, and by the monsters that swim in the mighty deep, then he changed his attitude entirely; he did not want to argue with God or to plead his own righteousness; he was ready to humble himself and to repent. He said:

"I had heard of thee by the hearing
of the ear;
But now mine eye seem thee:
Wherefore I abhor myself,
And repent in dust and ashes."

(Job 42:3-6.)